



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.



E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN
BEQUEST TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

*This book
was acquired for the
MEYERSTEIN
COLLECTION
OF THE
ENGLISH FACULTY
LIBRARY
with the help
of a grant made under
this bequest*



30652

XLig. 1 [Spe]

30652

S P E E C H

O F

EDMUND BURKE, Esq.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE
CITY OF BRISTOL,

On presenting to the House of Commons

(On the 11th of February, 1780)

A PLAN FOR THE BETTER SECURITY OF
THE INDEPENDENCE OF PARLIAMENT,

AND THE

OECONOMICAL REFORMATION OF THE
CIVIL AND OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, IN PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXX.

27



S P E E C H, &c.

Mr. SPEAKER,

I Rise, in acquittal of my engagement to the house, in obedience to the strong and just requisition of my constituents, and, I am persuaded, in conformity to the unanimous wishes of the whole nation, to submit to the wisdom of parliament, “ A plan of reform in the constitution of several parts of the public œconomy.”

I have endeavoured, that this plan should include in its execution, a considerable reduction of improper expence ; that, it should effect a conversion of unprofitable titles into a productive estate ; that, it should lead to, and indeed almost compel, a provident administration of such sums of public money as must remain under discretionary trusts ; that, it should render the incurring debts on the civil establishment (which must ultimately affect national strength and national credit) so very difficult, as to become next to impracticable.

But what, I confess, was uppermost with me, what I bent the whole force of my mind to, was

B

the

the reduction of that corrupt influence, which is itself the perennial spring of all prodigality, and of all disorder; which loads us, more than millions of debt; which takes away vigour from our arms, wisdom from our councils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of our constitution.

Sir, I assure you, very solemnly, and with a very clear conscience, that nothing in the world has led me to such an undertaking, but my zeal for the honour of this house, and the settled, habitual, systematic affection I bear to the cause, and to the principles of government.

I enter perfectly into the nature and consequences of my attempt; and I advance to it with a tremor that shakes me to the inmost fibre of my frame. I feel, that I engage in a business, in itself most ungracious, totally wide of the course of prudent conduct; and I really think, the most compleatly adverse that can be imagined, to the natural turn and temper of my own mind. I know, that all parsimony is of a quality approaching to unkindness; and that (on some person or other) every reform must operate as a sort of punishment. Indeed the whole class of the severe and restrictive virtues, are at a market almost too high for humanity. What is worse, there are very few of those virtues which are not capable of being imitated, and even outdone in many of their most striking effects, by the worst of vices. Malignity and envy will carve much more deeply, and finish much more sharply, in the work of retrenchment, than frugality and providence. I do not, therefore, wonder that gentlemen have kept away from such a task, as well from good nature as from prudence. Private feeling might, indeed, be overborne by legislative reason; and a man of a long-sighted and strong-nerved humanity,

humanity, might bring himself, not so much to consider from whom he takes a superfluous enjoyment, as for whom in the end he may preserve the absolute necessaries of life.

But it is much more easy to reconcile this measure to humanity, than to bring it to any agreement with prudence. I do not mean that little, selfish, pitiful, bastard thing, which sometimes goes by the name of a family in which it is not legitimate, and to which it is a disgrace;—I mean even that public and enlarged prudence, which, apprehensive of being disabled from rendering acceptable services to the world, withholds itself from those that are invidious. Gentlemen who are, with me, verging towards the decline of life, and are apt to form their ideas of kings from kings of former times, might dread the anger of a reigning prince;—they who are more provident of the future, or by being young are more interested in it, might tremble at the resentment of the successor; they might see a long, dull, dreary, unvaried vista of despair and exclusion, for half a century, before them. This is no pleasant prospect at the outset of a political journey.

