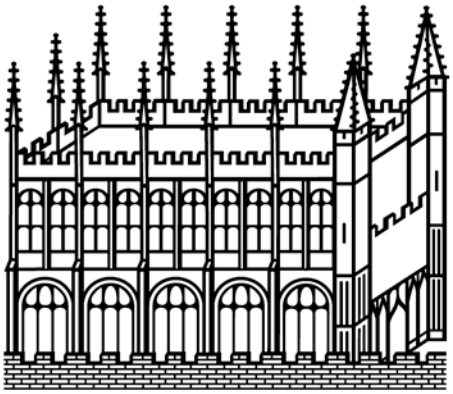

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OXFORD
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ENGLISH

RALPH BARNES

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XL 19.1 [Spe]

A

SPEECH

OF

EDMUND BURKE, Esq.

AT THE GUILDHALL, IN BRISTOL,

Previous to the late Election in that City,

UPON

CERTAIN POINTS RELATIVE TO HIS PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, IN PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXX.

SPEECH, &c.

Mr. Mayor, and Gentlemen,

I Am extremely pleaſed at the appearance of this large and reſpectable meeting. The ſteps I may be obliged to take will want the ſanction of a conſiderable authority; and in explaining any thing which may appear doubtful in my public conduct, I muſt naturally deſire a very full audience.

I have been backward to begin my canvaſs. The diſſolution of the Parliament was uncertain; and it did not become me, by an unſeaſonable importunity, to appear diffident of the effect of my ſix years endeavours to pleaſe you. I had ſerved the city of Briſtol honourably; and the city of Briſtol had no reaſon to think, that the means of honourable ſervice to the public, were become indifferent to me.

I found on my arrival here, that three gentlemen had been long in eager purſuit of an object which but two of us can obtain. I found, that they had all met with encouragement. A conteſted election in ſuch a city as this, is no light thing. I pauſed on the brink of the precipice. Theſe three gentlemen, by various

merits, and on various titles, I made no doubt, were worthy of your favour. I ſhall never attempt to raiſe myſelf by depreciating the merits of my competitors. In the complexity and confuſion of theſe croſs purſuits, I wiſhed to take the authentic public ſenſe of my friends upon a buſineſs of ſo much delicacy. I wiſhed to take your opinion along with me; that if I ſhould give up the conteſt at the very beginning, my ſurrender of my poſt may not ſeem the effect of inconſtancy, or timidity, or anger, or diſguſt, or indolence, or any other temper unbecoming a man who has engaged in the public ſervice. If, on the contrary, I ſhould undertake the election, and fail of ſucceſs, I was full as anxious, that it ſhould be manifeſt to the whole world, that the peace of the city had not been broken by my raſhneſs, preſumption, or fond conceit of my own merit.

I am not come, by a falſe and counterfeit ſhew of deference to your judgment, to ſeduce it in my favour. I aſk it ſeriouſly and unaffectedly. If you wiſh that I ſhould retire, I ſhall not conſider that advice as a cenſure upon my conduct, or an alteration in your ſentiments; but as a rational ſubmiſſion to the circumſtances of affairs. If, on the contrary, you ſhould think it proper for me to proceed on my canvaſs, if you will riſque the trouble on your part, I will riſque it on mine. My pretenſions are ſuch as you cannot be aſhamed of, whether they ſucceed or fail.

If you call upon me, I ſhall ſolicit the favour of the city upon manly ground. I come before you with the plain confidence of an honeſt ſervant in the equity of a candid and diſcerning maſter. I come to claim your approbation not to amuſe you with vain apologies, or with profeſſions ſtill more vain and ſenſeleſs. I have lived too long to be ſerved by apologies, or to ſtand in need of them. The part I have acted has been in open day; and to hold out to a conduct, which ſtands in that clear and ſteady light for all its good and all its evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuſes and promiſes—I never will do it.—They may obſcure it with their ſmoke; but they never can illumine ſunſhine by ſuch a flame as theirs.

I am ſenſible that no endeavours have been left untried to injure me in your opinion. But the uſe of character is to be a ſhield againſt calumny. I could wiſh, undoubtedly (if idle wiſhes were not the moſt idle of all things) to make every part of my conduct agreeable to every one of my conſtituents. But in ſo great a city, and ſo greatly divided as this, it is weak to expect it.

In ſuch a diſcordancy of ſentiments, it is better to look to the nature of things than to the humours of men. The very attempt towards pleaſing every body, diſcovers a temper always flaſhy, and often falſe and inſincere. Therefore, as I have proceeded ſtrait onward in my conduct,

ſo I will proceed in my account of thoſe parts of it which have been moſt excepted to. But I muſt firſt beg leave juſt to hint to you, that we may ſuffer very great detriment by being open to every talker. It is not to be imagined, how much of ſervice is loſt from ſpirits full of activity and full of energy, who are preſſing, who are ruſhing forward, to great and capital objects, when you oblige them to be continually looking back. Whilſt they are defending one ſervice, they defraud you of an hundred. Applaud us when we run; conſole us when we fall; cheer us when we recover; but let us paſs on—for God's ſake, let us paſs on.

Do you think, Gentlemen, that every public act in the ſix years ſince I ſtood in this place before you—that all the arduous things which have been done in this eventful period, which has crowded into a few years ſpace the revolutions of an age, can be opened to you on their fair grounds in half an hour's converſation?

But it is no reaſon, becauſe there is a bad mode of enquiry, that there ſhould be no examination at all. Moſt certainly it is our duty to examine; it is our intereſt too.—But it muſt be with diſcretion; with an attention to all the circumſtances, and to all the motives; like ſound judges, and not like cavilling pettyfoggers and quibbling pleaders, prying into flaws and hunting for exceptions. Look, Gentlemen, to the *whole tenour* of your member's conduct. Try whether

whether his ambition or his avarice have juſtled him out of the ſtrait line of duty; or whether that grand foe of the offices of active life, that maſter-vice in men of buſineſs, a degenerate and inglorious ſloth, has made him flag and languiſh in his courſe? This is the object of our enquiry. If our member's conduct can bear this touch, mark it for ſterling. He may have fallen into errors; he muſt have faults; but our error is greater, and our fault is radically ruinous to ourſelves, if we do not bear, if we do not even applaud, the whole compound and mixed maſs of ſuch a character. Not to act thus is folly; I had almoſt ſaid it is impiety. He cenſures God, who quarrels with the imperfections of man.

Gentlemen, we muſt not be peeviſh with thoſe who ſerve the people. For none will ſerve us whilſt there is a court to ſerve, but thoſe who are of a nice and jealous honour. They who think every thing, in compariſon of that honour, to be duſt and aſhes, will not bear to have it ſoiled and impaired by thoſe, for whoſe ſake they make a thouſand ſacrifices, to preſerve it immaculate and whole. We ſhall either drive ſuch men from the public ſtage, or we ſhall ſend them to the court for protection; where, if they muſt ſacrifice their reputation, they will at leaſt ſecure their intereſt. Depend upon it, that the lovers of freedom will be free. None will violate their conſcience to pleaſe us, in order afterwards to diſcharge that conſcience, which they

have violated, by doing us faithful and affectionate ſervice. If we degrade and deprave their minds by ſervility, it will be abſurd to expect, that they who are creeping and abject toward us, will ever be bold and uncorruptible aſſertors of our freedom, againſt the moſt ſeducing and the moſt formidable of all powers. No! human nature is not ſo formed; nor ſhall we improve the faculties, or better the morals of public men, by our poſſeſſion of the moſt infallible receipt in the world for making cheats and hypocrites.

Let me ſay with plainneſs, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our repreſentatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal ſcope to their underſtandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a *very* enlarged view of things; we ſhall at length infallibly degrade our national repreſentation into a confuſed and ſcuffling buſtle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the ſervice of the crown will be the ſole nurſery of ſtateſmen. Among the frolics of the court, it may at length take that of attending to its buſineſs. Then the monopoly of mental power will be added to the power of all other kinds it poſſeſſes. On the ſide of the people there will be nothing but impotence: for ignorance is impotence; narrowneſs of mind is impotence; timidity is itſelf impotence, and

makes

makes all other qualities that go along with it, impotent and uſeleſs.

At preſent, it is the plan of the court to make its ſervants inſignificant. If the people ſhould fall into the ſame humour, and ſhould chooſe their ſervants on the ſame principles of mere obſequiouſneſs, and flexibility, and total vacancy or indifference of opinion in all public matters, then no part of the ſtate will be ſound; and it will be in vain to think of ſaving of it.

I thought it very expedient at this time to give you this candid counſel; and with this counſel I would willingly cloſe, if the matters which at various times have been objected to me in this city concerned only myſelf, and my own election. Theſe charges, I think, are four in number;—my neglect of a due attention to my conſtituents; the not paying more frequent viſits here;—my conduct on the affairs of the firſt Iriſh trade acts;—my opinion and mode of proceeding on Lord Beauchamp's Debtors Bills;—and my votes on the late affairs of the Roman Catholics. All of theſe (except perhaps the firſt) relate to matters of very conſiderable public concern; and it is not leſt you ſhould cenſure me improperly, but leſt you ſhould form improper opinions on matters of ſome moment to you, that I trouble you at all upon the ſubject. My conduct is of ſmall importance.

With regard to the firſt charge, my friends have ſpoken to me of it in the ſtyle of amicable expoſtulation; not ſo much blaming the thing,

as lamenting the effects.—Others, leſs partial to me, were leſs kind in aſſigning the motives. I admit, there is a decorum and propriety in a member of parliament's paying a reſpectful court to his conſtituents. If I were conſcious to myſelf that pleaſure or diſſipation, or low unworthy occupations, had detained me from perſonal attendance on you, I would readily admit my fault, and quietly ſubmit to the penalty. But, Gentlemen, I live at an hundred miles diſtance from Briſtol; and at the end of a ſeſſion I come to my own houſe, fatigued in body and in mind, to a little repoſe, and to a very little attention to my family and my private concerns. A viſit to Briſtol is always a ſort of canvaſs; elſe it will do more harm than good. To paſs from the toils of a ſeſſion to the toils of a canvaſs, is the furtheſt thing in the world from repoſe. I could hardly ſerve you *as I have done*, and court you too. Moſt of you have heard, that I do not very remarkably ſpare myſelf in *public* buſineſs; and in the *private* buſineſs of my conſtituents I have done very near as much as thoſe who have nothing elſe to do. My canvaſs of you was not on the Change, nor in the county meetings, nor in the clubs of this city. It was in the Houſe of Commons; it was at the Cuſtom-houſe; it was at the Council; it was at the Treaſury; it was at the Admiralty. I canvaſſed you through your affairs, and not your perſons. I was not only your repreſentative as a body; I was the agent, the ſolicitor of individuals; I ran about

about wherever your affairs could call me; and in acting for you I often appeared rather as a ſhip-broker, than as a member of parliament. There was nothing too laborious, or too low for me to undertake. The meanneſs of the buſineſs was raiſed by the dignity of the object. If ſome leſſer matters have ſlipped through my fingers, it was becauſe I filled my hands too full; and in my eagerneſs to ſerve you, took in more than any hands could graſp. Several gentlemen ſtand round me who are my willing witneſſes; and there are others who, if they were here, would be ſtill better; becauſe they would be unwilling witneſſes to the ſame truth. It was in the middle of a ſummer reſidence in London, and in the middle of a negociation at the Admiralty for your trade, that I was called to Briſtol; and this late viſit, at this late day, has been poſſibly in prejudice to your affairs.

Since I have touched upon this matter, let me ſay, Gentlemen, that if I had a diſpoſition, or a right to complain, I have ſome cauſe of complaint on my ſide. With a petition of this city in my hand, paſſed through the corporation without a diſſenting voice, a petition in uniſon with almoſt the whole voice of the kingdom, (with whoſe formal thanks I was covered over) whilſt I laboured on no leſs than five bills for a public reform, and fought, againſt the oppoſition of great abilities, and of the greateſt power, every clauſe, and every word of the largeſt of thoſe bills, almoſt to the very laſt day of a very long ſeſſion; all this time a canvaſs in Briſtol was as calmly carried

carried on as if I were dead. I was conſidered as a man wholly out of the queſtion. Whilſt I watched, and faſted, and ſweated in the Houſe of Commons—by the moſt eaſy and ordinary arts of election, by dinners and viſits, by "How do you do's," and, "My worthy friends," I was to be quietly moved out of my ſeat—and promiſes were made, and engagements entered into, without any exception or reſerve, as if my laborious zeal in my duty had been a regular abdication of my truſt.

To open my whole heart to you on this ſubject, I do confeſs, however, that there were other times beſides the two years in which I did viſit you, when I was not wholly without leiſure for repeating that mark of my reſpect. But I could not bring my mind to ſee you. You remember, that in the beginning of this American war (that æra of calamity, diſgrace and downfall, an æra which no feeling mind will ever mention without a tear for England) you were greatly divided; and a very ſtrong body, if not the ſtrongeſt, oppoſed itſelf to the madneſs which every art and every power were employed to render popular, in order that the errors of the rulers might be loſt in the general blindneſs of the nation. This oppoſition continued until after our great, but moſt unfortunate victory at Long Iſland. Then all the mounds and banks of our conſtancy were borne down at once; and the phrenſy of the American war broke in upon us like a deluge. This victory, which ſeemed to put an immediate end to all difficulties, perfected us in that ſpirit

of domination, which our unparalleled proſperity had but too long nurtured. We had been ſo very powerful, and ſo very proſperous, that even the humbleſt of us were degraded into the vices and follies of kings. We loſt all meaſure between means and ends; and our headlong deſires became our politics and our morals. All men who wiſhed for peace, or retained any ſentiments of moderation, were overborne or ſilenced; and this city was led by every artifice (and probably with the more management, becauſe I was one of your members) to diſtinguiſh itſelf by its zeal for that fatal cauſe. In this temper of yours and of my mind, I ſhould ſooner have fled to the extremities of the earth, than have ſhewn myſelf here. I, who ſaw in every American victory (for you have had a long ſeries of theſe misfortunes) the germ and ſeed of the naval powers of France and Spain, which all our heat and warmth againſt America was only hatching into life,—I ſhould not have been a welcome viſitant with the brow and the language of ſuch feelings. When afterwards, the other face of your calamity was turned upon you, and ſhewed itſelf in defeat and diſtreſs, I ſhunned you full as much. I felt ſorely this variety in our wretchedneſs; and I did not wiſh to have the leaſt appearance of inſulting you with that ſhew of ſuperiority, which, though it may not be aſſumed, is generally ſuſpected in a time of calamity, from thoſe whoſe previous warnings have been deſpiſed. I

could

could not bear to ſhew you a repreſentative whoſe face did not reflect that of his conſtituents; a face that could not joy in your joys, and ſorrow in your ſorrows. But time at length has made us all of one opinion; and we have all opened our eyes on the true nature of the American war, to the true nature of all its ſucceſſes and all its failures.

In that public ſtorm too I had my private feelings. I had ſeen blown down and proſtrate on the ground ſeveral of thoſe houſes to whom I was chiefly indebted for the honour this city has done me. I confeſs, that whilſt the wounds of thoſe I loved were yet green, I could not bear to ſhew myſelf in pride and triumph in that place into which their partiality had brought me, and to appear at feaſts and rejoicings, in the midſt of the grief and calamity of my warm friends, my zealous ſupporters, my generous benefactors. This is a true, unvarniſhed, undiſguiſed ſtate of the affair. You will judge of it.

This is the only one of the charges in which I am perſonally concerned. As to the other matters objected againſt me, which in their turn I ſhall mention to you, remember once more I do not mean to extenuate or excuſe. Why ſhould I, when the things charged are among thoſe upon which I found all my reputation? What would be left to me, if I myſelf was the man, who ſoftened, and blended, and diluted, and weakened, all the diſtinguiſhing colours of my life, ſo as

to leave nothing diſtinct and determinate in my whole conduct?

It has been ſaid, and it is the ſecond charge, that in the queſtions of the Iriſh trade, I did not conſult the intereſt of my conſtituents, or, to ſpeak out ſtrongly, that I rather acted as a native of Ireland, than as an Engliſh member of parliament.

I certainly have very warm good wiſhes for the place of my birth. But the ſphere of my duties is my true country. It was, as a man attached to your intereſts, and zealous for the conſervation of your power and dignity, that I acted on that occaſion, and on all occaſions. You were involved in the American war. A new world of policy was opened, to which it was neceſſary we ſhould conform whether we would or not; and my only thought was how to conform to our ſituation in ſuch a manner as to unite to this kingdom, in proſperity and in affection, whatever remained of the empire. I was true to my old, ſtanding, invariable principle, that all things, which came from Great Britain, ſhould iſſue as a gift of her bounty and beneficence, rather than as claims recovered againſt a ſtruggling litigant; or at leaſt, that if your beneficence obtained no credit in your conceſſions, yet that they ſhould appear the ſalutary proviſions of your wiſdom and foreſight; not as things wrung from you with your blood, by the cruel gripe of a rigid neceſſity. The firſt conceſſions, by being (much againſt my will) mangled and ſtripped of

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the parts which were neceſſary to make out their juſt correſpondence and connection in trade, were of no uſe. The next year a feeble attempt was made to bring the thing into better ſhape. This attempt (countenanced by the miniſter) on the very firſt appearance of ſome popular uneaſineſs, was, after a conſiderable progreſs through the houſe, thrown out by *him*.

What was the conſequence? The whole kingdom of Ireland was inſtantly in a flame. Threatened by foreigners, and, as they thought, inſulted by England, they reſolved at once to reſiſt the power of France, and to caſt off yours. As for us, we were able neither to protect nor to reſtrain them. Forty thouſand men were raiſed and diſciplined without commiſſion from the crown. Two illegal armies were ſeen with banners diſplayed at the ſame time, and in the ſame country. No executive magiſtrate, no judicature, in Ireland, would acknowledge the legality of the army which bore the king's commiſſion; and no law, or appearance of law, authoriſed the army commiſſioned by itſelf. In this unexampled ſtate of things, which the leaſt error, the leaſt treſpaſs on the right or left, would have hurried down the precipice into an abyſs of blood and confuſion, the people of Ireland demand a freedom of trade with arms in their hands. They interdict all commerce between the two nations. They deny all new ſupply in the Houſe of Commons, although in time of war. They ſtint the truſt of the old revenue, given for two years to all the king's predeceſſors,

predeceſſors, to ſix months. The Britiſh Parliament, in a former ſeſſion frightened into a limited conceſſion by the menaces of Ireland, frightened out of it by the menaces of England, was again frightened back again, and made an univerſal ſurrender of all that had been thought the peculiar, reſerved, uncommunicable rights of England;—The excluſive commerce of America, of Africa, of the Weſt-Indies—all the enumerations of the acts of navigation—all the manufactures, —iron, glaſs, even the laſt pledge of jealouſy and pride, the intereſt hid in the ſecret of our hearts, the inveterate prejudice moulded into the conſtitution of our frame, even the ſacred fleece itſelf, all went together. No reſerve; no exception; no debate; no diſcuſſion. A ſudden light broke in upon us all. It broke in, not through well-contrived and well-diſpoſed windows, but through flaws and breaches; through the yawning chaſms of our ruin. We were taught wiſdom by humiliation. No town in England preſumed to have a prejudice; or dared to mutter a petition. What was worſe, the whole Parliament of England, which retained authority for nothing but ſurrenders, was deſpoiled of every ſhadow of its ſuperintendance. It was, without any qualification, denied in theory, as it had been trampled upon in practice. This ſcene of ſhame and diſgrace, has, in a manner whilſt I am ſpeaking, ended by the perpetual eſtabliſhment of a military power, in the dominions of this crown, without conſent of the Britiſh legiſlature,

legiſlature *, contrary to the policy of the conſtitution, contrary to the declaration of right: and by this your liberties are ſwept away along with your ſupreme authority—and both, linked together from the beginning, have, I am afraid, both together periſhed for ever.

What! Gentlemen, was I not to foreſee, or foreſeeing, was I not to endeavour to ſave you from all theſe multiplied miſchiefs and diſgraces? Would the little, ſilly, canvaſs prattle of obeying inſtructions, and having no opinions but yours, and ſuch idle ſenſeleſs tales, which amuſe the vacant ears of unthinking men, have ſaved you from "the pelting of that pitileſs ſtorm," to which the looſe improvidence, the cowardly raſhneſs of thoſe who dare not look danger in the face, ſo as to provide againſt it in time, have expoſed this degraded nation, beat down and proſtrate on the earth, unſheltered, unarmed, unreſiſting? Was I an Iriſhman on that day, that I boldly withſtood our pride? or on the day that I hung down my head, and wept in ſhame and ſilence over the humiliation of Great Britain? I became unpopular in England for the one, and in Ireland for the other. What then! What obligation lay on me to be popular? I was bound to ſerve both kingdoms. To be pleaſed with my ſervice, was their affair, not mine.

I was an Iriſhman in the Iriſh buſineſs, juſt as much as I was an American, when on the ſame

* Iriſh perpetual mutiny act.

principles,

principles, I wiſhed you to concede to America; at a time when ſhe prayed conceſſion at our feet. Juſt as much was I an American when I wiſhed Parliament to offer terms in victory, and not to wait the well-choſen hour of defeat, for making good by weakneſs, and by ſupplication, a claim of prerogative, pre-eminence, and authority.

Inſtead of requiring it from me, as a point of duty, to kindle with your paſſions, had you all been as cool as I was, you would have been ſaved diſgraces and diſtreſſes that are unutterable. Do you remember our commiſſion? We ſent out a ſolemn embaſſy acroſs the Atlantic ocean, to lay the Crown, the Peerage, the Commons of Great Britain, at the feet of the American Congreſs. That our diſgrace might want no ſort of brightening and burniſhing, obſerve who they were that compoſed this famous embaſſy. My Lord Carliſle is among the firſt ranks of our nobility. He is the identical man who but two years before, had been put forward, at the opening of a ſeſſion in the Houſe of Lords, as the mover of an haughty and rigorous addreſs againſt America. He was put in the front of the embaſſy of ſubmiſſion. Mr. Eden was taken from the office of Lord Suffolk, to whom he was then under ſecretary of ſtate; from the office of that Lord Suffolk, who but a few weeks before, in his place in parliament, did not deign to enquire where a Congreſs of vagrants was to be found. This Lord Suffolk ſent Mr. Eden to find theſe vagrants, without knowing where his King's

Generals were to be found, who were joined in the ſame commiſſion of ſupplicating thoſe whom they were ſent to ſubdue. They enter the capital of America only to abandon it; and theſe aſſertors and repreſentatives of the dignity of England, at the tail of a flying army, let fly their Parthian ſhafts of memorials and remonſtrances at random behind them. Their promiſes and their offers, their flatteries, their menaces, were all deſpiſed; and we were ſaved the diſgrace of their formal reception, only becauſe the Congreſs ſcorned to receive them; whilſt the State-houſe of independent Philadelphia opened her doors to the public entry of the ambaſſador of France. From war and blood, we went to ſubmiſſion; and from ſubmiſſion plunged back again to war and blood; to deſolate and be deſolated, without meaſure, hope, or end. I am a Royaliſt, I bluſhed for this degradation of the Crown. I am a Whig, I bluſhed for the diſhonour of Parliament. I am a true Engliſhman, I felt to the quick for the diſgrace of England. I am a Man, I felt for the melancholy reverſe of human affairs, in the fall of the firſt power in the world.

To read what was approaching in Ireland, in the black and bloody characters of the American war, was a painful, but it was a neceſſary part of my public duty. For, Gentlemen, it is not your fond deſires or mine that can alter the nature of things; by contending againſt which what have we got, or ſhall ever get, but defeat

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and ſhame? I did not obey your inſtructions? No. I conformed to the inſtructions of truth and nature, and maintained your intereſt, againſt your opinions, with a conſtancy that became me. A repreſentative worthy of you, ought to be a perſon of ſtability. I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to ſuch opinions as you and I *muſt* have five years hence. I was not to look to the flaſh of the day. I knew that you choſe me, in my place, along with others, to be a pillar of the ſtate, and not a weathercock on the top of the edifice, exalted for my levity and verſatility, and of no uſe but to indicate the ſhiftings of every faſhionable gale. Would to God, the value of my ſentiments on Ireland and on America had been at this day a ſubject of doubt and diſcuſſion! No matter what my ſufferings had been, ſo that this kingdom had kept the authority I wiſhed it to maintain, by a grave foreſight, and by an equitable temperance in the uſe of its power.

The next article of charge on my public conduct, and that which I find rather the moſt prevalent of all, is Lord Beauchamp's bill. I mean his bill of laſt ſeſſion for reforming the law-proceſs concerning impriſonment. It is ſaid, to aggravate the offence, that I treated the petition of this city with contempt even in preſenting it to the Houſe, and expreſſed myſelf in terms of marked diſreſpect. Had this latter part of the charge been true, no merits on the ſide of the queſtion which I took, could poſſibly excuſe

me. But I am incapable of treating this city with diſreſpect. Very fortunately, at this minute (if my bad eyeſight does not deceive me) * the worthy gentleman deputed on this buſineſs ſtands directly before me. To him I appeal, whether I did not, though it militated with my oldeſt and my moſt recent public opinions, deliver the petition with a ſtrong, and more than uſual recommendation to the conſideration of the Houſe, on account of the character and conſequence of thoſe who ſigned it. I believe the worthy gentleman will tell you, that the very day I received it, I applied to the Solicitor, now the Attorney General, to give it an immediate conſideration; and he moſt obligingly and inſtantly conſented to employ a great deal of his very valuable time, to write an explanation of the bill. I attended the Committee with all poſſible care and diligence, in order that every objection of yours might meet with a ſolution; or produce an alteration. I entreated your learned Recorder (always ready in buſineſs in which you take a concern) to attend. But what will you ſay to thoſe who blame me for ſupporting Lord Beauchamp's bill, as a diſreſpectful treatment of your petition, when you hear, that out of reſpect to you, I myſelf was the cauſe of the loſs of that very bill? for the noble Lord who brought it in, and who, I muſt ſay, has much merit for this and ſome other meaſures, at my requeſt conſented to put it off for a week, which the Speaker's illneſs lengthened to a fortnight; and then the frantic tumult about Popery,

* Mr. Williams.

drove

drove that and every rational buſineſs from the Houſe. So that if I choſe to make a defence of myſelf, on the little principles of a culprit pleading in his exculpation, I might not only ſecure my acquittal, but make merit with the oppoſers of the bill. But I ſhall do no ſuch thing. The truth is, that I did occaſion the loſs of the bill, and by a delay cauſed by my reſpect to you. But ſuch an event was never in my contemplation. And I am ſo far from taking credit for the defeat of that meaſure, that I cannot ſufficiently lament my misfortune, if but one man, who ought to be at large, has paſſed a year in priſon by my means. I am a debtor to the debtors. I confeſs judgment. I owe, what, if ever it be in my power, I ſhall moſt certainly pay,—ample atonement, and uſurious amends to liberty and humanity for my unhappy lapſe. For, Gentlemen, Lord Beauchamp's bill was a law of juſtice and policy, as far as it went; I ſay as far as it went, for its fault was its being, in the remedial part, miſerably defective.

There are two capital faults in our law with relation to civil debts. One is, that every man is preſumed ſolvent. A preſumption, in innumerable caſes, directly againſt truth. Therefore the debtor is ordered, on a ſuppoſition of ability and fraud, to be coerced his liberty until he makes payment. By this means, in all caſes of civil inſolvency, without a pardon from his creditor, he is to be impriſoned for life:—and thus a

miſerable miſtaken invention of artificial ſcience, operates to change a civil into a criminal judgment, and to ſcourge misfortune or indiſcretion with a puniſhment which the law does not inflict on the greateſt crimes.

The next fault is, that the inflicting of that puniſhment is not on the opinion of an equal and public judge; but is referred to the arbitrary diſcretion of a private, nay intereſted, and irritated, individual. He, who formally is, and ſubſtantially ought to be, the judge, is in reality no more than miniſterial, a mere executive inſtrument of a private man, who is at once judge and party. Every idea of judicial order is ſubverted by this procedure. If the inſolvency be no crime, why is it puniſhed with arbitrary impriſonment? If it be a crime, why is it delivered into private hands to pardon without diſcretion, or to puniſh without mercy and without meaſure?

To theſe faults, groſs and cruel faults in our law, the excellent principle of Lord Beauchamp's bill applied ſome ſort of remedy. I know that credit muſt be preſerved; but equity muſt be preſerved too; and it is impoſſible, that any thing ſhould be neceſſary to commerce, which is inconſiſtent with juſtice. The principle of credit was not weakened by that bill. God forbid! The enforcement of that credit was only put into the ſame public judicial hands on which we depend for our lives, and all that makes life dear to us. But, indeed, this buſineſs was taken

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up too warmly both here and elſewhere. The bill was extremely miſtaken. It was ſuppoſed to enact what it never enacted; and complaints were made of clauſes in it as novelties, which exiſted before the noble Lord that brought in the bill was born. There was a fallacy that run through the whole of the objections. The gentlemen who oppoſed the bill, always argued, as if the option lay between that bill and the antient law.—But this is a grand miſtake. For practically, the option is between, not that bill and the old law, but between that bill and thoſe occaſional laws called acts of grace. For the operation of the old law is ſo ſavage, and ſo inconvenient to ſociety, that for a long time paſt, once in every parliament, and lately twice, the legiſlature has been obliged to make a general arbitrary jail-delivery, and at once to ſet open, by its ſovereign authority, all the priſons in England.

Gentlemen, I never reliſhed acts of grace; nor ever ſubmitted to them but from deſpair of better. They are a diſhonourable invention, by which, not from humanity, not from policy, but merely becauſe we have not room enough to hold theſe victims of the abſurdity of our laws, we turn looſe upon the public three or four thouſand naked wretches, corrupted by the habits, debaſed by the ignominy of a priſon. If the creditor had a right to thoſe carcaſes as a natural ſecurity for his property, I am ſure we have no right to deprive him of that ſecurity.

But if the few pounds of fleſh were not neceſſary to his ſecurity, we had not a right to detain the unfortunate debtor, without any benefit at all to the perſon who confined him.—Take it as you will, we commit injuſtice. Now Lord Beauchamp's bill intended to do deliberately, and with great caution and circumſpection, upon each ſeveral caſe, and with all attention to the juſt claimant, what acts of grace do in a much greater meaſure, and with very little care, caution, or deliberation.

I ſuſpect that here too, if we contrive to oppoſe this bill, we ſhall be found in a ſtruggle againſt the nature of things. For as we grow enlightened, the public will not bear, for any length of time, to pay for the maintenance of whole armies of priſoners; nor, at their own expence, ſubmit to keep jails as a ſort of garriſons, merely to fortify the abſurd principle of making men judges in their own cauſe. For credit has little or no concern in this cruelty. I ſpeak in a commercial aſſembly. You know, that credit is given, becauſe capital *muſt* be employed; that men calculate the chances of inſolvency; and they either withhold the credit, or make the debtor pay the riſque in the price. The counting-houſe has no alliance with the jail. Holland underſtands trade as well as we, and ſhe has done much more than this obnoxious bill intended to do. There was not, when Mr. Howard viſited Holland, more than one priſoner for debt in the great city of Rotterdam. Although

Lord

Lord Beauchamp's act (which was previous to this bill, and intended to feel the way for it) has already preſerved liberty to thouſands; and though it is not three years ſince the laſt act of grace paſſed, yet by Mr. Howard's laſt account, there were near three thouſand again in jail. I cannot name this gentleman without remarking, that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has viſited all Europe,—not to ſurvey the ſumptuouſneſs of palaces, or the ſtatelineſs of temples; not to make accurate meaſurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a ſcale of the curioſity of modern art; not to collect medals, or collate manuſcripts:—but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hoſpitals; to ſurvey the manſions of ſorrow and pain; to take the gage and dimenſions of miſery, depreſſion, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to viſit the forſaken, and to compare and collate the diſtreſſes of all men in all countries. His plan is original; and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of diſcovery; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt more or leſs in every country: I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by ſeeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail but in groſs, the reward of thoſe who viſit the priſoner; and he has ſo foreſtalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I truſt,

truſt, little room to merit by ſuch acts of benevolence hereafter.

Nothing remains now to trouble you with, but the fourth charge againſt me—the buſineſs of the Roman Catholics. It is a buſineſs cloſely connected with the reſt. They are all on one and the ſame principle. My little ſcheme of conduct, ſuch as it is, is all arranged. I could do nothing but what I have done on this ſubject, without confounding the whole train of my ideas, and diſturbing the whole order of my life. Gentlemen, I ought to apologize to you, for ſeeming to think any thing at all neceſſary to be ſaid upon this matter. The calumny is fitter to be ſcrawled with the midnight chalk of incendiaries, with "No Popery," on walls and doors of devoted houſes, than to be mentioned in any civiliſed company. I had heard, that the ſpirit of diſcontent on that ſubject was very prevalent here. With pleaſure I find that I have been groſsly miſinformed. If it exiſts at all in this city, the laws have cruſhed its exertions, and our morals have ſhamed its appearance in day-light. I have purſued this ſpirit where-ever I could trace it; but it ſtill fled from me. It was a ghoſt, which all had heard of, but none had ſeen. None would acknowledge that he thought the public proceeding with regard to our Catholic diſſenters to be blameable; but ſeveral were ſorry it had made an ill impreſſion upon others, and that my intereſt was hurt by my ſhare in the buſineſs. I find with ſatisfaction and pride, that

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not above four or five in this city (and I dare ſay theſe miſled by ſome groſs miſrepreſentation) have ſigned that ſymbol of deluſion and bond of ſedition, that libel on the national religion and Engliſh character, the Proteſtant Aſſociation. It is therefore, Gentlemen, not by way of cure but of prevention, and leſt the arts of wicked men may prevail over the integrity of any one amongſt us, that I think it neceſſary to open to you the merits of this tranſaction pretty much at large; and I beg your patience upon it: for, although the reaſonings that have been uſed to depreciate the act are of little force, and though the authority of the men concerned in this ill deſign is not very impoſing; yet the audaciouſneſs of theſe conſpirators againſt the national honour, and the extenſive wickedneſs of their attempts, have raiſed perſons of little importance to a degree of evil eminence, and imparted a ſort of ſiniſter dignity to proceedings that had their origin in only the meaneſt and blindeſt malice.

In explaining to you the proceedings of Parliament which have been complained of, I will ſtate to you,—firſt, the thing that was done;—next, the perſons who did it;—and laſtly, the grounds and reaſons upon which the legiſlature proceeded in this deliberate act of public juſtice and public prudence.

Gentlemen, The condition of our nature is ſuch, that we buy our bleſſings at a price. The Reformation, one of the greateſt periods of human improvement, was a time of trouble and confuſion,

confuſion. The vaſt ſtructure of ſuperſtition and tyranny, which had been for ages in rearing, and which was combined with the intereſt of the great and of the many; which was moulded into the laws, the manners, and civil inſtitutions of nations, and blended with the frame and policy of ſtates; could not be brought to the ground without a fearful ſtruggle; nor could it fall without a violent concuſſion of itſelf and all about it. When this great revolution was attempted in a more regular mode by government, it was oppoſed by plots and ſeditions of the people; when by popular efforts, it was repreſſed as rebellion by the hand of power; and bloody executions (often bloodily returned) marked the whole of its progreſs through all its ſtages. The affairs of religion, which are no longer heard of in the tumult of our preſent contentions, made a principal ingredient in the wars and politics of that time; the enthuſiaſm of religion threw a gloom over the politics; and political intereſts poiſoned and perverted the ſpirit of religion upon all ſides. The Proteſtant religion in that violent ſtruggle, infected, as the Popiſh had been before, by worldly intereſts and worldly paſſions, became a perſecutor in its turn, ſometimes of the new ſects, which carried their own principles further than it was convenient to the original reformers; and always of the body from whom they parted; and this perſecuting ſpirit aroſe, not only, from the bitterneſs of retaliation, but from the mercileſs policy of fear.

It was long before the ſpirit of true piety and true wiſdom, involved in the principles of the Reformation, could be depurated from the dregs and feculence of the contention with which it was carried through. However, until this be done, the Reformation is not complete; and thoſe who think themſelves good Proteſtants, from their animoſity to others, are in that reſpect no Proteſtants at all. It was at firſt thought neceſſary, perhaps, to oppoſe to Popery another Popery, to get the better of it. Whatever was the cauſe, laws were made in many countries, and in this kingdom in particular, againſt Papiſts, which are as bloody as any of thoſe which had been enacted by the Popiſh princes and ſtates; and where thoſe laws were not bloody, in my opinion, they were worſe; as they were ſlow, cruel outrages on our nature, and kept men alive only to inſult in their perſons, every one of the rights and feelings of humanity. I paſs thoſe ſtatutes, becauſe I would ſpare your pious ears the repetition of ſuch ſhocking things; and I come to that particular law, the repeal of which has produced ſo many unnatural and unexpected conſequences.

A ſtatute was fabricated in the year 1699, by which the ſaying maſs (a church-ſervice in the Latin tongue, not exactly the ſame as our Liturgy, but very near it, and containing no offence whatſoever againſt the laws, or againſt good morals) was forged into a crime puniſhable with perpetual impriſonment. The teaching ſchool, an uſeful and virtuous occupation,

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even the teaching in a private family, was in every Catholic ſubjected to the ſame unproportioned puniſhment. Your induſtry, and the bread of your children, was taxed for a pecuniary reward to ſtimulate avarice to do what nature refuſed, to inform and proſecute on this law. Every Roman Catholic was, under the ſame act, to forfeit his eſtate to his neareſt Proteſtant relation, until, through a profeſſion of what he did not believe, he redeemed by his hypocriſy, what the law had transferred to the kinſman as the recompence of his profligacy. When thus turned out of doors from his paternal eſtate, he was diſabled from acquiring any other by any induſtry, donation, or charity; but was rendered a foreigner in his native land, only becauſe he retained the religion, along with the property, handed down to him from thoſe who had been the old inhabitants of that land before him.

Does any one who hears me approve this ſcheme of things, or think there is common juſtice, common ſenſe, or common honeſty in any part of it? If any does, let him ſay it, and I am ready to diſcuſs the point with temper and candour. But inſtead of approving, I perceive a virtuous indignation beginning to riſe in your minds on the mere cold ſtating of the ſtatute.

But what will you feel, when you know from hiſtory how this ſtatute paſſed, and what were the motives, and what the mode of making it? A party in this nation, enemies to the ſyſtem of the

the Revolution, were in oppoſition to the government of King William. They knew, that our glorious deliverer was an enemy to all perſecution. They knew that he came to free us from ſlavery and Popery, out of a country, where a third of the people are contented Catholics under a Proteſtant government. He came with a part of his army compoſed of thoſe very Catholics, to overſet the power of a Popiſh prince. Such is the effect of a tolerating ſpirit; and ſo much is liberty ſerved in every way, and by all perſons, by a manly adherence to its own principles. Whilſt freedom is true to itſelf, every thing becomes ſubject to it; and its very adverſaries are an inſtrument in its hands.

The party I ſpeak of (like ſome amongſt us who would diſparage the beſt friends of their country) reſolved to make the King either violate his principles of toleration, or incur the odium of protecting Papiſts. They therefore brought in this bill, and made it purpoſely wicked and abſurd that it might be rejected. The then court-party, diſcovering their game, turned the tables on them, and returned their bill to them ſtuffed with ſtill greater abſurdities, that its loſs might lie upon its original authors. They, finding their own ball thrown back to them, kicked it back again to their adverſaries. And thus this act, loaded with the double injuſtice of two parties, neither of whom intended to paſs, what they hoped the other would be perſuaded to reject,

went through the legiſlature, contrary to the real wiſh of all parts of it, and of all the parties that compoſed it. In this manner theſe inſolent and profligate factions, as if they were playing with balls and counters, made a ſport of the fortunes and the liberties of their fellow-creatures. Other acts of perſecution have been acts of malice. This was a ſubverſion of juſtice from wantonneſs and petulance. Look into the hiſtory of Biſhop Burnet. He is a witneſs without exception.

The effects of the act have been as miſchievous, as its origin was ludicrous and ſhameful. From that time every perſon of that communion, lay and eccleſiaſtic, has been obliged to fly from the face of day. The clergy, concealed in garrets of private houſes, or obliged to take a ſhelter (hardly ſafe to themſelves, but infinitely dangerous to their country) under the privileges of foreign miniſters, officiated as their ſervants, and under their protection. The whole body of the Catholics, condemned to beggary and to ignorance in their native land, have been obliged to learn the principles of letters, at the hazard of all their other principles, from the charity of your enemies. They have been taxed to their ruin at the pleaſure of neceſſitous and profligate relations, and according to the meaſure of their neceſſity and profligacy. Examples of this are many and affecting. Some of them are known by a friend who ſtands near me in this hall. It is but ſix or ſeven years ſince a clergyman of the name of Malony, a man

man of morals, neither guilty nor accuſed of any thing noxious to the ſtate, was condemned to perpetual impriſonment for exerciſing the functions of his religion; and after lying in jail two or three years, was relieved by the mercy of government from perpetual impriſonment, on condition of perpetual baniſhment. A brother of the Earl of Shrewſbury, a Talbot, a name reſpectable in this county, whilſt its glory is any part of its concern, was hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey among common felons, and only eſcaped the ſame doom, either by ſome error in the proceſs, or that the wretch who brought him there could not correctly deſcribe his perſon; I now forget which.—In ſhort, the perſecution would never have relented for a moment, if the judges, ſuperſeding (though with an ambiguous example) the ſtrict rule of their artificial duty by the higher obligation of their conſcience, did not conſtantly throw every difficulty in the way of ſuch informers. But ſo ineffectual is the power of legal evaſion againſt legal iniquity, that it was but the other day, that a lady of condition, beyond the middle of life, was on the point of being ſtripped of her whole fortune by a near relation, to whom ſhe had been a friend and benefactor: and ſhe muſt have been totally ruined, without a power of redreſs or mitigation from the courts of law, had not the legiſlature itſelf ruſhed in, and by a ſpecial act of Parliament reſcued her from the injuſtice of its own ſtatutes. One of the acts authoriſing ſuch things

was that which we in part repealed, knowing what our duty was; and doing that duty as men of honour and virtue, as good Proteſtants, and as good citizens. Let him ſtand forth that diſapproves what we have done!

Gentlemen, Bad laws are the worſt ſort of tyranny. In ſuch a country as this, they are of all bad things the worſt, worſe by far than any where elſe; and they derive a particular malignity even from the wiſdom and ſoundneſs of the reſt of our inſtitutions. For very obvious reaſons you cannot truſt the Crown with a diſpenſing power over any of your laws. However, a government, be it as bad as it may, will, in the exerciſe of a diſcretionary power, diſcriminate times and perſons; and will not ordinarily purſue any man, when its own ſafety is not concerned. A mercenary informer knows no diſtinction. Under ſuch a ſyſtem, the obnoxious people are ſlaves, not only to the government, but they live at the mercy of every individual; they are at once the ſlaves of the whole community, and of every part of it; and the worſt and moſt unmerciful men are thoſe on whoſe goodneſs they moſt depend.

In this ſituation men not only ſhrink from the frowns of a ſtern magiſtrate; but they are obliged to fly from their very ſpecies. The ſeeds of deſtruction are ſown in civil intercourſe, in ſocial habitudes. The blood of wholeſome kindred is infected. Their tables and beds are ſurrounded with ſnares. All the means given by Providence to make life ſafe and comfortable,

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are perverted into inſtruments of terror and torment. This ſpecies of univerſal ſubſerviency, that makes the very ſervant who waits behind your chair, the arbiter of your life and fortune, has ſuch a tendency to degrade and debaſe mankind, and to deprive them of that aſſured and liberal ſtate of mind, which alone can make us what we ought to be, that I vow to God I would ſooner bring myſelf to put a man to immediate death for opinions I diſliked, and ſo to get rid of the man and his opinions at once, than to fret him with a feveriſh being, tainted with the jail-diſtemper of a contagious ſervitude, to keep him above ground, an animated maſs of putrefaction, corrupted himſelf, and corrupting all about him.

The act repealed was of this direct tendency; and it was made in the manner which I have related to you. I will now tell you by whom the bill of repeal was brought into Parliament. I find it has been induſtriouſly given out in this city (from kindneſs to me unqueſtionably) that I was the mover or the ſeconder. The fact is, I did not once open my lips on the ſubject during the whole progreſs of the bill. I do not ſay this as diſclaiming my ſhare in that meaſure. Very far from it. I inform you of this fact, leſt I ſhould ſeem to arrogate to myſelf the merits which belong to others. To have been the man choſen out to redeem our fellow-citizens from ſlavery; to purify our laws from abſurdity and injuſtice; and to cleanſe our religion from the

blot and ſtain of perſecution, would be an honour and happineſs to which my wiſhes would undoubtedly aſpire; but to which nothing but my wiſhes could poſſibly have entitled me. That great work was in hands in every reſpect far better qualified than mine. The mover of the bill was Sir George Savile.

When an act of great and ſignal humanity was to be done, and done with all the weight and authority that belonged to it, the world could caſt its eyes upon none but him. I hope that few things, which have a tendency to bleſs or to adorn life, have wholly eſcaped my obſervation in my paſſage through it. I have ſought the acquaintance of that gentleman, and have ſeen him in all ſituations. He is a true genius; with an underſtanding vigorous, and acute, and refined, and diſtinguiſhing even to exceſs; and illuminated with a moſt unbounded, peculiar, and original caſt of imagination. With theſe he poſſeſſes many external and inſtrumental advantages; and he makes uſe of them all. His fortune is among the largeſt; a fortune which, wholly unincumbred, as it is, with one ſingle charge from luxury, vanity, or exceſs, ſinks under the benevolence of its diſpenſer. This private benevolence, expanding itſelf into patriotiſm, renders his whole being the eſtate of the public, in which he has not reſerved a *peculium* for himſelf of profit, diverſion, or relaxation. During the ſeſſion, the firſt in, and the laſt out of the Houſe of Commons; he paſſes from the ſenate to the camp; and,

and, ſeldom ſeeing the ſeat of his anceſtors, he is always in Parliament to ſerve his country, or in the field to defend it. But in all well-wrought compoſitions, ſome particulars ſtand out more eminently than the reſt; and the things which will carry his name to poſterity, are his two bills; I mean that for a limitation of the claims of the crown upon landed eſtates; and this for the relief of the Roman Catholics. By the former, he has emancipated property; by the latter, he has quieted conſcience; and by both, he has taught that grand leſſon to government and ſubject,—no longer to regard each other as adverſe parties.

Such was the mover of the act that is complained of by men, who are not quite ſo good as he is; an act, moſt aſſuredly not brought in by him from any partiality to that ſect which is the object of it. For, among his faults, I really cannot help reckoning a greater degree of prejudice againſt that people, than becomes ſo wiſe a man. I know that he inclines to a ſort of diſguſt, mixed with a conſiderable degree of aſperity, to the ſyſtem; and he has few, or rather no habits with any of its profeſſors. What he has done was on quite other motives. The motives were theſe, which he declared in his excellent ſpeech on his motion for the bill; namely, his extreme zeal to the Proteſtant religion, which he thought utterly diſgraced by the act of 1699; and his rooted hatred to all kind of oppreſſion, under any colour or upon any pretence whatſoever.

The ſeconder was worthy of the mover, and the motion. I was not the ſeconder; it was Mr. Dunning, Recorder of this city. I ſhall ſay the leſs of him, becauſe his near relation to you makes you more particularly acquainted with his merits. But I ſhould appear little acquainted with them, or little ſenſible of them, if I could utter his name on this occaſion without expreſſing my eſteem for his character. I am not afraid of offending a moſt learned body, and moſt jealous of its reputation for that learning, when I ſay he is the firſt of his profeſſion. It is a point ſettled by thoſe who ſettle every thing elſe; and I muſt add (what I am enabled to ſay from my own long and cloſe obſervation) that there is not a man, of any profeſſion, or in any ſituation, of a more erect and independent ſpirit; of a more proud honour; a more manly mind; a more firm and determined integrity. Aſſure yourſelves, that the names of two ſuch men will bear a great load of prejudice in the other ſcale, before they can be entirely outweighed.