Besides this, Sir, the private enemies to be made in all attempts of this kind, are innumerable; and their enmity will be the more bitter, and the more dangerous too, because a sense of dignity will oblige them to conceal the cause of their resentment. Very few men of great families and extensive connections, but will feel the smart of a cutting reform, in some close relation, some bosom friend, some pleasant acquaintance, some dear protected dependant. Emolument is taken from some; patronage from others; objects of pursuit from all. Men, forced into an involuntary independence, will abhor the authors of a blessing which in their eyes has so very near a resemblance to a curse. When officers are removed,

and the offices remain, you may set the gratitude of some against the anger of others; you may oppose the friends you oblige against the enemies you provoke. But services of the present sort create no attachments. The individual good felt in a public benefit, is comparatively so small, comes round through such an involved labyrinth of intricate and tedious revolutions; whilst a present personal detriment is so heavy where it falls, and so instant in its operation, that the cold commendation of a public advantage never was, and never will be, a match for the quick sensibility of a private loss: and you may depend upon it, Sir, that when many people have an interest in railing, sooner or later, they will bring a considerable degree of unpopularity upon any measure. So that, for the present at least, the reformation will operate against the reformers; and revenge (as against them at the least) will produce all the effects of corruption.

This, Sir, is almost always the case, where the plan has compleat success. But how stands the matter in the mere attempt? Nothing, you know, is more common, than for men to wish, and call loudly too, for a reformation, who, when it arrives, do by no means like the severity of its aspect. Reformation is one of those pieces which must be put at some distance in order to please. Its greatest favourers love it better in the abstract than in the substance. When any old prejudice of their own, or any interest that they value, is touched, they become scrupulous, they become captious, and every man has his separate exception. Some pluck out the black hairs, some the grey; one point must be given up to one; another point must be yielded to another; nothing is suffered to prevail upon its own principle: the whole is so frittered down, and disjointed, that

9

scarcely

scarcely a trace of the original scheme remains ! Thus, between the resistance of power, and the unsystematical process of popularity, the undertaker and the undertaking are both exposed, and the poor reformer is hissed off the stage, both by friends and foes.

Observe, Sir, that the apology for my undertaking (an apology which, though long, is no longer than necessary) is not grounded on my want of the fullest sense of the difficult and invidious nature of the task I undertake. I risque odium if I succeed, and contempt if I fail. My excuse must rest in mine and your conviction of the absolute, urgent *necessity* there is, that something of the kind should be done. If there is any sacrifice to be made, either of estimation or of fortune, the smallest is the best. Commanders in chief are not to be put upon the forlorn hope. But indeed it is necessary that the attempt should be made. It is necessary from our own political circumstances ; it is necessary from the operations of the enemy ; it is necessary from the demands of the people ; whose desires, when they do not militate with the stable and eternal rules of justice and reason (rules which are above us, and above them) ought to be as a law to a House of Commons.

As to our circumstances ; I do not mean to aggravate the difficulties of them, by the strength of any colouring whatsoever. On the contrary, I observe, and observe with pleasure, that our affairs rather wear a more promising aspect than they did on the opening of this session. We have had some leading successes. But those who rate them at the highest (higher a great deal indeed than I dare to do) are of opinion, that, upon the ground of such advantages, we cannot at this time hope to make any treaty of peace, which

would not be ruinous and completely disgraceful. In such an anxious state of things, if darnings of success serve to animate our diligence, they are good; if they tend to increase our presumption, they are worse than defeats. The state of our affairs shall then be as promising as any one may choose to conceive it: It is however but promising. We must recollect, that with but half of our natural strength, we are at war against confederated powers who have singly threatened us with ruin: We must recollect, that whilst we are left naked on one side, our other flank is uncovered by any alliance; That whilst we are weighing and balancing our successes against our losses, we are accumulating debt to the amount of at least fourteen millions in the year. That loss is certain.

I have no wish to deny, that our successes are as brilliant as any one chooses to make them; our resources too may, for me, be as unfathomable as they are represented. Indeed they are just whatever the people possess, and will submit to pay. Taxing is an easy business. Any projector can contrive new impositions; any bungler can add to the old. But is it altogether wise to have no other bounds to your impositions, than the patience of those who are to bear them?