With this mover, and this ſeconder, agreed the *whole* Houſe of Commons; the *whole* Houſe of Lords; the *whole* Bench of Biſhops; the King; the Miniſtry; the Oppoſition; all the diſtinguiſhed Clergy of the Eſtabliſhment; all the eminent lights (for they were conſulted) of the Diſſenting churches. This accerding voice of national wiſdom ought to be liſtened to with reverence. To ſay that all theſe deſcriptions of Engliſhmen unanimouſly concurred in a ſcheme for introducing

introducing the Catholic religion, or that none of them underſtood the nature and effects of what they were doing, ſo well as a few obſcure clubs of people, whoſe names you never heard of, is ſhameleſsly abſurd. Surely it is paying a miſerable compliment to the religion we profeſs, to ſuggeſt, that every thing eminent in the kingdom is indifferent, or even adverſe to that religion, and that its ſecurity is wholly abandoned to the zeal of thoſe, who have nothing but their zeal to diſtinguiſh them. In weighing this unanimous concurrence of whatever the nation has to boaſt of, I hope you will recollect, that all theſe concurring parties do by no means love one another enough to agree in any point, which was not both evidently, and importantly, right.

To prove this; to prove, that the meaſure was both clearly and materially proper, I will next lay before you (as I promiſed) the political grounds and reaſons for the repeal of that penal ſtatute; and the motives to its repeal at that particular time.

Gentlemen, America——When the Engliſh nation ſeemed to be dangerouſly, if not irrecoverably divided; when one, and that the moſt growing branch, was torn from the parent ſtock, and engrafted on the power of France, a great terror fell upon this kingdom. On a ſudden we awakened from our dreams of conqueſt, and ſaw ourſelves threatened with an immediate invaſion; which we were, at that time, very ill prepared to reſiſt. You remember the cloud that gloomed

over us all. In that hour of our diſmay, from the bottom of the hiding-places, into which the indiſcriminate rigour of our ſtatutes had driven them, came out the body of the Roman Catholics. They appeared before the ſteps of a tottering throne, with one of the moſt ſober, meaſured, ſteady, and dutiful addreſſes, that was ever preſented to the crown. It was no holiday ceremony; no anniverſary compliment of parade and ſhow. It was ſigned by almoſt every gentleman of that perſuaſion, of note or property, in England. At ſuch a criſis, nothing but a decided reſolution to ſtand or fall with their country could have dictated ſuch an addreſs; the direct tendency of which was to cut off all retreat; and to render them peculiarly obnoxious to an invader of their own communion. The addreſs ſhewed, what I long languiſhed to ſee, that all the ſubjects of England had caſt off all foreign views and connexions, and that every man looked for his relief from every grievance, at the hands only of his own natural government.

It was neceſſary, on our part, that the natural government ſhould ſhew itſelf worthy of that name. It was neceſſary, at the criſis I ſpeak of, that the ſupreme power of the ſtate ſhould meet the conciliatory diſpoſitions of the ſubject. To delay protection would be to reject allegiance. And why ſhould it be rejected, or even coldly and ſuſpiciouſly received? If any independent Catholic ſtate ſhould chooſe to take part with this kingdom in a war with France and Spain, that bigot (if ſuch a bigot could be found) would

would be heard with little reſpect, who could dream of objecting his religion to an ally, whom the nation would not only receive with its freeſt thanks, but purchaſe, with the laſt remains of its exhauſted treaſure. To ſuch an ally we ſhould not dare to whiſper a ſingle ſyllable of thoſe baſe and invidious topics, upon which, ſome unhappy men would perſuade the ſtate, to reject the duty and allegiance of its own members. Is it then, becauſe foreigners are in a condition to ſet our malice at defiance, that with *them*, we are willing to contract engagements of friendſhip, and to keep them with fidelity and honour; but that, becauſe we conceive, ſome deſcriptions of our countrymen are not powerful enough to puniſh our malignity, we will not permit them to ſupport our common intereſt? Is it on that ground, that our anger is to be kindled by their offered kindneſs, and that they are to be ſubjected to penalties, becauſe they are willing, by actual merit, to purge themſelves from imputed crimes? Leſt by an adherence to the cauſe of their country they ſhould acquire a title to fair and equitable treatment, are we reſolved to furniſh them with cauſes of eternal enmity; and rather ſupply them with juſt and founded motives to diſaffection, than not to have that diſaffection in exiſtence to juſtify an oppreſſion, which, not from policy but diſpoſition, we have determined to exerciſe?

What ſhadow of reaſon could be aſſigned, why, at a time, when the moſt Proteſtant part of this

this Proteſtant empire found it for its advantage to unite with the two principal Popiſh ſtates, to unite itſelf in the cloſeſt bonds with France and Spain, for our deſtruction, that we ſhould refuſe to unite with our own Catholic countrymen for our own preſervation? Ought we, like madmen, to tear off the plaiſters, that the lenient hand of prudence had ſpread over the wounds and gaſhes, which in our delirium of ambition we had given to our own body? No perſon ever reprobated the American war more than I did, and do, and ever ſhall. But I never will conſent that we ſhould lay additional voluntary penalties on ourſelves, for a fault which carries but too much of its own puniſhment in its own nature. For one, I was delighted with the propoſal of internal peace. I accepted the bleſſing with thankfulneſs and tranſport; I was truly happy, to find *one* good effect of our civil diſtractions, that they had put an end to all religious ſtrife and heart-burning in our own bowels. What muſt be the ſentiments of a man, who could wiſh to perpetuate domeſtic hoſtility, when the cauſes of diſpute are at an end; and who, crying out for peace with one part of the nation on the moſt humiliating terms, ſhould deny it to thoſe, who offer friendſhip without any terms at all?

But if I was unable to reconcile ſuch a denial to the contracted principles of local duty, what anſwer could I give to the broad claims of general humanity? I confeſs to you freely, that the ſufferings and diſtreſſes of the people of America

America in this cruel war, have at times affected me more deeply than I can expreſs. I felt every Gazette of triumph as a blow upon my heart, which has an hundred times ſunk and fainted within me at all the miſchiefs brought upon thoſe who bear the whole brunt of war in the heart of their country. Yet the Americans are utter ſtrangers to me; a nation, among whom I am not ſure, that I have a ſingle acquaintance. Was I to ſuffer my mind to be ſo unaccountably warped; was I to keep ſuch iniquitous weights and meaſures of temper and of reaſon, as to ſympathiſe with thoſe who are in open rebellion againſt an authority which I reſpect, at war with a country which by every title ought to be, and is moſt dear to me; and yet to have no feeling at all for the hardſhips and indignities ſuffered by men, who, by their very vicinity, are bound up in a nearer relation to us; who contribute their ſhare, and more than their ſhare, to the common proſperity; who perform the common offices of ſocial life, and who obey the laws to the full as well as I do? Gentlemen, the danger to the ſtate being out of the queſtion (of which, let me tell you, ſtateſmen themſelves are apt to have but too exquiſite a ſenſe) I could aſſign no one reaſon of juſtice, policy, or feeling, for not concurring moſt cordially, as moſt cordially I did concur, in ſoftening ſome part of that ſhameful ſervitude, under which ſeveral of my worthy fellow-citizens were groaning.

Important effects followed this act of wiſdom. They appeared at home and abroad, to the great benefit

benefit of this kingdom; and, let me hope, to the advantage of mankind at large. It betokened union among ourſelves. It ſhewed ſoundneſs, even on the part of the perſecuted, which generally is the weak ſide of every community. But its moſt eſſential operation was not in England. The act was immediately, though very imperfectly, copied in Ireland; and this imperfect tranſcript of an imperfect act, this firſt faint ſketch of toleration, which did little more than diſcloſe a principle, and mark out a diſpoſition, completed in a moſt wonderful manner the re-union to the ſtate, of all the Catholics of that country. It made us, what we ought always to have been, one family, one body, one heart and ſoul, againſt the family-combination, and all other combinations of our enemies. We have indeed obligations to that people, who received ſuch ſmall benefits with ſo much gratitude; and for which gratitude and attachment to us, I am afraid they have ſuffered not a little in other places.

I dare ſay, you have all heard of the privileges indulged to the Iriſh Catholics reſiding in Spain. You have likewiſe heard with what circumſtances of ſeverity they have been lately expelled from the ſea-ports of that kingdom; driven into the inland cities; and there detained as a ſort of priſoners of ſtate. I have good reaſon to believe, that it was the zeal to our government and our cauſe, (ſomewhat indiſcreetly expreſſed in one of the addreſſes of the Catholics of Ireland) which has thus drawn down on

their

their heads the indignation of the Court of Madrid; to the inexpreſſible loſs of ſeveral individuals, and in future, perhaps, to the great detriment of the whole of their body. Now that our people ſhould be perſecuted in Spain for their attachment to this country, and perſecuted in this country for their ſuppoſed enmity to us, is ſuch a jarring reconciliation of contradictory diſtreſſes, is a thing at once ſo dreadful and ridiculous, that no malice ſhort of diabolical, would wiſh to continue any human creatures in ſuch a ſituation. But honeſt men will not forget either their merit or their ſufferings. There are men, (and many, I truſt, there are) who, out of love to their country and their kind, would torture their invention to find excuſes for the miſtakes of their brethren; and who, to ſtifle diſſenſion, would conſtrue, even doubtful appearances, with the utmoſt favour: ſuch men will never perſuade themſelves to be ingenious and refined in diſcovering diſaffection and treaſon in the manifeſt palpable ſigns of ſuffering loyalty. Perſecution is ſo unnatural to them, that they gladly ſnatch the very firſt opportunity of laying aſide all the tricks and devices of penal politics; and of returning home, after all their irkſome and vexatious wanderings, to our natural family manſion, to the grand ſocial principle, that unites all men, in all deſcriptions, under the ſhadow of an equal and impartial juſtice.

Men of another ſort, I mean the bigotted enemies to liberty, may, perhaps, in their politics, make no account of the good or ill affection of the

the Catholics of England, who are but an handful of people (enough to torment, but not enough to fear) perhaps not ſo many, of both ſexes and of all ages, as fifty thouſand. But, Gentlemen, it is poſſible you may not know, that the people of that perſuaſion in Ireland, amount at leaſt to ſixteen or ſeventeen hundred thouſand ſouls. I do not at all exaggerate the number. A *nation* to be perſecuted! Whilſt we were maſters of the ſea, embodied with America, and in alliance with half the powers of the continent, we might perhaps, in that remote corner of Europe, afford to tyranniſe with impunity. But there is a revolution in our affairs, which makes it prudent to be juſt. In our late awkward conteſt with Ireland about trade, had religion been thrown in, to ferment and embitter the maſs of diſcontents, the conſequences might have been truly dreadful. But very happily, that cauſe of quarrel was previouſly quieted by the wiſdom of the acts I am commending.

Even in England, where I admit the danger from the diſcontent of that perſuaſion to be leſs than in Ireland; yet even here, had we liſtened to the counſels of Fanaticiſm and Folly, we might have wounded ourſelves very deeply; and wounded ourſelves in a very tender part. You are appriſed, that the Catholics of England conſiſt moſtly of your beſt manufacturers. Had the legiſlature choſen, inſtead of returning their declarations of duty with correſpondent good-will, to drive them to deſpair, there is a country at their very door,

to which they would be invited; a country in all reſpects as good as ours, and with the fineſt cities in the world ready built to receive them. And thus the bigotry of a free country, and in an enlightened age, would have repeopled the cities of Flanders, which, in the darkneſs of two hundred years ago, had been deſolated by the ſuperſtition of a cruel tyrant. Our manufactures were the growth of the perſecutions in the Low Countries. What a ſpectacle would it be to Europe, to ſee us at this time of day, balancing the account of tyranny with thoſe very countries, and by our perſecutions, driving back Trade and Manufacture, as a ſort of vagabonds, to their original ſettlement! But I truſt we ſhall be ſaved this laſt of diſgraces.

So far as to the effect of the act on the intereſts of this nation. With regard to the intereſts of mankind at large, I am ſure the benefit was very conſiderable. Long before this act, indeed, the ſpirit of toleration began to gain ground in Europe. In Holland, the third part of the people are Catholics; they live at eaſe; and are a ſound part of the ſtate. In many parts of Germany, Proteſtants and Papiſts partake the ſame cities, the ſame councils, and even the ſame churches. The unbounded liberality of the king of Pruſſia's conduct on this occaſion is known to all the world; and it is of a piece with the other grand maxims of his reign. The magnanimity of the Imperial Court, breaking through the narrow principles of its predeceſſors, has indulged its

Proteſtant

Proteſtant ſubjects, not only with property, with worſhip, with liberal education; but with honours and truſts, both civil and military. A worthy Proteſtant gentleman of this country now fills, and fills with credit, an high office in the Auſtrian Netherlands. Even the Lutheran obſtinacy of Sweden has thawed at length, and opened a toleration to all religions. I know myſelf, that in France the Proteſtants begin to be at reſt. The army, which in that country is every thing, is open to them; and ſome of the military rewards and decorations which the laws deny, are ſupplied by others, to make the ſervice acceptable and honourable. The firſt miniſter of finance in that country, is a Proteſtant. Two years war without a tax, is among the firſt-fruits of their liberality. Tarniſhed as the glory of this nation is, and far as it has waded into the ſhades of an eclipſe, ſome beams of its former illumination ſtill play upon its ſurface; and what is done in England is ſtill looked to, as argument, and as example. It is certainly true, that no law of this country ever met with ſuch univerſal applauſe abroad, or was ſo likely to produce the perfection of that tolerating ſpirit, which, as I obſerved, has been long gaining ground in Europe; for abroad, it was univerſally thought that we had done, what, I am ſorry to ſay, we had not; they thought we had granted a full toleration. That opinion was however ſo far from hurting the Proteſtant cauſe, that I declare, with the moſt ſerious ſolemnity, my firm belief, that no one thing done for theſe

fifty

fifty years paſt, was ſo likely to prove deeply beneficial to our religion at large as Sir George Savile's act. In its effects it was, "an act for tolerating "and protecting Proteſtantiſm throughout Eu- "rope:" and I hope, that thoſe who were taking ſteps for the quiet and ſettlement of our Proteſtant brethren in other countries, will even yet, rather conſider the ſteady equity of the greater and better part of the people of Great Britain, than the vanity and violence of a few.

I perceive, Gentlemen, by the manner of all about me, that you look with horror on the wicked clamour which has been raiſed on this ſubject; and that inſtead of an apology for what was done, you rather demand from me an account, why the execution of the ſcheme of toleration, was not made more anſwerable to the large and liberal grounds on which it was taken up. The queſtion is natural and proper; and I remember that a great and learned magiſtrate *, diſtinguiſhed for his ſtrong and ſyſtematic underſtanding, and who at that time was a member of the Houſe of Commons, made the ſame objection to the proceeding. The ſtatutes, as they now ſtand, are, without doubt, perfectly abſurd. But I beg leave to explain the cauſe of this groſs imperfection, in the tolerating plan, as well and as ſhortly as I am able. It was univerſally thought, that the ſeſſion ought not to paſs over without doing *ſomething* in this buſineſs. To reviſe the whole body of the penal

* The Chancellour.

ſtatutes was conceived to be an object too big for the time. The penal ſtatute therefore which was choſen for repeal (choſen to ſhew our diſpoſition to conciliate, not to perfect a toleration) was this act of ludicrous cruelty, of which I have juſt given you the hiſtory. It is an act, which, though not by a great deal ſo fierce and bloody as ſome of the reſt, was infinitely more ready in the execution. It was the act which gave the greateſt encouragement to thoſe peſts of ſociety, mercenary informers, and intereſted diſturbers of houſhold peace; and it was obſerved with truth, that the proſecutions, either carried to conviction or compounded, for many years, had been all commenced upon that act. It was ſaid, that whilſt we were deliberating on a more perfect ſcheme, the ſpirit of the age would never come up to the execution of the ſtatutes which remained; eſpecially as more ſteps, and a co-operation of more minds and powers, were required towards a miſchievous uſe of them, than for the execution of the act to be repealed: that it was better to unravel this texture from below than from above, beginning with the lateſt, which, in general practice, is the ſevereſt evil. It was alledged, that this ſlow proceeding would be attended with the advantage of a progreſſive experience; and that the people would grow reconciled to toleration, when they ſhould find by the effects, that juſtice was not ſo irreconcileable an enemy to convenience as they had imagined.

Theſe, Gentlemen, were the reaſons why we left this good work in the rude unfiniſhed ſtate, in which

which good works are commonly left, through the tame circumſpection with which a timid prudence ſo frequently enervates beneficence. In doing good, we are generally cold, and languid, and ſluggiſh; and of all things afraid of being too much in the right. But the works of malice and injuſtice are quite in another ſtyle. They are finiſhed with a bold maſterly hand; touched as they are with the ſpirit of thoſe vehement paſſions that call forth all our energies whenever we oppreſs and perſecute.

Thus this matter was left for the time, with a full determination in Parliament, not to ſuffer other and worſe ſtatutes to remain for the purpoſe of counteracting the benefits propoſed by the repeal of one penal law; for nobody then dreamed of defending what was done as a benefit, on the ground of its being no benefit at all. We were not then ripe for ſo mean a ſubterfuge.

I do not wiſh to go over the horrid ſcene that was afterwards acted. Would to God it could be expunged for ever from the annals of this country! But ſince it muſt ſubſiſt for our ſhame, let it ſubſiſt for our inſtruction. In the year 1780 there were found in this nation men deluded enough (for I give the whole to their deluſion) on pretences of zeal and piety, without any ſort of provocation whatſoever, real or pretended, to make a deſperate attempt, which would have conſumed all the glory and power of this country in the flames of London; and buried all law, order, and religion, under the ruins of the metropolis of the

Proteſtant world. Whether all this miſchief done, or in the direct train of doing, was in their original ſcheme, I cannot ſay; I hope it was not; but this would have been the unavoidable conſequence of their proceedings, had not the flames they had lighted up in their fury been extinguiſhed in their blood.

All the time that this horrid ſcene was acting, or avenging, as well as for ſome time before, and ever ſince, the wicked inſtigators of this unhappy multitude, guilty, with every aggravation, of all their crimes, and ſcreened in a cowardly darkneſs from their puniſhment, continued, without interruption, pity, or remorſe, to blow up the blind rage of the populace, with a continued blaſt of peſtilential libels, which infected and poiſoned the very air we breathed in.

The main drift of all the libels, and all the riots, was, to force Parliament (to perſuade us was hopeleſs) into an act of national perfidy, which has no example. For, Gentlemen, it is proper you ſhould all know what infamy we eſcaped by refuſing that repeal, for a refuſal of which, it ſeems, I, among others, ſtand ſomewhere or other accuſed. When we took away, on the motives which I had the honour of ſtating to you, a few of the innumerable penalties upon an oppreſſed and injured people, the relief was not abſolute, but given on a ſtipulation and compact between them and us; for we bound down the Roman Catholics with the moſt ſolemn oaths, to bear true allegiance to this government; to abjure all ſort of temporal

temporal power in any other; and to renounce, under the ſame ſolemn obligations, the doctrines of ſyſtematic perfidy, with which they ſtood (I conceive very unjuſtly) charged. Now our modeſt petitioners came up to us, moſt humbly praying nothing more, than that we ſhould break our faith without any one cauſe whatſoever of forfeiture aſſigned; and when the ſubjects of this kingdom had, on their part, fully performed their engagement, we ſhould refuſe, on our part, the benefit we had ſtipulated on the performance of thoſe very conditions that were preſcribed by our own authority, and taken on the ſanction of our public faith—That is to ſay, when we had inveigled them with fair promiſes within our door, we were to ſhut it on them; and, adding mockery to outrage—to tell them, "Now we have got you faſt—your conſciences "are bound to a power reſolved on your deſtruc-"tion. We have made you ſwear, that your reli-"gion obliges you to keep your faith; fools as "you are! we will now let you ſee, that our reli-"gion enjoins us to keep no faith with you." They who would adviſedly call upon us to do ſuch things, muſt certainly have thought us not only a convention of treacherous tyrants, but a gang of the loweſt and dirtieſt wretches that ever diſgraced humanity. Had we done this, we ſhould have indeed proved, that there were *ſome* in the world whom no faith could bind; and we ſhould have *convicted* ourſelves of that odious principle of which Papiſts ſtood *accuſed* by thoſe very ſavages,

who wiſhed us, on that accuſation, to deliver them over to their fury.

In this audacious tumult, when our very name and character, as gentlemen, was to be cancelled for ever along with the faith and honour of the nation, I, who had exerted myſelf very little on the quiet paſſing of the bill, thought it neceſſary then to come forward. I was not alone; but though ſome diſtinguiſhed members on all ſides, and particularly on ours, added much to their high reputation by the part they took on that day, (a part which will be remembered as long as honour, ſpirit, and eloquence have eſtimation in the world) I may and will value myſelf ſo far, that yielding in abilities to many, I yielded in zeal to none. With warmth, and with vigour, and animated with a juſt and natural indignation, I called forth every faculty that I poſſeſſed, and I directed it in every way which I could poſſibly employ it. I laboured night and day. I laboured in Parliament: I laboured out of Parliament. If therefore the reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, refuſing to commit this act of unmatched turpitude, be a crime, I am guilty among the foremoſt. But indeed, whatever the faults of that Houſe may have been, no one member was found hardy enough to propoſe ſo infamous a thing; and on full debate we paſſed the reſolution againſt the petitions with as much unanimity, as we had formerly paſſed the law of which theſe petitions demanded the repeal.

There was a circumſtance (juſtice will not ſuffer me

me to paſs it over) which, if any thing could enforce the reaſons I have given, would fully juſtify the act of relief, and render a repeal, or any thing like a repeal, unnatural, impoſſible. It was the behaviour of the perſecuted Roman Catholics under the acts of violence and brutal inſolence, which they ſuffered. I ſuppoſe there are not in London leſs than four or five thouſand of that perſuaſion from my country, who do a great deal of the moſt laborious works in the metropolis; and they chiefly inhabit thoſe quarters, which were the principal theatre of the fury of the bigotted multitude. They are known to be men of ſtrong arms, and quick feelings, and more remarkable for a determined reſolution, than clear ideas, or much foreſight. But though provoked by every thing that can ſtir the blood of men, their houſes and chapels in flames, and with the moſt atrocious profanations of every thing which they hold ſacred before their eyes, not a hand was moved to retaliate, or even to defend. Had a conflict once begun, the rage of their perſecutors would have redoubled. Thus fury encreaſing by the reverberation of outrages, houſe being fired for houſe, and church for chapel, I am convinced, that no power under heaven could have prevented a general conflagration; and at this day London would have been a tale. But I am well informed, and the thing ſpeaks it, that their clergy exerted their whole influence to keep their people in ſuch a ſtate of forbearance and quiet, as, when I look back, fills me with aſtoniſhment; but not with aſtoniſhment only. Their

merits on that occaſion ought not to be forgotten; nor will they, when Engliſhmen come to recollect themſelves. I am ſure it were far more proper to have called them forth, and given them the thanks of both Houſes of Parliament, than to have ſuffered thoſe worthy clergymen, and excellent citizens, to be hunted into holes and corners, whilſt we are making low-minded inquiſitions into the number of their people; as if a tolerating principle was never to prevail, unleſs we were very ſure that only a few could poſſibly take advantage of it. But indeed we are not yet well recovered of our fright. Our reaſon, I truſt, will return with our ſecurity; and this unfortunate temper will paſs over like a cloud.

Gentlemen, I have now laid before you a few of the reaſons for taking away the penalties of the act of 1699, and for refuſing to eſtabliſh them on the riotous requiſition of 1780. Becauſe I would not ſuffer any thing which may be for your ſatisfaction to eſcape, permit me juſt to touch on the objections urged againſt our act and our reſolves, and intended as a juſtification of the violence offered to both Houſes. "Parliament," they aſſert, "was "too haſty, and they ought, in ſo eſſential and "alarming a change, to have proceeded with a "far greater degree of deliberation." The direct contrary. Parliament was too ſlow. They took fourſcore years to deliberate on the repeal of an act which ought not to have ſurvived a ſecond ſeſſion. When at length, after a procraſtination of near a century, the buſineſs was taken up, it proceeded in the moſt public manner, by the

the ordinary ſtages, and as ſlowly as a law ſo evidently right as to be reſiſted by none, would naturally advance. Had it been read three times in one day, we ſhould have ſhewn only a becoming readineſs to recogniſe by protection the undoubted dutiful behaviour of thoſe whom we had but too long puniſhed for offences of preſumption or conjecture. But for what end was that bill to linger beyond the uſual period of an unoppoſed meaſure? Was it to be delayed until a rabble in Edinburgh ſhould dictate to the Church of England what meaſure of perſecution was fitting for her ſafety? Was it to be adjourned until a fanatical force could be collected in London, ſufficient to frighten us out of all our ideas of policy and juſtice? Were we to wait for the profound lectures on the reaſon of ſtate, eccleſiaſtical and political, which the Proteſtant Aſſociation have ſince condeſcended to read to us? Or were we, ſeven hundred Peers and Commoners, the only perſons ignorant of the ribbald invectives which occupy the place of argument in thoſe remonſtrances, which every man of common obſervation had heard a thouſand times over, and a thouſand times over had deſpiſed? All men had before heard what they have to ſay; and all men at this day know what they dare to do; and I truſt, all honeſt men are equally influenced by the one, and by the other.

But they tell us, that thoſe our fellow-citizens, whoſe chains we have a little relaxed, are enemies to liberty and our free conſtitution.—Not enemies, I preſume, to their *own* liberty. And as to the conſtitution,

conſtitution, until we give them ſome ſhare in it, I do not know on what pretence we can examine into their opinions about a buſineſs in which they have no intereſt or concern. But after all, are we equally ſure, that they are adverſe to our conſtitution, as that our ſtatutes are hoſtile and deſtructive to them? For my part, I have reaſon to believe, their opinions and inclinations in that reſpect are various, exactly like thoſe of other men; and if they lean more to the Crown than I, and than many of you think *we* ought, we muſt remember, that he who aims at another's life, is not to be ſurpriſed if he flies into any ſanctuary that will receive him. The tenderneſs of the executive power is the natural aſylum of thoſe upon whom the laws have declared war; and to complain that men are inclined to favour the means of their own ſafety, is ſo abſurd, that one forgets the injuſtice in the ridicule.

I muſt fairly tell you, that ſo far as my principles are concerned, (principles, that I hope will only depart with my laſt breath) that I have no idea of a liberty unconnected with honeſty and juſtice. Nor do I believe, that any good conſtitutions of government or of freedom, can find it neceſſary for their ſecurity to doom any part of the people to a permanent ſlavery. Such a conſtitution of freedom, if ſuch can be, is in effect no more than another name for the tyranny of the ſtrongeſt faction; and factions in republics have been, and are, full as capable as monarchs, of the moſt cruel oppreſſion and injuſtice. It is but too true, that the love, and even

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the very idea, of genuine liberty, is extremely rare. It is but too true, that there are many, whoſe whole ſcheme of freedom, is made up of pride, perverſeneſs, and inſolence. They feel themſelves in a ſtate of thraldom, they imagine that their ſouls are cooped and cabbined in, unleſs they have ſome man, or ſome body of men, dependent on their mercy. This deſire of having ſome one below them, deſcends to thoſe who are the very loweſt of all,—and a Proteſtant cobler, debaſed by his poverty, but exalted by his ſhare of the ruling church, feels a pride in knowing, it is by his generoſity alone, that the peer, whoſe footman's inſtep he meaſures, is able to keep his chaplain from a jail. This diſpoſition is the true ſource of the paſſion, which many men in very humble life, have taken to the American war. *Our* ſubjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependants. This luſt of party-power, is the liberty they hunger and thirſt for; and this Syren ſong of ambition, has charmed ears, that one would have thought were never organiſed to that ſort of muſic.

This way, of *proſcribing the citizens by denominations and general deſcriptions*, dignified by the name of reaſon of ſtate, and ſecurity for conſtitutions and commonwealths, is nothing better at bottom, than the miſerable invention of an ungenerous ambition, which would fain hold the ſacred truſt of power, without any of the virtues or any of the energies, that give a title to it; a receipt of policy, made up of a deteſtable compound of malice, cowardice, and ſloth. They would govern

men againſt their will; but in that government they would be diſcharged from the exerciſe of vigilance, providence, and fortitude; and therefore, that they may ſleep on their watch, they conſent to take ſome one diviſion of the ſociety into partnerſhip of the tyranny over the reſt. But let government, in what form it may be, comprehend the whole in its juſtice, and reſtrain the ſuſpicious by its vigilance; let it keep watch and ward; let it diſcover by its ſagacity, and puniſh by its firmneſs, all delinquency againſt its power, whenever delinquency exiſts in the overt acts; and then it will be as ſafe as ever God and nature intended it ſhould be. Crimes are the acts of individuals, and not of denominations; and therefore arbitrarily to claſs men under general deſcriptions, in order to proſcribe and puniſh them in the lump for a preſumed delinquency, of which perhaps but a part, perhaps none at all, are guilty, is indeed a compendious method, and ſaves a world of trouble about proof; but ſuch a method, inſtead of being law, is an act of unnatural rebellion againſt the legal dominion of reaſon and juſtice; and this vice, in any conſtitution that entertains it, at one time or other will certainly bring on its ruin.

We are told, that this is not a religious perſecution, and its abettors are loud in diſclaiming all ſeverities on account of conſcience. Very fine indeed! then let it be ſo; they are not perſecutors; they are only tyrants. With all my heart. I am perfectly indifferent concerning the pretexts upon which we torment one another; or whether it be for the conſtitution of the Church of England,

or

or for the conſtitution of the State of England, that people chooſe to make their fellow-creatures wretched. When we were ſent into a place of authority, you that ſent us had yourſelves but one commiſſion to give. You could give us none to wrong or oppreſs, or even to ſuffer any kind of oppreſſion or wrong, on any grounds whatſoever; not on political, as in the affairs of America; not on commercial, as in thoſe of Ireland; not in civil, as in the laws for debt; not in religious, as in the ſtatutes againſt Proteſtant or Catholic Diſſenters. The diverſified but connected fabric of univerſal juſtice, is well cramped and bolted together in all its parts; and depend upon it, I never have employed, and I never ſhall employ, any engine of power which may come into my hands, to wrench it aſunder. All ſhall ſtand, if I can help it, and all ſhall ſtand connected. After all, to complete this work, much remains to be done; much in the Eaſt, much in the Weſt. But great as the work is, if our will be ready, our powers are not deficient.

Since you have ſuffered me to trouble you ſo much on this ſubject, permit me, Gentlemen, to detain you a little longer. I am indeed moſt ſolicitous to give you perfect ſatisfaction. I find there are ſome of a better and ſofter nature than the perſons with whom I have ſuppoſed myſelf in debate, who neither think ill of the act of relief, nor by any means deſire the repeal, not accuſing but lamenting what was done, on account of the conſequences, have frequently expreſſed their wiſh,

that

that the late act had never been made. Some of this deſcription, and perſons of worth, I have met with in this city. They conceive, that the prejudices, whatever they might be, of a large part of the people, ought not to have been ſhocked; that their opinions ought to have been previouſly taken, and much attended to; and that thereby the late horrid ſcenes might have been prevented.

I confeſs, my notions are widely different; and I never was leſs ſorry for any action of my life. I like the bill the better, on account of the events of all kinds that followed it. It relieved the real ſufferers; it ſtrengthened the ſtate; and, by the diſorders that enſued, we had clear evidence, that there lurked a temper ſomewhere, which ought not to be foſtered by the laws. No ill conſequences whatever could be attributed to the act itſelf. We knew before-hand, or we were poorly inſtructed, that toleration is odious to the intolerant; freedom to oppreſſors; property to robbers; and all kinds and degrees of proſperity to the envious. We knew, that all theſe kinds of men would gladly gratify their evil diſpoſitions under the ſanction of law and religion, if they could: if they could not, yet, to make way to their objects, they would do their utmoſt to ſubvert all religion and all law. This we certainly knew. But knowing this, is there any reaſon, becauſe thieves break in and ſteal, and thus bring detriment to you, and draw ruin on themſelves, that I am to be ſorry that you are in poſſeſſion of ſhops, and of warehouſes, and of wholeſome

wholeſome laws to protect them? Are you to build no houſes, becauſe deſperate men may pull them down upon their own heads? Or, if a malignant wretch will cut his own throat, becauſe he ſees you give alms to the neceſſitous and deſerving; ſhall his deſtruction be attributed to your charity, and not to his own deplorable madneſs? If we repent of our good actions, what, I pray you, is left for our faults and follies? It is not the beneficence of the laws, it is the unnatural temper which beneficence can fret and ſour, that is to be lamented. It is this temper which, by all rational means, ought to be ſweetened and corrected. If froward men ſhould refuſe this cure, can they vitiate any thing but themſelves? Does evil ſo react upon good, as not only to retard its motion, but to change its nature? If it can ſo operate, then good men will always be in the power of the bad; and virtue, by a dreadful reverſe of order, muſt lie under perpetual ſubjection and bondage to vice.

As to the opinion of the people, which ſome think, in ſuch caſes, is to be implicitly obeyed; near two years tranquillity, which followed the act, and its inſtant imitation in Ireland, proved abundantly, that the late horrible ſpirit was, in a great meaſure, the effect of inſidious art, and perverſe induſtry, and groſs miſrepreſentation. But ſuppoſe that the diſlike had been much more deliberate, and much more general than I am perſuaded it was—When we know, that the opinions of even the greateſt multitudes, are the ſtandard of rectitude, I ſhall think myſelf obliged to make thoſe opinions

the

the maſters of my conſcience. But if it may be doubted whether Omnipotence itſelf is competent to alter the eſſential conſtitution of right and wrong, ſure I am, that ſuch *things*, as they and I, are poſſeſſed of no ſuch power. No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleaſing to the people. But the wideſt range of this politic complaiſance is confined within the limits of juſtice. I would not only conſult the intereſt of the people, but I would chearfully gratify their humours. We are all a ſort of children, that muſt be ſoothed and managed. I think I am not auſtere or formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myſelf play my part in, any innocent buffooneries, to divert them. But I never will act the tyrant for their amuſement. If they will mix malice in their ſports, I ſhall never conſent to throw them any living, ſentient, creature whatſoever, no not ſo much as a kitling, to torment.

"But if I profeſs all this impolitic ſtubbornneſs, "I may chance never to be elected into Parliament." It is certainly not pleaſing to be put out of the public ſervice. But I wiſh to be a member of Parliament, to have my ſhare of doing good, and reſiſting evil. It would therefore be abſurd to renounce my objects, in order to obtain my ſeat. I deceive myſelf indeed moſt groſsly, if I had not much rather paſs the remainder of my life hidden in the receſſes of the deepeſt obſcurity, feeding my mind even with the viſions and imaginations of ſuch things, than to be placed on the moſt ſplendid throne

throne of the univerſe, tantalized with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greateſt ſituation any other than the greateſt curſe. Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never ſufficiently expreſs my gratitude to you, for having ſet me in a place, wherein I could lend the ſlighteſt help to great and laudable deſigns. If I have had my ſhare, in any meaſure giving quiet to private property, and private conſcience; if by my vote I have aided in ſecuring to families the beſt poſſeſſion, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their ſubjects, and ſubjects to their prince; if I have aſſiſted to looſen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the goodwill of his countrymen;—if I have thus taken my part with the beſt of men in the beſt of their actions, I can ſhut the book;—I might wiſh to read a page or two more—but this is enough for my meaſure.—I have not lived in vain.

And now, Gentlemen, on this ſerious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you, let me take to myſelf ſome degree of honeſt pride on the nature of the charges that are againſt me. I do not here ſtand before you accuſed of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not ſaid, that, in the long period of my ſervice, I have, in a ſingle inſtance, ſacrificed the ſlighteſt of your intereſts to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alledged, that to gratify any anger, or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a ſhare in wronging or oppreſſing

any deſcription of men, or any one man in any deſcription. No! the charges againſt me, are all of one kind, that I have puſhed the principles of general juſtice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me. —In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in ſorrow, in depreſſion, and diſtreſs— I will call to mind this accuſation; and be comforted.

Gentlemen, I ſubmit the whole to your judgment. Mr. Mayor, I thank you for the trouble you have taken on this occaſion. In your ſtate of health, it is particularly obliging. If this company ſhould think it adviſeable for me to withdraw, I ſhall reſpectfully retire; if you think otherwiſe, I ſhall go directly to the Council-houſe and to the Change, and without a moment's delay, begin my canvaſs.

THE END.

Briſtol, Sept. 6, 1780.

AT a great and reſpectable Meeting of the Friends of EDMUND BURKE, *Eſq; held at the Guildhall this day;*

The Right Worſhipful the Mayor in the Chair;

Reſolved, That Mr. Burke, as a repreſentative for this city, has done all poſſible honour to himſelf as a ſenator and a man, and that we do heartily and honeſtly approve of his conduct, as the reſult of an enlightened loyalty to his ſovereign; a warm and zealous love to his country, through its widely-extended empire; a jealous and watchful care of the liberties of his fellow-ſubjects; an enlarged and liberal underſtanding of our commercial intereſt; a humane attention to the circumſtances of even the loweſt ranks of the community; and a truly wiſe, poïtic, and tolerant ſpirit, in ſupporting the national church, with a reaſonable indulgence to all who diſſent from it; and we wiſh to expreſs the moſt marked abhorrence of the baſe arts which have been employed, without regard to truth and reaſon, to miſrepreſent his eminent ſervices to his country.

Reſolved, That this reſolution be copied out, and ſigned by the Chairman, and be by him preſented to Mr. Burke, as the fulleſt expreſſion of the reſpectful

and grateful ſenſe we entertain of his merits and ſervices, public and private, to the Citizens of Briſtol, as a man and a repreſentative.

Reſolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Right Worſhipful the Mayor, who ſo ably and worthily preſided in this Meeting.

Reſolved, That it is the earneſt requeſt of this Meeting to Mr. Burke, that he ſhould again offer himſelf a candidate to repreſent this city in Parliament; aſſuring him of that full and ſtrenuous ſupport which is due to the merits of ſo excellent a repreſentative.

This buſineſs being over, Mr. Burke went to the Exchange, and offered himſelf as a candidate in the uſual manner. He was accompanied to the Council-houſe, and from thence to the Exchange, by a large body of moſt reſpectable Gentlemen, amongſt whom were the following Members of the Corporation, viz. Mr. Mayor, Mr. Alderman Smith, Mr. Alderman Deane, Mr. Alderman Gordon, William Weare, Samuel Munckley, John Merlott, John Crofts, Levy Ames, John Fiſher Weare, Benjamin Loſcombe, Philip Protheroe, Samuel Span, Joſeph Smith, Richard Bright, and John Noble, Eſquires.

SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE,

IN THE

DEBATE ON THE ARMY ESTIMATES,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

On Tueſday, the 9th Day of February, 1790.

COMPREHENDING A DISCUSSION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF AFFAIRS IN FRANCE.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DEBRETT, oppoſite Burlington Houſe, Piccadilly.

M.DCC.XC.

SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

MR. Burke's ſpeech on the Report of the army has not been correctly ſtated in ſome of the public papers, It is of conſequence to him not to be miſunderſtood. The matter which incidentally came into diſcuſſion is of the moſt ſerious importance. It is thought that the heads and

 ſubſtance

ſubſtance of the ſpeech will anſwer the purpoſe ſufficiently. If in making the abſtract, through defect of memory, in the perſon who now gives it, any difference at all ſhould be perceived from the ſpeech as it was ſpoken, it will not, the editor imagines, be found in any thing which may amount to a retraction of the opinions he then maintained, or to any ſoftening in the expreſſions in which they were conveyed.

Mr. Burke ſpoke a conſiderable time in anſwer to various arguments which had been inſiſted upon by Mr. Grenville and Mr. Pitt, for keeping an increaſed peace eſtabliſhment, and againſt an improper jealouſy of the Miniſters, in whom a full confidence, ſubject to reſponſibility, ought to be placed, on account of their knowledge of the real ſituation of affairs; the exact ſtate of which it frequently

quently happened, that they could not diſcloſe, without violating the conſtitutional and political ſecrecy, neceſſary to the well being of their country.

Mr. Burke ſaid in ſubſtance, "that confidence might become a vice, and jealouſy a virtue, according to circumſtances. That confidence, of all public virtues, was the moſt dangerous, and jealouſy in an Houſe of Commons, of all public vices, the moſt tolerable; eſpecially where the number and the charge of ſtanding armies, in time of peace, was the queſtion.

That in the annual mutiny bill, the annual army was declaredly to be for the purpoſe of preſerving the balance of power in Europe. The propriety of its being larger or ſmaller depended, therefore, upon the true ſtate of that balance. If the in-

creaſe of peace eſtabliſhments demanded of Parliament agreed with the manifeſt appearance of the balance, confidence in Miniſters, as to the particulars, would be very proper. If the increaſe was not at all ſupported by any ſuch appearance, he thought great jealouſy might, and ought to be, entertained on that ſubject.

That he did not find, on a review of all Europe, that, politically, we ſtood, in the ſmalleſt degree, of danger from any one ſtate or kingdom it contained; nor that any other foreign powers than our own allies were likely to obtain a conſiderable preponderance in the ſcale.

That France had hitherto been our firſt object, in all conſiderations, concerning the balance of power. The preſence or abſence of France totally varied

every ſort of ſpeculation relative to that balance.

That France was, at this time, in a political light, to be conſidered, as expunged out of the ſyſtem of Europe. Whether ſhe ever could appear in it again, as a leading power, was not eaſy to determine: but at preſent he conſidered France as not politically exiſting; and moſt aſſuredly it would take up much time to reſtore her to her former active exiſtence — *Gallos quoque in bellis floruiſſe audivimus*, might poſſibly be the language of the riſing generation. He did not mean to deny that it was our duty to keep our eye on that nation, and to regulate our preparation by the ſymptoms of her recovery.

That it was to her *ſtrength*, not to her *form of government* which we were to attend; becauſe Republics, as well as monarchies,

monarchies, were ſuſceptible of ambition, jealouſy, and anger, the uſual cauſes of war.

But if, while France continued in this ſwoon, we ſhould go on increaſing our expences, we ſhould certainly make ourſelves leſs a match for her, when it became our concern to arm.

It was ſaid, that as ſhe had ſpeedily fallen, ſhe might ſpeedily riſe again. He doubted this. That the fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and oppoſed by the laws of phyſical and political gravitation.

In a political view, France was low indeed. She had loſt every thing, even to her name

" Jacet

" Jacet ingens littere truncus
" Avolſumque humeris *caput*, et ſine *nomine* corpus."*

He was aſtoniſhed at it—he was alarmed at it—he trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatneſs.

Since the Houſe had been prorogued in the ſummer much work was done in France. The French had ſhewn themſelves the ableſt architects of ruin that had hitherto exiſted in the world. In that very

* Mr. Burke, probably, had in his mind the remainder of the paſſage, and was filled with ſome congenial apprehenſions:

" Hæc finis Priami fatorum; hic exitus illum
" Sorte tulit, Trojam incenſam, & prolapſa videntem
" Pergama; tot quondam populis, terriſque, ſuperbum
" Regnatorem Aſiæ. Jacet ingens littore truncus,
" Avolſumque humeris caput, & ſine nomine corpus.
" *At me* tum primum ſœvus circumſtetit horror;
" Obſtupui: *ſubiit chari genitoris imago*"——

ſhort

ſhort ſpace of time they had completely pulled down to the ground, their monarchy; their church; their nobility; their law; their revenue; their army; their navy; their commerce; their arts; and their manufactures. They had done their buſineſs for us as rivals, in a way in which twenty Ramilies or Blenheims could never have done it. Were we abſolute conquerors, and France to lye proſtrate at our feet, we ſhould be aſhamed to ſend a commiſſion to ſettle their affairs, which could impoſe ſo hard a law upon the French, and ſo deſtructive of all their conſequence as a nation, as that they had impoſed upon themſelves.

France, by the mere circumſtance of its vicinity, had been, and in a degree always muſt be, an object of our vigilance, either with regard to her actual power, or to her influence

influence and example. As to the former, he had ſpoken ; as to the latter, (her example) he ſhould ſay a few words : for by this example our friendſhip and our intercourſe with that nation had once been, and might again, become more dangerous to us than their worſt hoſtility.

In the laſt century, Louis the Fourteenth had eſtabliſhed a greater and better diſciplined military force than ever had been before ſeen in Europe, and with it a perfect deſpotiſm. Though that deſpotiſm was proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, ſplendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the impoſing robes of ſcience, literature, and arts, it was, in government, nothing better than a painted and gilded tyranny ; in religion, an hard ſtern intolerance, the fit companion and auxiliary to the deſpotic tyranny which prevailed in its

government. The ſame character of deſpotiſm inſinuated itſelf into every court of Europe—the ſame ſpirit of diſproportioned magnificence — the ſame love of ſtanding armies, above the ability of the people. In particular, our then Sovereigns, King Charles and King James, fell in love with the government of their neighbour, ſo flattering to the pride of Kings. A ſimilarity of ſentiments brought on connections equally dangerous to the intereſts and liberties of their country. It were well that the infection had gone no farther than the Throne. The admiration of a government flouriſhing and ſucceſsful, unchecked in its operations, and ſeeming therefore to compaſs its objects more ſpeedily and effectually, gained ſomething upon all ranks of people. The good patriots of that day, however, ſtruggled againſt it. They ſought nothing more anxiouſly than to break off all communication with France, and

to beget a total alienation from its councils and its example; which, by the animoſity prevalent between the abettors of their religious ſyſtem and the aſſertors of ours, was, in ſome degree, effected.

This day the evil is totally changed in France: but there is an evil. The diſeaſe is altered; but the vicinity of the two countries remains, and muſt remain; and the natural mental habits of mankind are ſuch, that the preſent diſtemper of France it is far more likely to be contagious than the old one; for it is not quite eaſy to ſpread a paſſion for ſervitude among the people: but in all evils of the oppoſite kind our natural inclinations are flattered. In the caſe of deſpotiſm there is the *fœdum crimen ſervitutis*; in the laſt the *falſa* ſpecies *libertatis*; and accordingly, as the hiſtorian ſays, *pronis auribus accipitur.*

In the laſt age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France in the net of a relentleſs deſpotiſm. It is not neceſſary to ſay any thing upon that example. It exiſts no longer. Our preſent danger from the example of a people, whoſe character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from anarchy; a danger of being led through an admiration of ſucceſsful fraud and violence, to an imitation of the exceſſes of an irrational, unprincipled, proſcribing, confiſcating, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy. On the ſide of religion, the danger of their example is no longer from intolerance, but from Atheiſm; a foul, unnatural vice, foe to all the dignity and conſolation of mankind; which ſeems in France, for a long time, to have been embodi e into a faction, accredited, and almoſt avowed.

Theſe

Theſe are our preſent dangers from France: but, in his opinion, the very worſt part of the example ſet is, in the late aſſumption of citizenſhip by the army, and the whole of the arrangement, or rather diſarrangement of their military.