All I claim upon the subject of your resources is this, that they are not likely to be increased by wasting them.—I think I shall be permitted to assume, that a system of frugality will not lessen your riches, whatever they may be;—I believe it will not be hotly disputed, that those resources which lie heavy on the subject, ought not to be objects of preference; that they ought not to be the *very first choice*, to an honest representative of the people.

This is all, Sir, that I shall say upon our circumstances and our resources: I mean to say a little

little more on the operations of the enemy, because this matter seems to me very natural in our present deliberation. When I look to the other side of the water, I cannot help recollecting what Pyrrhus said on reconnoitering the Roman camp, "These Barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline." When I look, as I have pretty carefully looked, into the proceedings of the French king, I am sorry to say it, I see nothing of the character and genius of arbitrary finance; none of the bold frauds of bankrupt power; none of the wild struggles, and plunges, of despotism in distress;—no lopping off from the capital of debt;—no suspension of interest;—no robbery under the name of loan;—no raising the value, no debasing the substance of the coin. I see neither Louis the fourteenth, nor Louis the fifteenth. On the contrary, I behold with astonishment, rising before me, by the very hands of arbitrary power, and in the very midst of war and confusion, a regular, methodical system of public credit; I behold a fabric laid on the natural and solid foundations of trust and confidence among men; and rising, by fair gradations, order over order, according to the just rules of symmetry and art. What a reverse of things! Principle, method, regularity, œconomy, frugality, justice to individuals, and care of the people, are the resources with which France makes war upon Great Britain. God avert the omen! But if we should see any genius in war and politics arise in France, to second what is done in the bureau!—I turn my eyes from the consequences.

The noble Lord in the blue ribbon, last year, treated all this with contempt. He never could conceive it possible that the French minister of finance could go through that year with a loan of but seventeen hundred thousand pounds; and that he should be able to fund that loan without any

tax. The second year, however, opens the very same scene. A small loan, a loan of no more than two millions five hundred thousand pounds, is to carry our enemies through the service of this year also. No tax is raised to fund that debt; no tax is raised for the current services. I am credibly informed that there is no anticipation whatsoever. * Compensations are correctly made. Old debts continue to be sunk as in the time of profound peace. Even payments which their treasury had been authorized to suspend during the time of war, are not suspended.

A general reform, executed through every *department of the revenue*, creates an annual income of more than half a million, whilst it facilitates and simplifies all the functions of administration. The king's *household*—at the remotest avenues to which, all reformation has been hitherto stopped—that household, which has been the strong-hold of prodigality, the virgin fortress which was never before attacked—has been not only not defended, but it has, even in the forms, been surrendered by the king to the œconomy of his minister. No capitulation; no reserve. Œconomy has entered in triumph into the public splendour of the monarch, into his private amusements, into the appointments of his nearest and highest relations. Œconomy and public spirit have made a beneficent and an honest spoil; they have plundered, from extravagance and luxury, for the use of substantial service, a revenue of near four hundred thousand pounds. The reform of the finances, joined to this reform of the court, gives to the public nine hundred thousand pounds a year and upwards.

The minister who does these things is a great man—But the king who desires that they should be

* This term comprehends various retributions made to persons whose offices are taken away, or who, in any other way, suffer by the new arrangements that are made.

done, is a far greater. We must do justice to our enemies—These are the acts of a patriot king. I am not in dread of the vast armies of France: I am not in dread of the gallant spirit of its brave and numerous nobility: I am not alarmed even at the great navy which has been so miraculously created. All these things Louis the fourteenth had before. With all these things, the French monarchy has more than once fallen prostrate at the feet of the public faith of Great Britain. It was the want of public credit which disabled France from recovering after her defeats, or recovering even from her victories and triumphs. It was a prodigal court, it was an ill-ordered revenue, that sapped the foundations of all her greatness. Credit cannot exist under the arm of necessity. Necessity strikes at credit, I allow, with a heavier and quicker blow under an arbitrary monarchy, than under a limited and balanced government: but still necessity and credit are natural enemies, and cannot be long reconciled in any situation. From necessity and corruption, a free state may lose the spirit of that complex constitution which is the foundation of confidence. On the other hand, I am far from being sure, that a monarchy, when once it is properly regulated, may not for a long time, furnish a foundation for credit upon the solidity of its maxims, though it affords no ground of trust in its institutions. I am afraid I see in England, and in France, something like a beginning of both these things. I wish I may be found in a mistake.