He was ſorry that his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had dropped even a word expreſſive of exultation on that circumſtance; or that he ſeemed of opinion that the objection from ſtanding armies was at all leſſened by it. He attributed this opinion of Mr. Fox entirely to his known zeal for the beſt of all cauſes, Liberty. That it was with a pain inexpreſſible he was obliged to have even the ſhadow of a difference with his friend, whoſe authority would be always great with him, and with all thinking people — *Quæ maxima ſemper cenſetur nobis, et* erit *quæ maxima ſemper.* —

His

His confidence in Mr. Fox was ſuch, and ſo ample, as to be almoſt implicit. That he was not aſhamed to avow that degree of docility. That when the choice is well made, it ſtrengthens inſtead of oppreſsing our intellect. That he who calls in the aid of an equal underſtanding, doubles his own. He who profits of a ſuperior underſtanding, raiſes his powers to a level with the height of the ſuperior underſtanding he unites with. He had found the benefit of ſuch a junction, and would not lightly depart from it. He wiſhed almoſt, on all occaſions, that his ſentiments were underſtood to be conveyed in Mr. Fox's words; and that he wiſhed, as amongſt the greateſt benefits he could wiſh the country, an eminent ſhare of power to that right honourable gentleman; becauſe he knew that, to his great and maſterly underſtanding, he had joined the greateſt poſſible degree of that natural moderation, which is the beſt

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corrective of power; that he was of the moſt artleſs, candid, open, and benevolent diſpoſition; diſintereſted in the extreme; of a temper mild and placable, even to a fault; without one drop of gall in his whole conſtitution.

That the Houſe muſt perceive, from his coming forward to mark an expreſſion or two of his beſt friend, how anxious he was to keep the diſtemper of France from the leaſt countenance in England, where he was ſure ſome wicked perſons had ſhewn a ſtrong diſpoſition to recommend an imitation of the French ſpirit of Reform. He was ſo ſtrongly oppoſed to any the leaſt tendency towards the *means* of introducing a democracy like theirs, as well as to the *end* itſelf, that much as it would afflict him, if ſuch a thing could be attempted, and that any friend of his could concur in ſuch meaſures, (he was far,

very

very far, from believing they could); he would abandon his beſt friends, and join with his worſt enemies to oppoſe either the means or the end; and to reſiſt all violent exertions of the ſpirit of innovation, ſo diſtant from all principles of true and ſafe reformation; a ſpirit well calculated to overturn ſtates, but perfectly unfit to amend them.

That he was no enemy to reformation. Almoſt every buſineſs in which he was much concerned, from the firſt day he ſat in that Houſe to that hour, was a buſineſs of reformation; and when he had not been employed in correcting, he had been employed in reſiſting abuſes. Some traces of this ſpirit in him now ſtand on their ſtatute book. In his opinion, any thing which unneceſſarily tore to pieces the contexture of the ſtate, not only prevented all real reformation, but introduced evils

which

which would call, but, perhaps, call in vain, for new reformation.

That he thought the French nation very unwiſe. What they valued themſelves on, was a diſgrace to them. They had gloried (and ſome people in England had thought fit to take ſhare in that glory) in making a revolution; as if revolutions were good things in themſelves. All the horrors, and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to their revolution, which attend its progreſs, and which may virtually attend it in its eſtabliſhment, paſs for nothing with the lovers of revolutions. The French have made their way through the deſtruction of their country, to a bad conſtitution, when they were abſolutely in poſſeſſion of a good one. They were in poſſeſſion of it the day the States met in ſeparate orders. Their buſineſs, had they been either virtuous, or wiſe, or had been left to their own judge-

ment, was to ſecure the ſtability and independence of the States, according to thoſe orders, under the Monarch on the Throne. It was then their duty to redreſs grievances.

Inſtead of redreſſing grievances, and improving the fabric of their State, to which they were called by their Monarch, and ſent by their Country, they were made to take a very different courſe. They firſt deſtroyed all the balances and counterpoiſes which ſerve to fix the ſtate; and to give it a ſteady direction; and which furniſh ſure correctives to any violent ſpirit which may prevail in any of the orders. Theſe balances exiſted in their oldeſt conſtitution; and in the conſtitution of this country; and in the conſtitution of all the countries in Europe. Theſe they raſhly deſtroyed, and then they melted down the whole into one incongruous, ill-connected maſs.

When

When they had done this, they inſtantly, with the moſt atrocious perfidy and breach of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property, and conſequently of all national proſperity, by confiſcating all the poſſeſſions of the church. They made and recorded a ſort of inſtitute and digeſt of anarchy, called the rights of man, in ſuch a pedantic abuſe of elementary principles as would have diſgraced boys at ſchool; but this declaration of rights was worſe than trifling and pedantic in them; as by their name and authority they ſyſtematically deſtroyed every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this mad declaration they ſubverted the ſtate; and brought on ſuch calamities as no country, without a long war, has ever been known to ſuffer, and which may in the end produce ſuch a war, and, perhaps, many ſuch.

With them the queſtion was not between deſpotiſm and liberty. The ſacrifice they made of the peace and power of their country was not made on the altar of Freedom. They brought themſelves into all the calamities they ſuffer, not that through them they might obtain the Britiſh conſtitution; they plunged themſelves headlong into thoſe calamities, to prevent themſelves from ſettling into that conſtitution, or into any thing reſembling it.

That if they ſhould perfectly ſucceed in what they propoſe, as they are likely enough to do, and eſtabliſh a democracy, or a mob of democracies, in a country circumſtanced like France, they will eſtabliſh a very bad government—a very bad ſpecies of tyranny.

That, the worſt effect of all their proceeding was on their military, which was rendered

rendered an army for every purpoſe but that of defence. That, if the queſtion was, whether ſoldiers were to forget they were citizens, as an abſtract propoſition, he could have no difference about it; though, as it is uſual, when abſtract principles are to be applied, much was to be thought on the manner of uniting the character of citizen and ſoldier. But as applied to the events which had happened in France, where the abſtract principle was cloathed with its circumſtances, he thought that his friend would agree with him, that what was done there furniſhed no matter of exultation, either in the act or the example. Theſe ſoldiers were not citizens; but baſe hireling mutineers, and mercenary ſordid deſerters, wholly deſtitute of any honourable principle. Their conduct was one of the fruits of that anarchic ſpirit, from the evils of which a democracy itſelf was to be received by thoſe who were the

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leaſt diſpoſed to that form as a cure. It was not an army in corps and with diſcipline, and embodied under the reſpectable patriot citizens of the ſtate in reſiſting tyranny. Nothing like it. It was the caſe of common ſoldiers deſerting from their officers, to join a furious, licentious populace. It was a deſertion to a cauſe, the real object of which was to level all thoſe inſtitutions, and to break all thoſe connections, natural and civil, that regulate and hold together the community by a chain of ſubordination; to raiſe ſoldiers againſt their officers; ſervants againſt their maſters; tradeſmen againſt their cuſtomers; artificers againſt their employers; tenants againſt their landlords; curates againſt their biſhops; and children againſt their parents. That this cauſe of theirs was not an enemy to ſervitude, but to ſociety.

He wiſhed the Houſe to conſider, how the

the members would like to have their manſions pulled down and pillaged, their perſons abuſed, inſulted, and deſtroyed; their title deeds brought out and burned before their faces, and themſelves and their families driven to ſeek refuge in every nation throughout Europe, for no other reaſon than this, that without any fault of theirs, they were born gentlemen, and men of property, and were ſuſpected of a deſire to preſerve their conſideration and their eſtates. The deſertion in France was to aid an abominable ſedition, the very profeſſed principle of which was an implacable hoſtility to nobility and gentry, and whoſe ſavage war-whoop was "*a l'Ariſtocrate*," by which ſenſeleſs, bloody cry, they animated one another to rapine and murder; whilſt abetted by ambitious men of another claſs, they were cruſhing every thing reſpectable and virtuous in their nation, and to their power diſgracing almoſt

every

every name, by which we formerly knew there was ſuch a country in the world as France.

He knew too well, and he felt as much as any man, how difficult it was to accommodate a ſtanding army to a free conſtitution, or to any conſtitution. An armed, diſciplined body is, in its eſſence, dangerous to liberty; undiſciplined, it is ruinous to ſociety. Its component parts are, in the latter caſe, neither good citizens, nor good ſoldiers. What have they thought of in France, under ſuch a difficulty as almoſt puts the human faculties to a ſtand? They have put their army under ſuch a variety of principles of duty, that it is more likely to breed litigants, pettyfoggers, and mutineers, than ſoldiers. They have to balance their Crown army, another army, deriving under another authority, called a municipal army—

a balance of armies, not of orders. Theſe latter they have deſtroyed with every mark of inſult and oppreſſion. States may, and they will beſt, exiſt with a partition of power. Armies cannot exiſt under a divided command. This ſtate of things he thought, in effect, a ſtate of war, or, at beſt, but a truce inſtead of peace, in the country.

What a dreadful thing is a ſtanding army, for the conduct of the whole, or any part of which, no man is reſponſible! In the preſent ſtate of the French crown army, is there any General who can be reſponſible for the obedience of a Brigade? Any Colonel for that of a Regiment? Any Captain for that of a Company? And as to the municipal army, reinforced as it is by the new citizen-deſerters, under whoſe command are they? Have we not ſeen them, not led by, but dragging their

nominal Commander with a rope about his neck, when they, or thoſe whom they accompanied, proceeded to the moſt attrocious acts of treaſon and murder? Are any of theſe armies? Are any of theſe citizens?

We have in ſuch a difficulty as that of fitting a ſtanding army to the ſtate, as he conceived, done much better. We have not diſtracted our army by divided principles of obedience. We have put them under a ſingle authority, with a ſimple (our common) oath of fidelity; and we keep the whole under our annual inſpection. This was doing all that could be ſafely done.

He felt ſome concern that this ſtrange thing, called a Revolution in France, ſhould be compared with the glorious event, commonly called the Revolution in England;

England; and the conduct of the ſoldiery, on that occaſion, compared with the behaviour of ſome of the troops of France in the preſent inſtance. At that period the Prince of Orange, a prince of the blood royal in England, was called in by the flower of the Engliſh ariſtocracy to defend its ancient conſtitution, and not to level all diſtinctions. To this Prince, ſo invited, the ariſtocratic leaders who commanded the troops went over with their ſeveral corps, in bodies, to the deliverer of their country. Ariſtocratic leaders brought up the corps of citizens who newly enliſted in this cauſe. Military obedience changed its object; but military diſcipline was not for a moment interrupted in its principle. The troops were ready for war, but indiſpoſed to mutiny.

But as the conduct of theſe armies was different, ſo was that of the whole Engliſh

nation at that time. In truth, the circumſtances of our revolution (as it is called) and that of France are juſt the reverſe of each other in almoſt every particular, and in the whole ſpirit of the tranſaction. With us it was the caſe of a legal Monarch attempting arbitrary power — in France it is the caſe of an arbitrary Monarch, beginning, from whatever cauſe, to legaliſe his authority. The one was to be reſiſted, the other was to be managed and directed; but in neither caſe was the order of the ſtate to be changed, leſt government might be ruined, which ought only to be corrected and legaliſed. With us we got rid of the man, and preſerved the conſtituent parts of the ſtate. There they get rid of the conſtituent parts of the ſtate, and keep the man. What we did was in truth and ſubſtance, and in a conſtitutional light, a revolution, not made, but prevented. We took ſolid ſecurities; we ſettled

led doubtful queſtions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the ſtable fundamental parts of our conſtitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. Perhaps it might be ſhewn that we ſtrengthened it very conſiderably. The nation kept the ſame ranks, the ſame orders, the ſame privileges, the ſame franchiſes, the ſame rules for property, the ſame ſubordinations, the ſame order in the law, in the revenue, and in the magiſtracy; the ſame lords, the ſame commons, the ſame corporations, the ſame electors.

The church was not impaired. Her eſtates, her majeſty, her ſplendor, her orders and gradations continued the ſame; ſhe was preſerved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of a certain intolerance, which was her weakneſs and diſgrace. The church and the ſtate were the ſame after the revolution

lution that they were before, but better ſecured in every part.

Was little done becauſe a revolution was not made in the conſtitution? No! Every thing was done; becauſe we commenced with reparation not with ruin. Accordingly the ſtate flouriſhed. Inſtead of lying as dead, in a ſort of trance, or expoſed as ſome others, in an epileptic fit, to the pity or deriſion of the world, for her wild, ridiculous, convulſive movements, impotent to every purpoſe but that of daſhing out our brains againſt the pavement, Great Britain roſe above the ſtandard, even of her former ſelf. An æra of a more improved domeſtic proſperity then commenced, and ſtill continues, not only unimpaired, but growing, under the waſting hand of time. All the energies of the country were awakened. England never preſented a firmer

firmer countenance, or a more vigorous arm, to all her enemies, and to all her rivals. Europe under her reſpired and revived. Every where ſhe appeared as the protector, aſſertor, or avenger, of liberty. A war was made and ſupported againſt fortune itſelf. The treaty of Ryſwick, which firſt limited the power of France, was ſoon after made: the grand alliance very ſhortly followed, which ſhook to the foundations the dreadful power which menaced the independence of mankind. The ſtates of Europe lay happy under the ſhade of a great and free monarchy, which knew how to be great without endangering its own peace at home, or the internal or external peace of any of its neighbours.

Mr. Burke ſaid he ſhould have felt very unpleaſantly if he had not delivered theſe ſentiments. He was near the end of his natural, probably ſtill nearer to the end of

his political career; that he was weak and weary; and wiſhed for reſt. That he was little diſpoſed to controverſies, or what is called a detailed oppoſition. That at his time of life, if he could not do ſomething by ſome ſort of weight of opinion, natural or acquired, it was uſeleſs and indecorous to attempt any thing by mere ſtruggle. *Turpe ſenex Miles.* That he had for that reaſon little attended the army buſineſs, or that of the revenue, or almoſt any other matter of detail for ſome years paſt. That he had, however, his taſk. He was far from condemning ſuch oppoſition; on the contrary, he moſt highly applauded it, where a juſt occaſion exiſted for it, and gentlemen had vigour and capacity to purſue it. Where a great occaſion occurred, he was, and while he continued in Parliament, would be amongſt the moſt active and the moſt earneſt, as he hoped he had ſhewn on a late event. With reſpect to

the

the conſtitution itſelf, he wiſhed few alterations in it. Happy if he left it not the worſe for any ſhare he had taken in its ſervice.

Mr. Fox then roſe, and declared, in ſubſtance, that ſo far as regarded the French army, he went no farther than the general principle, by which that army ſhewed itſelf indiſpoſed to be an inſtrument in the ſervitude of their fellow citizens, but did not enter into the particulars of their conduct. He declared, that he did not affect a democracy. That he always thought any of the ſimple, unbalanced governments bad; ſimple monarchy, ſimple ariſtocracy, ſimple democracy; he held them all imperfect or vicious: all were bad by themſelves: the compoſition alone was good. That theſe had been always his principles, in which he had agreed with his friend, Mr. Burke, of whom he ſaid many kind and flattering

things, which Mr. Burke, I take it for granted, will know himſelf too well to think he merits, from any thing but Mr. Fox's acknowledged good nature. Mr. Fox thought, however, that, in many caſes, he was rather carried too far by his hatred to innovation.

Mr. Burke ſaid, he well knew that theſe had been Mr. Fox's invariable opinions; that they were a ſure ground for the confidence of his country. But he had been fearful, that cabals of very different intentions, would be ready to make uſe of his great name, againſt his character and ſentiments, in order to derive a credit to their deſtructive machinations.

Mr. Sheridan then roſe, and made a lively and eloquent ſpeech againſt Mr. Burke; in which, among other things, he ſaid that Mr. Burke had libelled the National

tional Aſſembly of France, and had caſt out reflections on ſuch characters as thoſe of the Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Bailly.

Mr. Burke ſaid, that he did not libel the National Aſſembly of France, whom he conſidered very little in the diſcuſſion of theſe matters. That he thought all the ſubſtantial power reſided in the republic of Paris, whoſe authority guided, or whoſe example was followed by all the Republics of France. The Republic of Paris had an army under their orders, and not under thoſe of the National Aſſembly.

N. B. As to the particular gentlemen, I do not remember that Mr. Burke mentioned either of them— certainly not Mr. Bailly. He alluded, undoubtedly, to the caſe of the Marquis de la Fayette; but whether what he aſſerted of him be a libel

on him, muſt be left to thoſe who are acquainted with the buſineſs.

Mr. Pitt concluded the debate with becoming gravity and dignity, and a reſerve on both ſides of the queſtion, as related to France, fit for a perſon in a miniſterial ſituation. He ſaid, that what he had ſpoken only regarded France when ſhe ſhould unite, which he rather thought ſhe ſoon might, with the liberty ſhe had acquired, the bleſſings of law and order. He, too, ſaid ſeveral civil things concerning the ſentiments of Mr. Burke, as applied to this country.

FINIS.

A LETTER

FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE

TO

A NOBLE LORD,

ON THE

ATTACKS MADE UPON HIM AND HIS PENSION,

IN

The Houſe of Lords,

BY

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

AND THE

EARL OF LAUDERDALE,

Early in the preſent Seſſions of Parliament.

London:

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1796.

MY LORD,

I COULD hardly flatter myſelf with the hope, that ſo very early in the ſeaſon I ſhould have to acknowledge obligations to the Duke of Bedford and to the Earl of Lauderdale. Theſe noble perſons have loſt no time in conferring upon me, that ſort of honour, which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly moſt congenial to their nature and their manners to beſtow.

To be ill ſpoken of, in whatever language they ſpeak, by the zealots of the new ſect in philoſophy and politicks, of which theſe noble perſons think ſo charitably, and of which others think ſo juſtly, to me, is no matter of uneaſineſs or ſurpriſe. To have incurred the diſpleaſure of the Duke of Orleans or the Duke of Bedford, to

fall under the cenſure of Citizen Briſſot or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, I ought to conſider as proofs, not the leaſt ſatisfactory, that I have produced ſome part of the effect I propoſed by my endeavours. I have laboured hard to earn, what the noble Lords are generous enough to pay. Perſonal offence I have given them none. The part they take againſt me is from zeal to the cauſe. It is well! It is perfectly well! I have to do homage to their juſtice. I have to thank the Bedfords and the Lauderdales for having ſo faithfully and ſo fully acquitted towards me whatever arrear of debt was left undiſcharged by the Prieſtleys and the Paines.

Some, perhaps, may think them executors in their own wrong: I at leaſt have nothing to complain of. They have gone beyond the demands of juſtice. They have been (a little perhaps beyond their intention) favourable to me. They have been the means of bringing out, by their invectives, the handſome things which Lord Grenville has had the goodneſs and condeſcenſion to ſay in my behalf. Retired as I am from the world, and from all it's affairs and all it's pleaſures, I confeſs it does kindle, in my nearly extinguiſhed feelings,

feelings, a very vivid ſatisfaction to be ſo attacked and ſo commended. It is ſoothing to my wounded mind, to be commended by an able, vigorous, and well informed ſtateſman, and at the very moment when he ſtands forth with a manlineſs and reſolution, worthy of himſelf and of his cauſe, for the preſervation of the perſon and government of our Sovereign, and therein for the ſecurity of the laws, the liberties, the morals, and the lives of his people. To be in any fair way connected with ſuch things, is indeed a diſtinction. No philoſophy can make me above it: no melancholy can depreſs me ſo low, as to make me wholly inſenſible to ſuch an honour.

Why will they not let me remain in obſcurity and inaction? Are they apprehenſive, that if an atom of me remains, the ſect has ſomething to fear? Muſt I be annihilated, leſt, like old *John Ziſca*'s, my ſkin might be made into a drum, to animate Europe to eternal battle, againſt a tyranny that threatens to overwhelm all Europe, and all the human race?

My Lord, it is a ſubject of aweful meditation. Before this of France, the annals of all time

have not furniſhed an inſtance of a *compleat* revolution. That revolution ſeems to have extended even to the conſtitution of the mind of man. It has this of wonderful in it, that it reſembles what Lord Verulam ſays of the operations of nature: It was perfect, not only in all its elements and principles, but in all it's members and it's organs from the very beginning. The moral ſcheme of France furniſhes the only pattern ever known, which they who admire will *inſtantly* reſemble. It is indeed an inexhauſtible repertory of one kind of examples. In my wretched condition, though hardly to be claſſed with the living, I am not ſafe from them. They have tygers to fall upon animated ſtrength. They have hyenas to prey upon carcaſſes. The national menagerie is collected by the firſt phyſiologiſts of the time; and it is defective in no deſcription of ſavage nature. They purſue, even ſuch as me, into the obſcureſt retreats, and haul them before their revolutionary tribunals. Neither ſex, nor age—not the ſanctuary of the tomb is ſacred to them. They have ſo determined a hatred to all privileged orders, that they deny even to the departed, the ſad immunities of the grave. They are not wholly without an object. Their turpitude purveys to their malice; and

and they unplumb the dead for bullets to aſſaſſinate the living. If all revolutioniſts were not proof againſt all caution, I ſhould recommend it to their conſideration, that no perſons were ever known in hiſtory, either ſacred or profane, to vex the ſepulchre, and by their ſorceries, to call up the prophetic dead, with any other event, than the prediction of their own diſaſtrous fate. —" Leave me, oh leave me to repoſe!"

In one thing I can excuſe the Duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary penſion. He cannot readily comprehend the tranſaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain; the production of no intrigue; the reſult of no compromiſe; the effect of no ſolicitation. The firſt ſuggeſtion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to his Majeſty or any of his Miniſters. It was long known that the inſtant my engagements would permit it, and before the heavieſt of all calamities had for ever condemned me to obſcurity and ſorrow, I had reſolved on a total retreat. I had executed that deſign. I was entirely out of the way of ſerving or of hurting any ſtateſman, or any party, when the Miniſters ſo generouſly and ſo nobly carried into

into effect the ſpontaneous bounty of the Crown. Both deſcriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer ſerve them, the Miniſters have conſidered my ſituation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutioniſts have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I truſt, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred. It came to me indeed, at a time of life, and in a ſtate of mind and body, in which no circumſtance of fortune could afford me any real pleaſure. But this was no fault in the Royal Donor, or in his Miniſters, who were pleaſed, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid ſervant of the publick, to aſſuage the ſorrows of a deſolate old man.

It would ill become me to boaſt of any thing. It would as ill become me, thus called upon, to depreciate the value of a long life, ſpent with unexampled toil in the ſervice of my country. Since the total body of my ſervices, on account of the induſtry which was ſhewn in them, and the fairneſs of my intentions, have obtained the acceptance of my Sovereign, it would be abſurd in me to range myſelf on the ſide of the Duke of Bedford and the Correſponding Society, or, as far as in me lies, to permit a diſpute on the rate at which the authority appointed by

by *our* Conſtitution to eſtimate ſuch things, has been pleaſed to ſet them.

Looſe libels ought to be paſſed by in ſilence and contempt. By me they have been ſo always. I knew that as long as I remained in publick, I ſhould live down the calumnies of malice, and the judgments of ignorance. If I happened to be now and then in the wrong, as who is not, like all other men, I muſt bear the conſequence of my faults and my miſtakes. The libels of the preſent day, are juſt of the ſame ſtuff as the libels of the paſt. But they derive an importance from the rank of the perſons they come from, and the gravity of the place where they were uttered. In ſome way or other I ought to take ſome notice of them. To aſſert myſelf thus traduced is not vanity or arrogance. It is a demand of juſtice; it is a demonſtration of gratitude. If I am unworthy, the Miniſters are worſe than prodigal. On that hypotheſis, I perfectly agree with the Duke of Bedford.

For whatever I have been (I am now no more) I put myſelf on my country. I ought to be allowed a reaſonable freedom, becauſe I ſtand upon my deliverance; and no culprit ought to plead

plead in irons. Even in the utmoſt latitude of defenſive liberty, I wiſh to preſerve all poſſible decorum. Whatever it may be in the eyes of theſe noble perſons themſelves, to me, their ſituation calls for the moſt profound reſpect. If I ſhould happen to treſpaſs a little, which I truſt I ſhall not, let it always be ſuppoſed, that a confuſion of characters may produce miſtakes; that in the maſquerades of the grand carnival of our age, whimſical adventures happen; odd things are ſaid and paſs off. If I ſhould fail a ſingle point in the high reſpect I owe to thoſe illuſtrious perſons, I cannot be ſuppoſed to mean the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of the Houſe of Peers, but the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of Palace Yard;—The Dukes and Earls of Brentford. There they are on the pavement; there they ſeem to come nearer to my humble level; and, virtually at leaſt, to have waved their high privilege.