This very short, and very imperfect state of what is now going on in France (the last circumstances of which I received in about eight days after the registry of the * edict) I do not, Sir, lay before you for any invidious purpose. It is in

* Edict, registered 29 Jan. 1780.

order to excite in us the spirit of a noble emulation.—Let the nations make war upon each other (since we must make war) not with a low and vulgar malignity, but by a competition of virtues. This is the only way by which both parties can gain by war. The French have imitated us; let us, through them, imitate ourselves; ourselves in our better and happier days. If public frugality, under whatever men, or in whatever mode of government, is national strength, it is a strength which our enemies are in possession of before us.

Sir, I am well aware, that the state and the result of the French œconomy which I have laid before you, are even now lightly treated by some, who ought never to speak but from information. Pains have not been spared, to represent them as impositions on the public. Let me tell you, Sir, that the creation of a navy, and a two years war without taxing, are a very singular species of imposture. But be it so. For what end does Neckar carry on this delusion? Is it to lower the estimation of the crown he serves, and to render his own administration contemptible? No! No! He is conscious, that the sense of mankind is so clear and decided in favour of œconomy, and of the weight and value of its resources, that he turns himself to every species of fraud and artifice, to obtain the meer reputation of it. Men do not affect a conduct that tends to their discredit. Let us, then, get the better of Monsieur Neckar in his own way—Let us do in reality what he does only in pretence—Let us turn his French tinsel into English gold. Is then the meer opinion and appearance of frugality and good management of such use to France, and is the substance to be so mischievous to England? Is the very constitution of nature so altered by a sea of twenty miles, that œconomy should give power
on

on the continent, and that profusion should give it here? For God's sake let not this be the only fashion of France which we refuse to copy.

To the last kind of necessity, the desires of the people, I have but a very few words to say. The ministers seem to contest this point; and affect to doubt, whether the people do really desire a plan of œconomy in the civil government. Sir, this is too ridiculous. It is impossible that they should not desire it. It is impossible that a prodigality which draws its resources from their indigence, should be pleasing to them. Little factions of pensioners, and their dependants, may talk another language. But the voice of nature is against them; and it will be heard. The people of England will not, they cannot take it kindly, that representatives should refuse to their constituents, what an absolute sovereign voluntarily offers to his subjects. The expression of the petitions is, that "*before any new burthens are laid upon this country, effectual measures be taken by this house, to enquire into, and correct, the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money.*"

This has been treated by the noble lord in the blue ribbon, as a wild factious language. It happens, however, that the people in their address to us, use almost word for word the same terms as the king of France uses in addressing himself to his people; and it differs only, as it falls short of the French king's idea of what is due to his subjects. "To convince," says he, "our faithful subjects of *the desire we entertain not to recur to new impositions*, until we have first exhausted all the resources which order and œconomy can possibly supply."—&c. &c.

These desires of the people of England, which come far short of the voluntary concessions of the king of France, are moderate indeed. They only

only contend that we should interweave some œconomy with the taxes with which we have chosen to begin the war. They request, not that you should rely upon œconomy exclusively, but that you should give it rank and precedence, in the order of the ways and means of this single session.

But if it were possible, that the desires of our constituents, desires which are at once so natural, and so very much tempered and subdued, should have no weight with an house of commons, which has its eye elsewhere; I would turn my eyes to the very quarter to which theirs are directed. I would reason this matter with the house, on the mere policy of the question; and I would undertake to prove, that an early dereliction of abuse, is the direct interest of government, of government taken abstractedly from its duties, and considered merely as a system intending its own conservation.

If there is any one eminent criterion, which, above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this;—"well to know the best time and manner of yielding, what it is impossible to keep."—There have been, Sir, and there are, many who chuse to chicaner with their situation, rather than be instructed by it. Those gentlemen argue against every desire of reformation, upon the principles of a criminal prosecution. It is enough for them to justify their adherence to a pernicious system, that it is not of their contrivance; that it is an inheritance of absurdity, derived to them from their ancestors; that they can make out a long and unbroken pedigree of mismanagers that have gone before them. They are proud of the antiquity of their house; and they defend their errors, as if they were defending their inheritance:
afraid

afraid of derogating from their nobility; and carefully avoiding a sort of blot in their scutcheon, which they think would degrade them for ever.

It was thus that the unfortunate Charles the First defended himself on the practice of the Stuart who went before him, and of all the Tudors; his partizans might have gone to the Plantagenets.—They might have found bad examples enough, both abroad and at home, that could have shewn an antient and illustrious descent. But there is a time, when men will not suffer bad things because their ancestors have suffered worse. There is a time, when the hoary head of inveterate abuse, will neither draw reverence nor obtain protection. If the noble Lord in the blue ribbon pleads, “*not guilty*,” to the charges brought against the present system of public œconomy, it is not possible to give a fair verdict by which he will not stand acquitted. But pleading is not our present business. His plea or his traverse may be allowed as an answer to a charge, when a charge is made. But if he puts himself in the way to obstruct reformation, then the faults of his office instantly become his own. Instead of a public officer in an abusive department, whose province is an object to be regulated, he becomes a criminal who is to be punished. I do most seriously put it to administration, to consider the wisdom of a timely reform. Early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power: Late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy; early reformations are made in cool blood; late reformations are made under a state of inflammation. In that state of things the people behold in government nothing that is respectable. They see the abuse, and they will see nothing else—They fall into the temper of a furious populace provoked at the disorder of a house

of

of ill fame ; they never attempt to correct or regulate ; they go to work by the shortest way— They abate the nuisance, they pull down the house.

This is my opinion with regard to the true interest of government. But as it is the interest of government that reformation should be early, it is the interest of the people that it should be temperate. It is their interest, because a temperate reform is permanent ; and because it has a principle of growth. Whenever we improve, it is right to leave room for a further improvement. It is right to consider, to look about us, to examine the effect of what we have done.—Then we can proceed with confidence, because we can proceed with intelligence.—Whereas in hot reformations, in what men, more zealous than considerate, *call making clear work*, the whole is generally so crude, so harsh, so indigested ; mixed with so much imprudence, and so much injustice ; so contrary to the whole course of human nature and human institutions, that the very people who are most eager for it, are among the first to grow disgusted at what they have done. Then some part of the abdicated grievance is recalled from its exile in order to become a corrective of the correction. Then the abuse assumes all the credit and popularity of a reform. The very idea of purity and disinterestedness in politics falls into disrepute, and is considered as a vision of hot and inexperienced men ; and thus disorders become incurable, not by the virulence of their own quality, but by the unapt and violent nature of the remedies. A great part therefore, of my idea of reform, is meant to operate gradually ; some benefits will come at a nearer, some at a more remote period. We must no more make haste to be rich by parsimony, than by intemperate acquisition.

In my opinion, it is our duty when we have
the

the desires of the people before us, to pursue them, not in the spirit of literal obedience, which may militate with their very principle, much less to treat them with a peevish and contentious litigation, as if we were adverse parties in a suit. It would, Sir, be most dishonourable for a faithful representative of the commons, to take advantage of any inartificial expression of the people's wishes, in order to frustrate their attainment of what they have an undoubted right to expect. We are under infinite obligations to our constituents, who have raised us to so distinguished a trust, and have imparted such a degree of sanctity to common characters. We ought to walk before them with purity, plainness, and integrity of heart; with filial love, and not with slavish fear, which is always a low and tricking thing. For my own part, in what I have meditated upon that subject, I cannot indeed take upon me to say I have the honour *to follow* the sense of the people. The truth is, *I met it on the way*, while I was pursuing their interest according to my own ideas. I am happy beyond expression, to find that my intentions have so far coincided with theirs, that I have not had cause to be in the least scrupulous to sign their Petition, conceiving it to express my own opinions, as nearly as general terms can express the object of particular arrangements.