Making this proteſtation, I refuſe all revolutionary tribunals, where men have been put to death for no other reaſon, than that they had obtained favours from the Crown. I claim, not the letter, but the ſpirit of the old Engliſh law, that is, to be tried by my peers. I decline his

his Grace's juriſdiction as a judge. I challenge the Duke of Bedford as a juror to paſs upon the value of my ſervices. Whatever his natural parts may be, I cannot recognize in his few and idle years, the competence to judge of my long and laborious life. If I can help it, he ſhall not be on the inqueſt of my *quantum meruit*. Poor rich man! He can hardly know any thing of publick induſtry in it's exertions, or can eſtimate it's compenſations when it's work is done. I have no doubt of his Grace's readineſs in all the calculations of vulgar arithmetick; but I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that he is very little ſtudied in the theory of moral proportions; and has never learned the Rule of Three in the arithmetick of policy and ſtate.

His Grace thinks I have obtained too much. I anſwer, that my exertions, whatever they have been, were ſuch as no hopes of pecuniary reward could poſſibly excite; and no pecuniary compenſation can poſſibly reward them. Between money and ſuch ſervices, if done by abler men than I am, there is no common principle of compariſon: they are quantities incommenſurable. Money is made for the comfort and convenience of animal life. It cannot be a reward for what, mere animal life muſt indeed ſuſ-

tain, but never can inſpire. With ſubmiſſion to his Grace, I have not had more than ſufficient. As to any noble uſe, I truſt I know how to employ, as well as he, a much greater fortune than he poſſeſſes. In a more confined application, I certainly ſtand in need of every kind of relief and eaſement much more than he does. When I ſay I have not received more than I deſerve, is this the language I hold to Majeſty? No! Far, very far, from it! Before that preſence, I claim no merit at all. Every thing towards me is favour, and bounty. One ſtyle to a gracious benefactor; another to a proud and inſulting foe.

His Grace is pleaſed to aggravate my guilt, by charging my acceptance of his Majeſty's grant as a departure from my ideas, and the ſpirit of my conduct with regard to œconomy. If it be, my ideas of œconomy were falſe and ill founded. But they are the Duke of Bedford's ideas of œconomy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain bills brought in by me on a meſſage from the throne in 1782, I tell him, that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or the ſpirit of thoſe acts.—Does he mean the pay-office act? I take it for granted he does not. The act to which he alludes is, I ſuppoſe,

I ſuppoſe, the eſtabliſhment act. I greatly doubt whether his Grace has ever read the one or the other. The firſt of theſe ſyſtems coſt me, with every aſſiſtance which my then ſituation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the publick at large, that it would prove impoſſible to reform and methodize the office of Paymaſter General. I undertook it, however; and I ſucceeded in my undertaking. Whether the military ſervice, or whether the general œconomy of our finances have profited by that act, I leave to thoſe who are acquainted with the army, and with the treaſury, to judge.

An opinion full as general prevailed alſo at the ſame time, that nothing could be done for the regulation of the civil-liſt eſtabliſhment. The very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitations to it's ſervices, was held abſurd. I had not ſeen the man, who ſo much as ſuggeſted one œconomical principle, or an œconomical expedient, upon that ſubject. Nothing but coarſe amputation, or coarſer taxation, were then talked of, both of them without deſign, combination, or the leaſt ſhadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal, or factious fury, were the whole contribution brought by the moſt

noiſy on that occaſion, towards the ſatisfaction of the publick, or the relief of the Crown.

Let me tell my youthful Cenſor, that the neceſſities of that time required ſomething very different from what others then ſuggeſted, or what his Grace now conceives. Let me inform him, that it was one of the moſt critical periods in our annals.

Aſtronomers have ſuppoſed, that if a certain comet, whoſe path interſected the ecliptick, had met the earth in ſome (I forget what) ſign, it would have whirled us along with it, in it's excentrick courſe, into God knows what regions of heat and cold. Had the portentous comet of the rights of man, (which "from it's horrid hair "ſhakes peſtilence, and war," and "with fear of "change perplexes Monarchs") had that comet croſſed upon us in that internal ſtate of England, nothing human could have prevented our being irreſiſtibly hurried, out of the highway of heaven, into all the vices, crimes, horrours and miſeries of the French revolution.

Happily, France was not then jacobinized. Her hoſtility was at a good diſtance. We had a limb cut off; but we preſerved the body: We loſt

loſt our Colonies; but we kept our Conſtitution. There was, indeed, much inteſtine heat; there was a dreadful fermentation. Wild and ſavage inſurrection quitted the woods, and prowled about our ſtreets in the name of reform. Such was the diſtemper of the publick mind, that there was no madman, in his maddeſt ideas, and maddeſt projects, who might not count upon numbers to ſupport his principles and execute his deſigns.

Many of the changes, by a great miſnomer called parliamentary reforms, went, not in the intention of all the profeſſors and ſupporters of them, undoubtedly, but went in their certain, and, in my opinion, not very remote effect, home to the utter deſtruction of the Conſtitution of this kingdom. Had they taken place, not France, but England, would have had the honour of leading up the death-dance of Democratick Revolution. Other projects, exactly coincident in time with thoſe, ſtruck at the very exiſtence of the kingdom under any conſtitution. There are who remember the blind fury of ſome, and the lamentable helpleſſneſs of others; here, a torpid confuſion, from a panic fear of the danger; there, the ſame inaction from a ſtupid inſenſibility to it; here, well-wiſhers to the miſchief;

there,

there, indifferent lookers-on. At the ſame time, a ſort of National Convention, dubious in its nature, and perilous in its example, noſed Parliament in the very ſeat of its authority; ſat with a ſort of ſuperintendance over it; and little leſs than dictated to it, not only laws, but the very form and eſſence of Legiſlature itſelf. In Ireland things ran in a ſtill more eccentrick courſe. Government was unnerved, confounded, and in a manner ſuſpended. It's equipoiſe was totally gone. I do not mean to ſpeak diſreſpectfully of Lord North. He was a man of admirable parts; of general knowledge; of a verſatile underſtanding fitted for every ſort of buſineſs; of infinite wit and pleaſantry; of a delightful temper; and with a mind moſt perfectly diſintereſted. But it would be only to degrade myſelf by a weak adulation, and not to honour the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted ſomething of the vigilance, and ſpirit of command, that the time required. Indeed, a darkneſs, next to the fog of this awful day, loured over the whole region. For a little time the helm appeared abandoned—

> Ipſe diem noctemque negat diſcernere cœlo
> Nec meminiſſe viæ mediâ Palinurus in undâ.

At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. They loved Liberty

berty as much as the Duke of Bedford can do; and they underſtood it at leaſt as well. Perhaps their politicks, as uſual, took a tincture from their character, and they cultivated what they loved. The Liberty they purſued was a Liberty inſeparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion, and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wiſh, that Liberty, in itſelf, one of the firſt of bleſſings, ſhould in it's perverſion become the greateſt curſe which could fall upon mankind. To preſerve the Conſtitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of it's formation, not in one ſingle part, but in all it's parts, was to them the firſt object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. Theſe were with them only different means of obtaining that object; and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a ſurer or a leſs certain proſpect of arriving at that end. It is ſome conſolation to me in the chearleſs gloom, which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality, nor in appearance, for any length of time, was ſeparated from their good wiſhes and good opinion.

By what accident it matters not, nor upon what deſert, but juſt then, and in the midſt of

that

that hunt of obloquy, which ever has purſued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very conſiderable degree of publick confidence. I know well enough how equivocal a teſt this kind of popular opinion forms of the merit that obtained it. I am no ſtranger to the inſecurity of it's tenure. I do not boaſt of it. It is mentioned, to ſhew, not how highly I prize the thing, but my right to value the uſe I made of it. I endeavoured to turn that ſhort-lived advantage to myſelf into a permanent benefit to my Country. Far am I from detracting from the merit of ſome Gentlemen, out of office or in it, on that occaſion. No!—It is not my way to refuſe a full and heaped meaſure of juſtice to the aids that I receive. I have, through life, been willing to give every thing to others; and to reſerve nothing for myſelf, but the inward conſcience, that I had omitted no pains, to diſcover, to animate, to diſcipline, to direct the abilities of the Country for it's ſervice, and to place them in the beſt light to improve their age, or to adorn it. This conſcience I have. I have never ſuppreſſed any man; never checked him for a moment in his courſe, by any jealouſy, or by any policy. I was always ready, to the height of my means (and they were always infinitely below my deſires) to forward thoſe abilities which overpowered my own.

He

He is an ill-furniſhed undertaker, who has no machinery but his own hands to work with. Poor in my own faculties, I ever thought myſelf rich in theirs. In that period of difficulty and danger, more eſpecially, I conſulted, and ſincerely co-operated with men of all parties, who ſeemed diſpoſed to the ſame ends, or to any main part of them. Nothing, to prevent diſorder, was omitted: when it appeared, nothing to ſubdue it, was left uncounſelled, nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I ſpeak of, and having a momentary lead, ſo aided and ſo encouraged, and as a feeble inſtrument in a mighty hand—I do not ſay, I ſaved my Country; I am ſure I did my Country important ſervice. There were few, indeed, that did not at that time acknowledge it, and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one voice, that no man in the kingdom better deſerved an honourable proviſion ſhould be made for him.

So much for my general conduct through the whole of the portentous criſis from 1780 to 1782, and the general ſenſe then entertained of that conduct by my country. But my character, as a reformer, in the particular inſtances which the Duke of Bedford refers to, is ſo connected in principle with my opinions on the hideous changes, which have ſince barbarized

France, and ſpreading thence, threaten the political and moral order of the whole world, that it ſeems to demand ſomething of a more detailed diſcuſſion.

My œconomical reforms were not, as his Grace may think, the ſuppreſſion of a paltry penſion or employment, more or leſs. Œconomy in my plans was, as it ought to be, ſecondary, ſubordinate, inſtrumental. I acted on ſtate principles. I found a great diſtemper in the commonwealth; and, according to the nature of the evil and of the object, I treated it. The malady was deep; it was complicated, in the cauſes and in the ſymptoms. Throughout it was full of contraindicants. On one hand Government, daily growing more invidious for an apparent increaſe of the means of ſtrength, was every day growing more contemptible by real weakneſs. Nor was this diſſolution confined to Government commonly ſo called. It extended to Parliament; which was loſing not a little in it's dignity and eſtimation, by an opinion of it's not acting on worthy motives. On the other hand, the deſires of the People, (partly natural and partly infuſed into them by art) appeared in ſo wild and inconſiderate a manner, with regard to the œconomical object (for

(for I ſet aſide for a moment the dreadful tampering with the body of the Conſtitution itſelf) that if their petitions had literally been complied with, the State would have been convulſed; and a gate would have been opened, through which all property might be ſacked and ravaged. Nothing could have ſaved the Publick from the miſchiefs of the falſe reform but it's abſurdity; which would ſoon have brought itſelf, and with it all real reform, into diſcredit. This would have left a rankling wound in the hearts of the people who would know they had failed in the accompliſhment of their wiſhes, but who, like the reſt of mankind in all ages, would impute the blame to any thing rather than to their own proceedings. But there were then perſons in the world, who nouriſhed complaint; and would have been thoroughly diſappointed if the people were ever ſatisfied. I was not of that humour. I wiſhed that they *ſhould* be ſatisfied. It was my aim to give to the People the ſubſtance of what I knew they deſired, and what I thought was right whether they deſired it or not, before it had been modified for them into ſenſeleſs petitions. I knew that there is a manifeſt marked diſtinction, which ill men, with ill deſigns, or weak men incapable of any deſign, will conſtantly be confounding, that is, a marked diſtinction be-

tween Change and Reformation. The former alters the ſubſtance of the objects themſelves; and gets rid of all their eſſential good, as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is deſired, cannot be certainly known beforehand. Reform is, not a change in the ſubſtance, or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of. So far as that is removed, all is ſure. It ſtops there; and if it fails, the ſubſtance which underwent the operation, at the very worſt, is but where it was.

All this, in effect, I think, but am not ſure, I have ſaid elſewhere. It cannot at this time be too often repeated; line upon line; precept upon precept; until it comes into the currency of a proverb, *To innovate is not to reform.* The French revolutioniſts complained of every thing; they refuſed to reform any thing; and they left nothing, no, nothing at all *unchanged.* The conſequences are *before* us,—not in remote hiſtory; not in future prognoſtication: they are about us; they are upon us. They ſhake the publick ſecurity;

ſecurity; they menace private enjoyment. They dwarf the growth of the young; they break the quiet of the old. If we travel, they ſtop our way. They infeſt us in town; they purſue us to the country. Our buſineſs is interrupted; our repoſe is troubled; our pleaſures are ſaddened; our very ſtudies are poiſoned and perverted, and knowledge is rendered worſe than ignorance, by the enormous evils of this dreadful innovation. The revolution harpies of France, ſprung from night and hell, or from that chaotick anarchy, which generates equivocally "all monſtrous, all prodigious things," cuckoo-like, adulterouſly lay their eggs, and brood over, and hatch them in the neſt of every neighbouring State. Theſe obſcene harpies, who deck themſelves, in I know not what divine attributes, but who in reality are foul and ravenous birds of prey (both mothers and daughters) flutter over our heads, and ſouſe down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unrifled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the ſlime of their filthy offal *.

* Triſtius haud illis monſtrum, nec ſævior ulla
Peſtis, & ira Deûm Stygiis ſeſe extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus; fædiſſima ventris
Proluvies; uncæque manus; & pallida ſemper
Ora fame——

Here

If his Grace can contemplate the reſult of this compleat innovation, or, as ſome friends of his will call it *reform*, in the whole body of it's ſolidity and compound maſs, at which, as Hamlet ſays, the face of Heaven glows with horrour and indignation, and which, in truth, makes every reflecting mind, and every feeling heart, perfectly thought-ſick, without a thorough abhorrence of every thing they ſay, and every thing they do, I am amazed at the morbid ſtrength, or the natural infirmity of his mind.

It was then not my love, but my hatred to innovation, that produced my Plan of Reform. Without troubling myſelf with the exactneſs of the logical diagram, I conſidered them as things ſubſtantially oppoſite. It was to prevent that evil, that I propoſed the meaſures, which his Grace is pleaſed, and I am not ſorry he is pleaſed, to recall to my recollection. I had (what

Here the Poet breaks the line, becauſe he (and that He is Virgil) had not verſe or language to deſcribe that monſter even as he had conceived her. Had he lived to our time, he would have been more overpowered with the reality than he was with the imagination. Virgil only knew the horror of the times before him. Had he lived to ſee the Revolutioniſts and Conſtitutionaliſts of France, he would have had more horrid and diſguſting features of his harpies to deſcribe, and more frequent failures in the attempt to deſcribe them.

I hope

I hope that Noble Duke will remember in all his operations) a State to preſerve, as well as a State to reform. I had a People to gratify, but not to inflame, or to miſlead. I do not claim half the credit for what I did, as for what I prevented from being done. In that ſituation of the publick mind, I did not undertake, as was then propoſed, to new model the Houſe of Commons or the Houſe of Lords; or to change the authority under which any officer of the Crown acted, who was ſuffered at all to exiſt. Crown, Lords, Commons, judicial ſyſtem, ſyſtem of adminiſtration, exiſted as they had exiſted before; and in the mode and manner in which they had always exiſted. My meaſures were, what I then truly ſtated them to the Houſe to be, in their intent, healing and mediatorial. A complaint was made of too much influence in the Houſe of Commons; I reduced it in both Houſes; and I gave my reaſons article by article for every reduction, and ſhewed why I thought it ſafe for the ſervice of the State. I heaved the lead every inch of way I made. A diſpoſition to expence was complained of; to that I oppoſed, not mere retrenchment, but a ſyſtem of œconomy, which would make a random expence without plan or foreſight, in future not

eaſily

eaſily practicable. I proceeded upon principles of reſearch to put me in poſſeſſion of my matter; on principles of method to regulate it; and on principles in the human mind and in civil affairs to ſecure and perpetuate the operation. I conceived nothing arbitrarily; nor propoſed any thing to be done by the will and pleaſure of others, or my own; but by reaſon, and by reaſon only. I have ever abhorred, ſince the firſt dawn of my underſtanding to this it's obſcure twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of Government, where only a ſovereign reaſon, paramount to all forms of legiſlation and adminiſtration, ſhould dictate. Government is made for the very purpoſe of oppoſing that reaſon to will and to caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed, in Kings, in Senates, or in People.

On a careful review, therefore, and analyſis of all the component parts of the Civil Liſt, and on weighing them each againſt other, in order to make, as much as poſſible, all of them a ſubject of eſtimate (the foundation and corner-ſtone of all regular provident œconomy) it appeared to me evident, that this was impracticable, whilſt that part, called the Penſion Liſt,

was

was totally diſcretionary in it's amount. For this reaſon, and for this only, I propoſed to reduce it, both in it's groſs quantity, and in it's larger individual proportions, to a certainty: leſt, if it were left without a *general* limit, it might eat up the Civil Liſt ſervice; if ſuffered to be granted in portions too great for the fund, it might defeat it's own end; and by unlimited allowances to ſome, it might diſable the Crown in means of providing for others. The Penſion Liſt was to be kept as a ſacred fund; but it could not be kept as a conſtant open fund, ſufficient for growing demands, if ſome demands could wholly devour it. The tenour of the Act will ſhew that it regarded the Civil Liſt *only*, the reduction of which to ſome ſort of eſtimate was my great object.

No other of the Crown funds did I meddle with, becauſe they had not the ſame relations. This of the four and a half per cents does his Grace imagine had eſcaped me, or had eſcaped all the men of buſineſs, who acted with me in thoſe regulations? I knew that ſuch a fund exiſted, and that penſions had been always granted on it, before his Grace was born. This fund was full in my eye. It was full in the eyes of thoſe who worked with me. It was left on principle. On principle I did what was then

done; and on principle what was left undone was omitted. I did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward merit. If I preſſed this point too cloſe, I acted contrary to the avowed principles on which I went. Gentlemen are very fond of quoting me; but if any one thinks it worth his while to know the rules that guided me in my plan of reform, he will read my printed ſpeech on that ſubject; at leaſt what is contained from page 230 to page 241 in the ſecond Volume of the collection which a friend has given himſelf the trouble to make of my publications. Be this as it may, theſe two Bills (though atchieved with the greateſt labour, and management of every ſort, both within and without the Houſe) were only a part, and but a ſmall part, of a very large ſyſtem, comprehending all the objects I ſtated in opening my propoſition, and indeed many more, which I juſt hinted at in my Speech to the Electors of Briſtol, when I was put out of that repreſentation. All theſe, in ſome ſtate or other of forwardneſs, I have long had by me.

But do I juſtify his Majeſty's grace on theſe grounds? I think them the leaſt of my ſervices! The time gave them an occaſional value: What I have done in the way of political œconomy was far from confined to this body of meaſures.

meaſures. I did not come into Parliament to con my leſſon. I had earned my penſion before I ſet my foot in St. Stephen's Chapel. I was prepared and diſciplined to this political warfare. The firſt ſeſſion I ſat in Parliament, I found it neceſſary to analyze the whole commercial, financial, conſtitutional and foreign intereſts of Great Britain and it's Empire. A great deal was then done; and more, far more would have been done, if more had been permitted by events. Then in the vigour of my manhood, my conſtitution ſunk under my labour. Had I then died, (and I ſeemed to myſelf very near death) I had then earned for thoſe who belonged to me, more than the Duke of Bedford's ideas of ſervice are of power to eſtimate. But in truth, theſe ſervices I am called to account for, are not thoſe on which I value myſelf the moſt. If I were to call for a reward (which I have never done) it ſhould be for thoſe in which for fourteen years, without intermiſſion, I ſhewed the moſt induſtry, and had the leaſt ſucceſs; I mean in the affairs of India. They are thoſe on which I value myſelf the moſt; moſt for the importance; moſt for the labour; moſt for the judgment; moſt for conſtancy and perſeverance in the purſuit. Others may value

them moſt for the *intention*. In that, ſurely, they are not miſtaken.

Does his Grace think, that they who adviſed the Crown to make my retreat eaſy, conſidered me only as an œconomiſt? That, well underſtood, however, is a good deal. If I had not deemed it of ſome value, I ſhould not have made political œconomy an object of my humble ſtudies, from my very early youth to near the end of my ſervice in parliament, even before, (at leaſt to any knowledge of mine) it had employed the thoughts of ſpeculative men in other parts of Europe. At that time, it was ſtill in it's infancy in England, where, in the laſt century, it had it's origin. Great and learned men thought my ſtudies were not wholly thrown away, and deigned to communicate with me now and then on ſome particulars of their immortal works. Something of theſe ſtudies may appear incidentally in ſome of the earlieſt things I publiſhed. The Houſe has been witneſs to their effect, and has profited of them more or leſs, for above eight and twenty years.

To their eſtimate I leave the matter. I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, ſwaddled, and

and rocked, and dandled into a Legiſlator; "*Nitor in adverſum*" is the motto for a man like me. I poſſeſſed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts, that recommend men to the favour and protection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts, by impoſing on the underſtandings, of the people. At every ſtep of my progreſs in life (for in every ſtep was I traverſed and oppoſed), and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to ſhew my paſſport, and again and again to prove my ſole title to the honour of being uſeful to my Country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with it's laws, and the whole ſyſtem of it's intereſts both abroad and at home. Otherwiſe no rank, no toleration even, for me. I had no arts, but manly arts. On them I have ſtood, and, pleaſe God, in ſpite of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, to the laſt gaſp will I ſtand.

Had his Grace condeſcended to enquire concerning the perſon, whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found, that in the whole courſe of my life, I have never, on any pretence of œconomy, or on any other pretence, ſo much as in a ſingle inſtance, ſtood between any man and his reward of ſervice,

ſervice, or his encouragement in uſeful talent and purſuit, from the higheſt of thoſe ſervices and purſuits to the loweſt. On the contrary I have, on an hundred occaſions, exerted myſelf with ſingular zeal to forward every man's even tolerable pretenſions. I have more than once had good-natured reprehenſions from my friends for carrying the matter to ſomething bordering on abuſe. This line of conduct, whatever it's merits might be, was partly owing to natural diſpoſition; but I think full as much to reaſon and principle. I looked on the conſideration of publick ſervice, or publick ornament, to be real and very juſtice: and I ever held, a ſcanty and penurious juſtice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its conſequences, the worſt œconomy in the world. In ſaving money, I ſoon can count up all the good I do; but when by a cold penury, I blaſt the abilities of a nation, and ſtunt the growth of it's active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation. Whether it be too much or too little, whatever I have done has been general and ſyſtematick. I have never entered into thoſe trifling vexations and oppreſſive details, that have been falſely, and moſt ridiculouſly laid to my charge.

Did

Did I blame the penſions given to Mr. Barré and Mr. Dunning between the propoſition and execution of my plan? No! ſurely, no! Thoſe penſions were within my principles. I aſſert it, thoſe gentlemen deſerved their penſions, their titles,—all they had; and if more they had, I ſhould have been but pleaſed the more. They were men of talents; they were men of ſervice. I put the profeſſion of the law out of the queſtion in one of them. It is a ſervice that rewards itſelf. But their *publick ſervice*, though, from their abilities unqueſtionably of more value than mine, in it's quantity and in it's duration was not to be mentioned with it. But I never could drive a hard bargain in my life, concerning any matter whatever; and leaſt of all do I know how to haggle and huckſter with merit. Penſion for myſelf I obtained none; nor did I ſolicit any. Yet I was loaded with hatred for every thing that was with-held, and with obloquy for every thing that was given. I was thus left to ſupport the grants of a name ever dear to me, and ever venerable to the world, in favour of thoſe, who were no friends of mine or of his, againſt the rude attacks of thoſe who were at that time friends to the grantees, and their own zealous partizans. I have never heard the Earl of Lauderdale complain of theſe penſions. He finds nothing

nothing wrong till he comes to me. This is impartiality, in the true modern revolutionary ſtyle.

Whatever I did at that time, ſo far as it regarded order and œconomy, is ſtable and eternal; as all principles muſt be. A particular order of things may be altered; order itſelf cannot loſe its value. As to other particulars, they are variable by time and by circumſtances. Laws of regulation are not fundamental laws. The publick exigencies are the maſters of all ſuch laws. They rule the laws, and are not to be ruled by them. They who exerciſe the legiſlative power at the time muſt judge.

It may be new to his Grace, but I beg leave to tell him, that mere parſimony is not œconomy. It is ſeparable in theory from it; and in fact it may, or it may not, be a *part* of œconomy, according to circumſtances. Expence, and great expence, may be an eſſential part in true œconomy. If parſimony were to be conſidered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is however another and an higher œconomy. Œconomy is a diſtributive virtue, and conſiſts not in ſaving, but in ſelection. Parſimony requires no providence, no ſagacity, no powers of combination, no compariſon,

pariſon, no judgment. Meer inſtinct, and that not an inſtinct of the nobleſt kind, may produce this falſe œconomy in perfection. The other œconomy has larger views. It demands a diſcriminating judgment, and a firm ſagacious mind. It ſhuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpreſuming merit. If none but meritorious ſervice or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the ſervice it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No ſtate, ſince the foundation of ſociety, has been impoveriſhed by that ſpecies of profuſion. Had the œconomy of ſelection and proportion been at all times obſerved, we ſhould not now have had an overgrown Duke of Bedford, to oppreſs the induſtry of humble men, and to limit by the ſtandard of his own conceptions, the juſtice, the bounty, or, if he pleaſes, the charity of the Crown.

His Grace may think as meanly as he will of my deſerts in the far greater part of my conduct in life. It is free for him to do ſo. There will always be ſome difference of opinion in the value of political ſervices. But there is one merit of mine, which he, of all men living, ought to be

the laſt to call in queſtion. I have ſupported with very great zeal, and I am told with ſome degree of ſucceſs, thoſe opinions, or if his Grace likes another expreſſion better, thoſe old prejudices which buoy up the ponderous maſs of his nobility, wealth, and titles. I have omitted no exertion to prevent him and them from ſinking to that level, to which the meretricious French faction, his Grace at leaſt coquets with, omit no exertion to reduce both. I have done all I could to diſcountenance their enquiries into the fortunes of thoſe, who hold large portions of wealth without any apparent merit of their own. I have ſtrained every nerve to keep the Duke of Bedford in that ſituation, which alone makes him my ſuperior. Your Lordſhip has been a witneſs of the uſe he makes of that pre-eminence.

But be it, that this is virtue! Be it, that there is virtue in this well ſelected rigour; yet all virtues are not equally becoming to all men and at all times. There are crimes, undoubtedly there are crimes, which in all ſeaſons of our exiſtence, ought to put a generous antipathy in action; crimes that provoke an indignant juſtice, and call forth a warm and animated purſuit. But all things, that concern, what I may call, the preventive police of morality, all things mere-

ly

ly rigid, harſh and cenſorial, the antiquated moraliſts, at whoſe feet I was brought up, would not have thought theſe the fitteſt matter to form the favourite virtues of young men of rank. What might have been well enough, and have been received with a veneration mixed with awe and terrour, from an old, ſevere, crabbed Cato, would have wanted ſomething of propriety in the young Scipios, the ornament of the Roman Nobility, in the flower of their life. But the times, the morals, the maſters, the ſcholars have all undergone a thorough revolution. It is a vile illiberal ſchool, this new French academy of the *ſans culottes*. There is nothing in it that is fit for a Gentleman to learn.

Whatever it's vogue may be, I ſtill flatter myſelf, that the parents of the growing generation will be ſatisfied with what is to be taught to their children in Weſtminſter, in Eaton, or in Wincheſter: I ſtill indulge the hope that no *grown* Gentleman or Nobleman of our time will think of finiſhing at Mr. Thelwall's lecture whatever may have been left incompleat at the old Univerſities of his country. I would give to Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt for a motto, what was ſaid of a Roman Cenſor or Prætor (or

what was he), who in virtue of a Senatûs conſultum ſhut up certain academies,

"Cludere Ludum Impudentiæ juſſit,"

Every honeſt father of a family in the kingdom will rejoice at the breaking up for the holidays, and will pray that there may be a very long vacation in all ſuch ſchools.

The awful ſtate of the time, and not myſelf or my own juſtification, is my true object in what I now write; or in what I ſhall ever write or ſay. It little ſignifies to the world what becomes of ſuch things as me, or even as the Duke of Bedford. What I ſay about either of us is nothing more than a vehicle, as you, my Lord, will eaſily perceive, to convey my ſentiments on matters far more worthy of your attention. It is when I ſtick to my apparent firſt ſubject that I ought to apologize, not when I depart from it. I therefore muſt beg your Lordſhip's pardon for again reſuming it after this very ſhort digreſſion; aſſuring you that I ſhall never altogether loſe ſight of ſuch matter as perſons abler than I am may turn to ſome profit.

The Duke of Bedford conceives, that he is obliged to call the attention of the Houſe of Peers to his Majeſty's grant to me, which he conſiders as exceſſive and out of all bounds.

I know not how it has happened, but it really ſeems, that, whilſt his Grace was meditating his well-conſidered cenſure upon me, he fell into a ſort of ſleep. Homer nods; and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced and incongruouſly put together, his Grace preſerved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the ſubject-matter from the Crown-grants *to his own family*. This is "the ſtuff of which his dreams are made." In that way of putting things together his Grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the Houſe of Ruſſel were ſo enormous, as not only to outrage œconomy, but even to ſtagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the Leviatan hamong all the creatures of the Crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and rolicks in the ocean of the Royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilſt "he lies floating many a rood," he is ſtill a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very ſpiracles through which he ſpouts a torrent of brine againſt his origin, and covers me all over with the

the ſpray,—every thing of him and about him is from the Throne. Is it for *him* to queſtion the diſpenſation of the Royal favour?

I really am at a loſs to draw any ſort of parallel between the publick merits of his Grace, by which he juſtifies the grants he holds, and theſe ſervices of mine, on the favourable conſtruction of which I have obtained what his Grace ſo much diſapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honour of acquaintance with the noble Duke. But I ought to preſume, and it coſts me nothing to do ſo, that he abundantly deſerves the eſteem and love of all who live with him. But as to publick ſervice, why truly it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myſelf in rank, in fortune, in ſplendid deſcent, in youth, ſtrength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his ſervices, and my attempts to be uſeful to my country. It would not be groſs adulation, but uncivil irony, to ſay, that he has any publick merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the ſervices by which his vaſt landed Penſions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and perſonal; his are derivative. It is his anceſtor, the original penſioner, that has laid up this inexhauſtible fund

of

of merit, which makes his Grace ſo very delicate and exceptious about the merit of all other grantees of the Crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I ſhould have ſaid 'tis his eſtate; that's enough. It is his by law; what have I to do with it or it's hiſtory? He would naturally have ſaid on his ſide, 'tis this man's fortune.—He is as good now, as my anceſtor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old penſions; he is an old man with very young penſions,—that's all?

Why will his Grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the Crown thoſe prodigies of profuſe donation by which he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals? I would willingly leave him to the Herald's College, which the philoſophy of the Sans culottes, (prouder by far than all the Garters, and Norroys and Clarencieux, and Rouge Dragons that ever pranced in a proceſſion of what his friends call ariſtocrates and deſpots) will aboliſh with contumely and ſcorn. Theſe hiſtorians, recorders, and blazoners of virtues and arms, differ wholly from that other deſcription of hiſtorians, who never aſſign any act of politicians to a good motive. Theſe gentle hiſtorians, on the contrary,

dip

dip their pens in nothing but the milk of human kindneſs. They ſeek no further for merit than the preamble of a patent, or the inſcription on a tomb. With them every man created a peer is firſt an hero ready made. They judge of every man's capacity for office by the offices he has filled; and the more offices the more ability. Every General-officer with them is a Marlborough; every Stateſman a Burleigh; every Judge a Murray or a Yorke. They, who alive, were laughed at or pitied, by all their acquaintance, make as good a figure as the beſt of them in the pages of Guillim, Edmonſon, and Collins.

To theſe recorders, ſo full of good nature to the great and proſperous, I would willingly leave the firſt Baron Ruſſel, and Earl of Bedford, and the merits of his grants. But the aulnager, the weigher, the meter of grants, will not ſuffer us to acquieſce in the judgment of the Prince reigning at the time when they were made. They are never good to thoſe who earn them. Well then; ſince the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the Sovereign is not to be taken, let us turn our eyes to hiſtory, in which great men have always a pleaſure in contemplating the heroic origin of their houſe.

The

The firſt peer of the name, the firſt purchaſer of the grants, was a Mr. Ruſſel, a perſon of an ancient gentleman's family raiſed by being a minion of Henry the Eighth. As there generally is ſome reſemblance of character to create theſe relations, the favourite was in all likelihood much ſuch another as his maſter. The firſt of thoſe immoderate grants was not taken from the antient demeſne of the Crown, but from the recent confiſcation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion having ſucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcaſe to the jackall in waiting. Having taſted once the food of confiſcation, the favourites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favourite's firſt grant was from the lay nobility. The ſecond, infinitely improving on the enormity of the firſt, was from the plunder of the church. In truth his Grace is ſomewhat excuſable for his diſlike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in it's kind ſo different from his own.

Mine was from a mild and benevolent ſovereign; his from Henry the Eighth.

Mine had not it's fund in the murder of any innocent perſon of illuſtrious rank*, or in the pillage of any body of unoffending men. His grants were from the aggregate and conſolidated funds of judgments iniquitouſly legal, and from poſſeſſions voluntarily ſurrendered by the lawful proprietors with the gibbet at their door.

The merit of the grantee whom he derives from, was that of being a prompt and greedy inſtrument of a *levelling* tyrant, who oppreſſed all deſcriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on every thing that was *great and noble*. Mine has been, in endeavouring to ſcreen every man, in every claſs, from oppreſſion, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who in the bad times of confiſcating Princes, confiſcating chief Governors, or confiſcating Demagogues, are the moſt expoſed to jealouſy, avarice and envy.

The merit of the original grantee of his Grace's penſions, was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the ſpoil with a Prince, who plun-

* See the hiſtory of the melancholy cataſtrophe of the Duke of Buckingham. Temp. Hen. 8.

dered

dered a part of his national church of his time and country. Mine was in defending the whole of the national church of my own time and my own country, and the whole of the national churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples which lead to eccleſiaſtical pillage, thence to a contempt of *all* preſcriptive titles, thence to the pillage of *all* property, and thence to univerſal deſolation.

The merit of the origin of his Grace's fortune was in being a favourite and chief adviſer to a Prince, who left no liberty to their native country. My endeavour was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born, and for all deſcriptions and denominations in it.—Mine was to ſupport with unrelaxing vigilance every right, every privilege, every franchiſe, in this my adopted, my dearer and more comprehenſive country; and not only to preſerve thoſe rights in this chief ſeat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language and religion, in the vaſt domain that ſtill is under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection, of the Britiſh Crown.

His founder's merits were, by arts in which he ſerved his maſter and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedneſs and depopulation on his country. Mine were under a benevolent Prince, in promoting the commerce, manufactures and agriculture of his kingdom; in which his Majeſty ſhews an eminent example, who even in his amuſements is a patriot, and in hours of leiſure an improver of his native ſoil.

His founder's merit, was the merit of a gentleman raiſed by the arts of a Court, and the protection of a Wolſey, to the eminence of a great and potent Lord. His merit in that eminence was by inſtigating a tyrant to injuſtice, to provoke a people to rebellion —— My merit was, to awaken the ſober part of the country, that they might put themſelves on their guard againſt any one potent Lord, or any greater number of potent Lords, or any combination of great leading men of any ſort, if ever they ſhould attempt to proceed in the ſame courſes, but in the reverſe order, that is, by inſtigating a corrupted populace to rebellion, and, through that rebellion, introducing a tyranny yet worſe than the tyranny which his Grace's anceſtor ſupported, and of which he profited in the manner

we behold in the deſpotiſm of Henry the Eighth.

The political merit of the firſt penſioner of his Grace's houſe, was that of being concerned as a counſellor of ſtate in adviſing, and in his perſon executing the conditions of a diſhonourable peace with France; the ſurrendering the fortreſs of Boulogne, then our out-guard on the Continent. By that ſurrender, Calais, the key of France, and the bridle in the mouth of that power, was, not many years afterwards, finally loſt. My merit has been in reſiſting the power and pride of France, under any form of it's rule; but in oppoſing it with the greateſt zeal and earneſtneſs, when that rule appeared in the worſt form it could aſſume; the worſt indeed which the prime cauſe and principle of all evil could poſſibly give it. It was my endeavour by every means to excite a ſpirit in the houſe, where I had the honour of a ſeat, for carrying on with early vigour and deciſion, the moſt clearly juſt and neceſſary war, that this or any nation ever carried on; in order to ſave my country from the iron yoke of it's power, and from the more dreadful contagion of its principles; to preſerve, while they can be preſerved pure and untainted, the ancient, inbred integrity, piety,

good

good nature, and good humour of the people of England, from the dreadful peſtilence which beginning in France, threatens to lay waſte the whole moral, and in a great degree the whole phyſical world, having done both in the focus of it's moſt intenſe malignity.

The labours of his Grace's founder merited the curſes, not loud but deep, of the Commons of England, on whom *he* and his maſter had effected a *compleat Parliamentary Reform*, by making them in their ſlavery and humiliation, the true and adequate repreſentatives of a debaſed, degraded, and undone people. My merits were, in having had an active, though not always an oſtentatious ſhare, in every one act, without exception, of undiſputed conſtitutional utility in my time, and in having ſupported on all occaſions, the authority, the efficiency, and the privileges of the Commons of Great Britain. I ended my ſervices by a recorded and fully reaſoned aſſertion on their own journals of their conſtitutional rights, and a vindication of their conſtitutional conduct. I laboured in all things to merit their inward approbation, and (along with the aſſiſtants of the largeſt, the greateſt, and beſt of my endeavours) I received their free, unbiaſſed, publick, and ſolemn thanks.

Thus

Thus ſtands the account of the comparative merits of the Crown grants which compoſe the Duke of Bedford's fortune as balanced againſt mine. In the name of common ſenſe, why ſhould the Duke of Bedford think, that none but of the Houſe of Ruſſel are entitled to the favour of the Crown? Why ſhould he imagine that no King of England has been capable of judging of merit but King Henry the Eighth? Indeed, he will pardon me; he is a little miſtaken; all virtue did not end in the firſt Earl of Bedford. All diſcernment did not loſe it's viſion when his Creator cloſed his eyes. Let him remit his rigour on the diſproportion between merit and reward in others, and they will make no enquiry into the origin of his fortune. They will regard with much more ſatisfaction, as he will contemplate with infinitely more advantage, whatever in his pedigree has been dulcified by an expoſure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallick tincture of the ſpring. It is little to be doubted, that ſeveral of his forefathers in that long ſeries, have degenerated into honour and virtue. Let the Duke of Bedford (I am ſure he will) reject with ſcorn and horror, the counſels of the lecturers, thoſe wicked panders to avarice and ambition, who would tempt him in the troubles

bles of his country, to ſeek another enormous fortune from the forfeitures of another nobility, and the plunder of another church. Let him (and I truſt that yet he will) employ all the energy of his youth, and all the reſources of his wealth, to cruſh rebellious principles which have no foundation in morals, and rebellious movements, that have no provocation in tyranny.

Then will be forgot the rebellions, which, by a doubtful priority in crime, his anceſtor had provoked and extinguiſhed. On ſuch a conduct in the noble Duke, many of his countrymen might, and with ſome excuſe might, give way to the enthuſiaſm of their gratitude, and in the daſhing ſtyle of ſome of the old declaimers, cry out, that if the fates had found no other way in which they could give a *Duke of Bedford and his opulence as props to a tottering world, then the butchery of the Duke of Buckingham might be tolerated; it might be regarded even with complacency, whilſt in the heir of confiſcation they ſaw the ſympathizing comforter of the martyrs, who ſuffer under the cruel confiſcation of this day; whilſt they beheld with admiration

* At ſi non aliam venturo fata Neroni, &c.

his

his zealous protection of the virtuous and loyal nobility of France, and his manly ſupport of his brethren, the yet ſtanding nobility and gentry of his native land. Then his Grace's merit would be pure and new, and ſharp, as freſh from the mint of honour. As he pleaſed he might reflect honour on his predeceſſors, or throw it forward on thoſe who were to ſucceed him. He might be the propagator of the ſtock of honour, or the root of it, as he thought proper.

Had it pleaſed God to continue to me the hopes of ſucceſſion, I ſhould have been, according to my mediocrity, and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a ſort of founder of a family; I ſhould have left a ſon, who, in all the points in which perſonal merit can be viewed, in ſcience, in erudition, in genius, in taſte, in honour, in generoſity, in humanity, in every liberal ſentiment, and every liberal accompliſhment, would not have ſhewn himſelf inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of thoſe whom he traces in his line. His Grace very ſoon would have wanted all plauſibility in his attack upon that proviſion which belonged more to mine than to me. He would ſoon have ſupplied every deficiency, and ſymmetrized every diſproportion. It would not have been for that ſucceſſor to reſort to any ſtag-

nant waſting reſervoir of merit in me, or in any anceſtry. He had in himſelf a ſalient, living ſpring, of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would have re-purchaſed the bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a publick creature; and had no enjoyment whatever, but in the performance of ſome duty. At this exigent moment, the loſs of a finiſhed man is not eaſily ſupplied.

But a diſpoſer whoſe power we are little able to reſiſt, and whoſe wiſdom it behoves us not at all to diſpute; has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous weakneſs might ſuggeſt) a far better. The ſtorm has gone over me; and I lie like one of thoſe old oaks which the late hurricane has ſcattered about me. I am ſtripped of all my honours; I am torn up by the roots, and lie proſtrate on the earth! There, and proſtrate there, I moſt unfeignedly recognize the divine juſtice, and in ſome degree ſubmit to it. But whilſt I humble myſelf before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjuſt and inconſiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After ſome of the convulſive ſtruggles of our irritable nature, he ſubmitted himſelf, and repented in duſt and aſhes.

aſhes. But even ſo, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a conſiderable degree of verbal aſperity, thoſe ill-natured neighbours of his, who viſited his dunghill to read moral, political, and œconomical lectures on his miſery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my Lord, I greatly deceive myſelf, if in this hard ſeaſon I would give a peck of refuſe wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury; it is a privilege; it is an indulgence for thoſe who are at their eaſe. But we are all of us made to ſhun diſgrace, as we are made to ſhrink from pain, and poverty, and diſeaſe. It is an inſtinct; and under the direction of reaſon, inſtinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have ſucceeded me are gone before me. They who ſhould have been to me as poſterity are in the place of anceſtors. I owe to the deareſt relation (which ever muſt ſubſiſt in memory) that act of piety, which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to ſhew that he was not deſcended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

The Crown has conſidered me after long ſervice: the Crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by

advance. He has had a long credit for any ſervice which he may perform hereafter. He is ſecure, and long may he be ſecure, in his advance, whether he performs any ſervices or not. But let him take care how he endangers the ſafety of that Conſtitution which ſecures his own utility or his own inſignificance; or how he diſcourages thoſe, who take up, even puny arms, to defend an order of things, which, like the Sun of Heaven, ſhines alike on the uſeful and the worthleſs. His grants are engrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the ſacred rules of preſcription, found in that full treaſury of juriſprudence from which the jejuneneſs and penury of our municipal law has, by degrees, been enriched and ſtrengthened. This preſcription I had my ſhare (a very full ſhare) in bringing to it's perfection *. The Duke of Bedford will ſtand as long as preſcriptive law endures; as long as the great ſtable laws of property, common to us with all civilized nations, are kept in their integrity, and without the ſmalleſt intermixture of the laws, maxims, principles, or precedents of the Grand Revolution. They are ſecure againſt

* Sir George Savile's Act, called the *Nullum Tempus* Act.

all

all changes but one. The whole revolutionary ſyſtem, inſtitutes, digeſt, code, novels, text, gloſs, comment, are, not only not the ſame, but they are the very reverſe, and the reverſe fundamentally, of all the laws, on which civil life has hitherto been upheld in all the governments of the world. The learned profeſſors of the Rights of Man regard preſcription, not as a title to bar all claim, ſet up againſt old poſſeſſion —but they look on preſcription as itſelf a bar againſt the poſſeſſor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial poſſeſſion to be no more than a long continued, and therefore an aggravated injuſtice.

Such are *their* ideas; ſuch *their* religion, and ſuch *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well compacted ſtructure of our church and ſtate, the ſanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortreſs at once and a temple*, ſhall ſtand inviolate on the brow of the Britiſh Sion—as long as the Britiſh Monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the State, ſhall, like the proud Keep

* Templum in modum arcis. Tacitus of the Temple of Jeruſalem

of

of Windſor, riſing in the majeſty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of it's kindred and coeval towers, as long as this awful ſtructure ſhall overſee and guard the ſubjected land—ſo long the mounds and dykes of the low, fat, Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our Sovereign Lord the King, and his faithful ſubjects, the Lords and Commons of this realm,—the triple cord, which no man can break; the ſolemn, ſworn, conſtitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each others being, and each others rights; the joint and ſeveral ſecurities, each in it's place and order, for every kind and every quality, of property and of dignity—As long as theſe endure, ſo long the Duke of Bedford is ſafe: and we are all ſafe together—the high from the blights of envy and the ſpoliations of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppreſſion and the inſolent ſpurn of contempt. Amen! and ſo be it; and ſo it will be,

Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile ſaxum
Accolet; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.—

But if the rude inroad of Gallick tumult, with it's ſophiſtical Rights of Man, to falſify the account,

count, and it's ſword as a makeweight to throw into the ſcale, ſhall be introduced into our city by a miſguided populace, ſet on by proud great men, themſelves blinded and intoxicated by a frantick ambition, we ſhall, all of us, periſh and be overwhelmed in a common ruin. If a great ſtorm blow on our coaſt, it will caſt the whales on the ſtrand as well as the periwinkles. His Grace will not ſurvive the poor grantee he deſpiſes, no not for a twelvemonth. If the great look for ſafety in the ſervices they render to this Gallick cauſe, it is to be fooliſh, even above the weight of privilege allowed to wealth. If his Grace be one of theſe whom they endeavour to proſelytize, he ought to be aware of the character of the ſect, whoſe doctrines he is invited to embrace. With them, inſurrection is the moſt ſacred of revolutionary duties to the ſtate. Ingratitude to benefactors is the firſt of revolutionary virtues. Ingratitude is indeed their four cardinal virtues compacted and amalgamated into one; and he will find it in every thing that has happened ſince the commencement of the philoſophick revolution to this hour. If he pleads the merit of having performed the duty of inſurrection againſt the order he lives in (God forbid he ever ſhould), the merit of others

will

will be to perform the duty of inſurrection againſt him. If he pleads (again God forbid he ſhould, and I do not ſuſpect he will) his ingratitude to the Crown for it's creation of his family, others will plead their right and duty to pay him in kind. They will laugh, indeed they will laugh, at his parchment and his wax. His deeds will be drawn out with the reſt of the lumber of his evidence room, and burnt to the tune of *ça ira* in the courts of Bedford (then Equality) Houſe.

Am I to blame, if I attempt to pay his Grace's hoſtile reproaches to me with a friendly admonition to himſelf? Can I be blamed, for pointing out to him in what manner he is like to be affected, if the ſect of the cannibal philoſophers of France ſhould proſelytize any conſiderable part of this people, and, by their joint proſelytizing arms, ſhould conquer that Government, to which his Grace does not ſeem to me to give all the ſupport his own ſecurity demands? Surely it is proper, that he, and that others like him, ſhould know the true genius of this ſect; what their opinions are; what they have done: and to whom; and what, (if a prognoſtick is to be formed from the diſpoſitions and actions of men) it is certain they will do hereafter. He

ought

ought to know, that they have ſworn aſſiſtance, the only engagement they ever will keep, to all in this country, who bear a reſemblance to themſelves, and who think as ſuch, that *The whole duty of man* conſiſts in deſtruction. They are a miſallied and diſparaged branch of the houſe of Nimrod. They are the Duke of Bedford's natural hunters; and he is their natural game. Becauſe he is not very profoundly reflecting, he ſleeps in profound ſecurity: they, on the contrary, are always vigilant, active, enterprizing, and though far removed from any knowledge, which makes men eſtimable or uſeful, in all the inſtruments and reſources of evil, their leaders are not meanly inſtructed, or inſufficiently furniſhed. In the French Revolution every thing is new; and, from want of preparation to meet ſo unlooked for an evil, every thing is dangerous. Never, before this time, was a ſet of literary men, converted into a gang of robbers and aſſaſſins. Never before, did a den of bravoes and banditti, aſſume the garb and tone of an academy of philoſophers.

Let me tell his Grace, that an union of ſuch characters, monſtrous as it ſeems, is not made for producing deſpicable enemies. But if they are formidable as foes, as friends they are

dreadful indeed. The men of property in France confiding in a force, which ſeemed to be irreſiſtible, becauſe it had never been tried, neglected to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at their own weapons. They were found in ſuch a ſituation as the Mexicans were, when they were attacked by the dogs, the cavalry, the iron, and the gunpowder of an handful of bearded men, whom they did not know to exiſt in nature. This is a compariſon that ſome, I think, have made; and it is juſt. In France they had their enemies within their houſes. They were even in the boſoms of many of them. But they had not ſagacity to diſcern their ſavage character. They ſeemed tame, and even careſſing. They had nothing but *douce humanité* in their mouth. They could not bear the puniſhment of the mildeſt laws on the greateſt criminals. The ſlighteſt ſeverity of juſtice made their fleſh creep. The very idea that war exiſted in the world diſturbed their repoſe. Military glory was no more, with them, than a ſplendid infamy. Hardly would they hear of ſelf defence, which they reduced within ſuch bounds, as to leave it no defence at all. All this while they meditated the confiſcations and maſſacres we have ſeen. Had any one told theſe unfortunate Noblemen and Gentlemen, how, and

by

by whom, the grand fabrick of the French monarchy under which they flouriſhed would be ſubverted, they would not have pitied him as a viſionary, but would have turned from him as what they call a *mauvais plaiſant*. Yet we have ſeen what has happened. The perſons who have ſuffered from the cannibal philoſophy of France, are ſo like the Duke of Bedford, that nothing but his Grace's probably not ſpeaking quite ſo good French, could enable us to find out any difference. A great many of them had as pompous titles as he, and were of full as illuſtrious a race: ſome few of them had fortunes as ample; ſeveral of them, without meaning the leaſt diſparagement to the Duke of Bedford, were as wiſe, and as virtuous, and as valiant, and as well educated, and as compleat in all the lineaments of men of honour as he is: And to all this they had added the powerful outguard of a military profeſſion, which, in it's nature, renders men ſomewhat more cautious than thoſe, who have nothing to attend to but the lazy enjoyment of undiſturbed poſſeſſions. But ſecurity was their ruin. They are daſhed to pieces in the ſtorm, and our ſhores are covered with the wrecks. If they had been aware that ſuch a thing might happen, ſuch a thing never could have happened.

I aſſure his Grace, that if I ſtate to him the deſigns of his enemies, in a manner which may appear to him ludicrous and impoſſible, I tell him nothing that has not exactly happened, point by point, but twenty-four mile from our own ſhore. I aſſure him that the Frenchified faction, more encouraged, than others are warned, by what has happened in France, look at him and his landed poſſeſſions, as an object at once of curioſity and rapacity. He is made for them in every part of their double character. As robbers, to them he is a noble booty: as ſpeculatiſts, he is a glorious ſubject for their experimental philoſophy. He affords matter for an extenſive analyſis, in all the branches of their ſcience, geometrical, phyſical, civil and political. Theſe philoſophers are fanaticks; independent of any intereſt, which if it operated alone would make them much more tractable, they are carried with ſuch an headlong rage towards every deſperate trial, that they would ſacrifice the whole human race to the ſlighteſt of their experiments. I am better able to enter into the character of this deſcription of men than the noble Duke can be. I have lived long and variouſly in the World. Without any conſiderable pretenſions to literature in myſelf, I have aſpired

to

to the love of letters. I have lived for a great many years in habitudes with thoſe who profeſſed them. I can form a tolerable eſtimate of what is likely to happen from a character, chiefly dependent for fame and fortune, on knowledge and talent, as well in it's morbid and perverted ſtate, as in that which is ſound and natural. Naturally men ſo formed and finiſhed are the firſt gifts of Providence to the World. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the caſe, and the fear of man, which is now the caſe, and when in that ſtate they come to underſtand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot ariſe out of Hell to ſcourge mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphyſician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked ſpirit than to the frailty and paſſion of a man. It is like that of the principle of Evil himſelf, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil. It is no eaſy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breaſt. What Shakeſpeare calls "the compunctious viſitings of nature," will ſometimes knock at their hearts, and proteſt againſt their murderous ſpeculations. But they have a means of compounding with their nature.

Their

Their humanity is not diſſolved. They only give it a long prorogation. They are ready to declare, that they do not think two thouſand years too long a period for the good that they purſue. It is remarkable, that they never ſee any way to their projected good but by the road of ſome evil. Their imagination is not fatigued, with the contemplation of human ſuffering thro' the wild waſte of centuries added to centuries, of miſery and deſolation. Their humanity is at their horizon—and, like the horizon, it always flies before them. The geometricians, and the chymiſts bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams, and the other from the ſoot of their furnaces, diſpoſitions that make them worſe than indifferent about thoſe feelings and habitudes, which are the ſupports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them ſuddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearleſs of the danger, which may from thence ariſe to others or to themſelves. Theſe philoſophers, conſider men in their experiments, no more than they do mice in an air pump, or in a recipient of mephitick gas. Whatever his Grace may think of himſelf, they look upon him, and every thing that belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiſkers of that little long-tailed

tailed animal, that has been long the game of the grave, demure, inſidious, ſpring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philoſophers, whether going upon two legs, or upon four.

His Grace's landed poſſeſſions are irreſiſtibly inviting to an *agrarian* experiment. They are a downright inſult upon the Rights of Man. They are more extenſive than the territory of many of the Grecian republicks; and they are without compariſon more fertile than moſt of them. There are now republicks in Italy, in Germany and in Swiſſerland, which do not poſſeſs any thing like ſo fair and ample a domain. There is ſcope for ſeven philoſophers to proceed in their analytical experiments, upon Harington's ſeven different forms of republicks, in the acres of this one Duke. Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to ſpeculation; fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer, ſtill more to ſtupify the dull Engliſh underſtanding. Abbé Sieyes has whole neſts of pigeon-holes full of conſtitutions ready made, ticketed, ſorted, and numbered; ſuited to every ſeaſon and every fancy; ſome with the top of the pattern at the bottom, and ſome with the bottom at the top; ſome plain, ſome flowered; ſome diſtinguiſhed for their ſimplicity;

ſimplicity; others for their complexity; ſome of blood colour; ſome of *boue de Paris*; ſome with directories, others without a direction; ſome with councils of elders, and councils of youngſters; ſome without any council at all. Some where the electors chooſe the repreſentatives; others, where the repreſentatives chooſe the electors. Some in long coats, and ſome in ſhort cloaks; ſome with pantaloons; ſome without breeches. Some with five ſhilling qualifications; ſome totally unqualified. So that no conſtitution-fancier may go unſuited from his ſhop, provided he loves a pattern of pillage, oppreſſion, arbitrary impriſonment, confiſcation, exile, revolutionary judgment, and legaliſed premeditated murder, in any ſhapes into which they can be put. What a pity it is, that the progreſs of experimental philoſophy ſhould be checked by his Grace's monopoly! Such are their ſentiments, I aſſure him; ſuch is their language when they dare to ſpeak; and ſuch are their proceedings, when they have the means to act.

Their geographers, and geometricians, have been ſome time out of practice. It is ſome time ſince they have divided their own country into ſquares. That figure has loſt the charms of it's novelty.

novelty. They want new lands for new trials. It is not only the geometricians of the republick that find him a good ſubject, the chymiſts have beſpoke him after the geometricians have done with him. As the firſt ſet have an eye on his Grace's lands, the chymiſts are not leſs taken with his buildings. They conſider mortar as a very anti-revolutionary invention in it's preſent ſtate; but properly employed, an admirable material for overturning all eſtabliſhments. They have found that the gunpowder of *ruins* is far the fitteſt for making other *ruins*, and ſo *ad infinitum*. They have calculated what quantity of matter convertible into nitre is to be found in Bedford Houſe, in Woburn Abbey, and in what his Grace and his truſtees have ſtill ſuffered to ſtand of that fooliſh royaliſt Inigo Jones, in Covent Garden. Churches, play-houſes, coffee-houſes, all alike are deſtined to be mingled, and equalized, and blended into one common rubbiſh; and well ſifted, and lixiviated, to chryſtalize into true democratick exploſive inſurrectionary nitre. Their Academy del *Cimento* (per antiphraſin) with Morveau and Haſſenfrats at it's head, have computed that the brave Sans-culottes may make war on all the ariſtocracy of Europe for a twelvemonth, out of

the rubbiſh of the Duke of Bedford's buildings *.

While the Morveaux and Prieſtleys are proceeding with theſe experiments upon the Duke

* There is nothing, on which the leaders of the Republick, one and indiviſible, value themſelves, more than on the chymical operations, by which, through ſcience, they convert the pride of Ariſtocracy, to an inſtrument of it's own deſtruction—on the operations by which they reduce the magnificent ancient country ſeats of the nobility, decorated with the *feudal* titles of Duke, Marquis, or Earl, into magazines of what they call *revolutionary* gunpowder. They tell us, that hitherto things "had not yet been properly and in a "*revolutionary* manner explored."—"The ſtrong *cha-*"*teaus*, thoſe *feudal* fortreſſes, that *were ordered to be demo-*"*liſhed*, attracted next the attention of your Committee. "*Nature* there had *ſecretly* regained her *rights*, and had pro-"duced ſalt-petre for the *purpoſe*, as it ſhould ſeem, *of facili-*"*tating the execution of your decree by preparing the means of de-*"*ſtruction*. From theſe *ruins*, which *ſtill frown* on the "liberties of the Republick, we have extracted the means "of producing good; and thoſe piles, which have hitherto "glutted the *pride of Deſpots*, and covered the plots of La "Vendée, will ſoon furniſh wherewithal to tame the traitors, "and to overwhelm the diſaffected."———"The *rebellious* "*cities* alſo, have afforded a large quantity of ſalt-petre. "*Commune Affranchie*, (that is, the noble city of Lyons re-"duced in many parts to an heap of ruins) and Toulon "will pay a *ſecond* tribute to our artillery." Report 1ſt, February 1794.

of

of Bedford's houſes, the Sieyes, and the reſt of the analytical legiſlators, and conſtitution-venders, are quite as buſy in their trade of decompoſing organization, in forming his Grace's vaſſals into primary aſſemblies, national guards, firſt, ſecond and third requiſitioners, committees of reſearch, conductors of the travelling guillotine, judges of revolutionary tribunals, legiſlative hangmen, ſuperviſors of domiciliary viſitation, exactors of forced loans, and aſſeſſors of the maximum.

The din of all this ſmithery may ſome time or other poſſibly wake this noble Duke, and puſh him to an endeavour to ſave ſome little matter from their experimental philoſophy. If he pleads his grants from the Crown, he is ruined at the outſet. If he pleads he has received them from the pillage of ſuperſtitious corporations, this indeed will ſtagger them a little, becauſe they are enemies to all corporations, and to all religion. However, they will ſoon recover themſelves, and will tell his Grace, or his learned council, that all ſuch property belongs to the *nation*; and that it would be more wiſe for him, if he wiſhes to live the natural term of a *citizen*, (that is, according to Condorcet's calculation, ſix months on an average,) not to paſs

for an uſurper upon the national property. This is what the *Serjeants* at law of the Rights of Man, will ſay to the puny *apprentices* of the common law of England.

Is the Genius of Philoſophy not yet known? You may as well think the Garden of the Tuilleries was well protected with the cords of ribbon inſultingly ſtretched by the National Aſſembly to keep the ſovereign canaille from intruding on the retirement of the poor King of the French, as that ſuch flimſy cobwebs will ſtand between the ſavages of the Revolution and their natural prey. Deep Philoſophers are no triflers; brave Sans culottes are no formaliſts. They will no more regard a Marquis of Taviſtock than an Abbot of Taviſtock; the Lord of Wooburn will not be more reſpectable in their eyes than the Prior of Wooburn: they will make no difference between the Superior of a Covent Garden of nuns and of a Covent Garden of another deſcription. They will not care a ruſh whether his coat is long or ſhort; whether the colour be purple or blue and buff. They will not trouble *their* heads, with what part of *his* head, his hair is cut from; and they will look with equal reſpect on a tonſure and a crop. Their only queſtion will be that of their *Legendre*, or ſome other of their legiſlative butchers, How he cuts

cuts up? how he tallows in the cawl or on the kidneys?

Is it not a ſingular phœnomenon, that whilſt the Sans culotte Carcaſe Butchers, and the Philoſophers of the ſhambles, are pricking their dotted lines upon his hide, and like the print of the poor ox that we ſee in the ſhop windows at Charing Croſs, alive as he is, and thinking no harm in the world, he is divided into rumps, and ſirloins, and briſkets, and into all ſorts of pieces for roaſting, boiling, and ſtewing, that all the while they are meaſuring *him*, his Grace is meaſuring *me*; is invidiouſly comparing the bounty of the Crown with the deſerts of the defender of his order, and in the ſame moment fawning on thoſe who have the knife half out of the ſheath—poor innocent!

> Pleas'd to the laſt, he crops the flow'ry food,
> And licks the hand juſt rais'd to ſhed his blood.

No man lives too long, who lives to do with ſpirit, and ſuffer with reſignation, what Providence pleaſes to command or inflict: but indeed they are ſharp incommodities which beſet old age. It was but the other day, that on putting in order ſome things which had been brought here on my taking leave of London for

ever,

ever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, moſt of them of perſons now dead, but whoſe ſociety, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongſt theſe was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artiſt worthy of the ſubject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earlieſt youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldneſs, of peeviſhneſs, of jealouſy, or of jar, to the day of our final ſeparation.

I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greateſt and beſt men of his age; and I loved, and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and I believe I was in his to the very laſt beat. It was after his trial at Portſmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my ſon in the early fluſh and enthuſiaſm of his virtue, and the pious paſſion with which he attached himſelf to all my connections, with what prodigality we both ſquandered ourſelves in courting almoſt every ſort of enmity for his ſake, I believe he felt, juſt as I ſhould have felt, ſuch friendſhip on ſuch an occaſion. I partook indeed of this honour, with ſeveral of the firſt,

firſt, and beſt, and ableſt in the kingdom, but I was behind hand with none of them; and I am ſure, that if to the eternal diſgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I ſhould have attended him to the quarter-deck with no leſs good will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the juſtice that was done to his virtue.

Pardon, my Lord, the feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuſe itſelf in diſcourſe of the departed great. At my years we live in retroſpect alone: and, wholly unfitted for the ſociety of vigorous life, we enjoy, the beſt balm to all wounds, the conſolation of friendſhip, in thoſe only whom we have loſt for ever. Feeling the loſs of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it ſo much as on the firſt day when I was attacked in the Houſe of Lords.

Had he lived, that reverend form would have riſen in its place, and with a mild, parental reprehenſion to his nephew the Duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favour of that gracious prince, who had honoured his virtues with

with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a ſeat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeſervedly ſhewn to the friend of the beſt portion of his life, and his faithful companion and counſellor under his rudeſt trials. He would have told him, that to whomever elſe theſe reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred. He would have told him that when men in that rank loſe decorum, they loſe every thing.

On that day I had a loſs in Lord Keppel; but the publick loſs of him in this aweful criſis—! I ſpeak from much knowledge of the perſon, he never would have liſtened to any compromiſe with the rabble rout of this Sans Culotterie of France. His goodneſs of heart, his reaſon, his taſte, his publick duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him for ever from all connection with that horrid medley of madneſs, vice, impiety, and crime.

Lord Keppel had two countries; one of deſcent, and one of birth. Their intereſts and their glory are the ſame; and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble and it was Dutch: that is, he was of the

the oldeſt and pureſt nobility that Europe can boaſt, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never ſhewn in inſult to any human being, Lord Keppel was ſomething high. It was a wild ſtock of pride, on which the tendereſt of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility; and he was not diſinclined to augment it with new honours. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuſe for inglorious ſloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He conſidered it as a ſort of cure for ſelfiſhneſs and a narrow mind; conceiving that a man born in an elevated place, in himſelf was nothing, but every thing in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much ſpeculation, but by the ſure inſtinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain unſophiſticated natural underſtanding, he felt, that no great Commonwealth could by any poſſibility long ſubſiſt, without a body of ſome kind or other of nobility, decorated with honour, and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the ages of a nation, which otherwiſe (with Mr. Paine) would ſoon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabrick could be well made without ſome ſuch order of things

as might, through a ſeries of time afford a rational hope of ſecuring unity, coherence, conſiſtency, and ſtability to the ſtate. He felt that nothing elſe can protect it againſt the levity of courts, and the greater levity of the multitude. That to talk of hereditary monarchy without any thing elſe of hereditary reverence in the Commonwealth, was a low-minded abſurdity; fit only for thoſe deteſtable "fools aſpiring to be knaves," who began to forge in 1789, the falſe money of the French Conſtitution— That it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* Republicks, (among a people, who, once poſſeſſing ſuch an advantage, have wickedly and inſolently rejected it,) that the *prejudice* of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be repleniſhed: men may be taken from it, or aggregated to it, but the *thing itſelf* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere poſitive inſtitution. He felt, that this nobility, in fact does not exiſt in wrong of other orders of the ſtate, but by them, and for them.

I knew the man I ſpeak of; and, if we can divine the future, out of what we collect from the paſt, no perſon living would look with more

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ſcorn and horrour on the impious parricide committed on all their anceſtry, and on the deſperate attainder paſſed on all their poſterity, by the Orleans, and the Rochefoucaults, and the Fayettes, and the Viſcomtes de Noailles, and the falſe Perigords, and the long *et cætera* of the perfidious Sans Culottes of the court, who like demoniacks, poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of fallen pride, and inverted ambition, abdicated their dignities, diſowned their families, betrayed the moſt ſacred of all truſts, and by breaking to pieces a great link of ſociety, and all the cramps and holdings of the ſtate, brought eternal confuſion and deſolation on their country. For the fate of the miſcreant parricides themſelves he would have had no pity. Compaſſion for the myriads of men, of whom the world was not worthy, who by their means have periſhed in priſons, or on ſcaffolds, or are pining in beggary and exile, would leave no room in his, or in any well-formed mind, for any ſuch ſenſation. We are not made at once to pity the oppreſſor and the oppreſſed.

Looking to his Batavian deſcent, how could he bear to behold his kindred, the deſcendants of the brave nobility of Holland, whoſe blood prodigally poured out, had, more than all the ca-

nals, meers, and inundations of their country, protected their independence, to behold them bowed in the baſeſt ſervitude, to the baſeſt and vileſt of the human race; in ſervitude to thoſe who in no reſpect, were ſuperior in dignity, or could aſpire to a better place than that of hangmen to the tyrants, to whoſe ſceptered pride they had oppoſed an elevation of ſoul, that ſurmounted, and overpowered the loftineſs of Caſtile, the haughtineſs of Auſtria, and the overbearing arrogance of France?

Could he with patience bear, that the children of that nobility, who would have deluged their country and given it to the ſea, rather than ſubmit to Louis XIV. who was then in his meridian glory, when his arms were conducted by the Turennes, by the Luxembourgs, by the Boufflers; when his councils were directed by the Colberts, and the Louvois; when his tribunals were filled by the Lamoignons and the Dagueſſaus---that theſe ſhould be given up to the cruel ſport of the Pichegru's, the Jourdans, the Santerres, under the Rollands, and Briſſots, and Gorſas, and Robeſpierres, the Reubels, the Carnots, and Talliens, and Dantons, and the whole tribe of Regicides, robbers, and revolutionary judges, that, from the rotten carcaſe of their

their own murdered country, have poured out innumerable ſwarms of the loweſt, and at once the moſt deſtructive of the claſſes of animated nature, which like columns of locuſts, have laid waſte the faireſt part of the world?

Would Keppel have borne to ſee the ruin of the virtuous Patricians, that happy union of the noble and the burgher, who with ſignal prudence and integrity, had long governed the cities of the confederate Republick, the cheriſhing fathers of their country, who, denying commerce to themſelves, made it flouriſh in a manner unexampled under their protection? Could Keppel have borne that a vile faction ſhould totally deſtroy this harmonious conſtruction, in favour of a robbing Democracy, founded on the ſpurious rights of man?

He was no great clerk, but he was perfectly well verſed in the intereſts of Europe, and he could not have heard with patience, that the country of Grotius, the cradle of the Law of Nations, and one of the richeſt repoſitories of all Law, ſhould be taught a new code by the ignorant flippancy of Thomas Paine, the preſumptuous foppery of La Fayette, with his ſtolen rights of man in his hand, the wild profligate intrigue

intrigue and turbulency of Marat, and the impious ſophiſtry of Condorcet, in his inſolent addreſſes to the Batavian Republick?

Could Keppel, who idolized the houſe of Naſſau, who was himſelf given to England, along with the bleſſings of the Britiſh and Dutch revolutions; with revolutions of ſtability; with revolutions which conſolidated and married the liberties and the intereſts of the two nations for ever, could he ſee the fountain of Britiſh liberty itſelf in ſervitude to France? Could he ſee with patience a Prince of Orange expelled as a ſort of diminutive deſpot, with every kind of contumely, from the country, which that family of deliverers had ſo often reſcued from ſlavery, and obliged to live in exile in another country, which owes it's liberty to his houſe?

Would Keppel have heard with patience, that the conduct to be held on ſuch occaſions was to become ſhort by the knees to the faction of the homicides, to intreat them quietly to retire? or if the fortune of war ſhould drive them from their firſt wicked and unprovoked invaſion, that no ſecurity ſhould be taken, no arrangement made, no barrier formed, no alliance entered into for the ſecurity of that, which under a foreign

reign name is the moſt precious part of England? What would he have ſaid, if it was even propoſed that the Auſtrian Netherlands (which ought to be a barrier to Holland, and the tie of an alliance, to protect her againſt any ſpecies of rule that might be erected, or even be reſtored in France) ſhould be formed into a republick under her influence and dependent upon her power?

But above all, what would he have ſaid, if he had heard it made a matter of accuſation againſt me, by his nephew the Duke of Bedford, that I was the author of the war? Had I a mind to keep that high diſtinction to myſelf, as from pride I might, but from juſtice I dare not, he would have ſnatched his ſhare of it from my hand, and held it with the graſp of a dying convulſion to his end.

It would be a moſt arrogant preſumption in me to aſſume to myſelf the glory of what belongs to his Majeſty, and to his Miniſters, and to his Parliament, and to the far greater majority of his faithful people: But had I ſtood alone to counſel, and that all were determined to be guided by my advice, and to follow it implicitly—then I ſhould have been the ſole author of a war. But it ſhould have been a war on

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my ideas and my principles. However let his Grace think as he may of my demerits with regard to the war with Regicide, he will find my guilt confined to that alone. He never ſhall, with the ſmalleſt colour of reaſon, accuſe me of being the author of a peace with Regicide. But that is high matter; and ought not to be mixed with any thing of ſo little moment, as what may belong to me, or even to the Duke of Bedford.

I have the honour to be, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.