I am therefore satisfied to act as a fair mediator between government and the people, endeavouring to form a plan which should have both an early and a temperate operation. I mean, that it should be substantial; that it should be systematic. That it should rather strike at the first cause of prodigality and corrupt influence, than attempt to follow them in all their effects.

It was to fulfil the first of these objects (the proposal of something substantial) that I found myself

myself obliged at the out-set, to reject a plan proposed by an honourable and * attentive member of parliament, with very good intentions on his part, about a year or two ago. Sir, the plan I speak of, was the tax of 25 *per cent.* moved upon places and pensions during the continuance of the American war.—Nothing, Sir, could have met my ideas more than such a tax, if it was considered as a practical satire on that war, and as a penalty upon those who led us into it; but in any other view it appeared to me very liable to objections. I considered the scheme as neither substantial, nor permanent, nor systematical, nor likely to be a corrective of evil influence. I have always thought employments a very proper subject of regulation, but a very ill-chosen subject for a tax. An equal tax upon property is reasonable; because the object is of the same quality throughout. The species is the same, it differs only in its quantity: but a tax upon salaries is totally of a different nature; there can be no equality, and consequently no justice, in taxing them by the hundred, in the gross.

We have, Sir, on our establishment, several offices which perform real service—We have also places that provide large rewards for no service at all. We have stations which are made for the public decorum; made for preserving the grace and majesty of a great people.—We have likewise expensive formalities, which tend rather to the disgrace than the ornament of the state and the court. This, Sir, is the real condition of our establishments. To fall with the same severity on objects so perfectly dissimilar, is the very reverse of a reformation. I mean a reformation framed,

* Thomas Gilbert, Esq; member for Litchfield.

as all serious things ought to be, in number, weight, and measure.—Suppose, for instance, that two men receive a salary of £. 800 a year each.—In the office of one, there is nothing at all to be done; in the other, the occupier is oppressed by its duties.—Strike off twenty-five *per cent.* from these two offices, you take from one man £. 200, which in justice he ought to have, and you give in effect to the other £. 600, which he ought not to receive. The public robs the former, and the latter robs the public; and this mode of mutual robbery is the only way in which the office and the public can make up their accounts.

But the balance in settling the account of this double injustice, is much against the state. The result is short. You purchase a saving of two hundred pounds, by a profusion of six. Besides, Sir, whilst you leave a supply of unsecured money behind, wholly at the discretion of ministers, they make up the tax to such places as they wish to favour, or in such new places as they may choose to create. Thus the civil list becomes oppressed with debt; and the public is obliged to repay, and to repay with an heavy interest, what it has taken by an injudicious tax. Such has been the effect of the taxes hitherto laid on pensions and employments, and it is no encouragement to recur again to the same expedient.

In effect, such a scheme is not calculated to produce, but to prevent reformation. It holds out a shadow of present gain to a greedy and necessitous public, to divert their attention from those abuses, which in reality are the great causes of their wants. It is a composition to stay enquiry; it is a fine paid by mismanagement, for the renewal of its lease. What is worse, it is a fine paid by industry and merit; for an indemnity to the idle and the worthless. But I shall say no more upon

this topic, because (whatever may be given out to the contrary) I know that the noble lord in the blue ribbon perfectly agrees with me in these sentiments.

After all that I have said on this subject, I am so sensible, that it is our duty to try every thing which may contribute to the relief of the nation, that I do not attempt wholly to reprobate the idea even of a tax. Whenever, Sir, the incumbrance of useless office (which lies no less a dead weight upon the service of the state, than upon its revenues) shall be removed;—when the remaining offices shall be classed according to the just proportion of their rewards and services, so as to admit the application of an equal rule to their taxation, when the discretionary power over the civil list cash shall be so regulated, that a minister shall no longer have the means of repaying with a private, what is taken by a public hand—if after all these preliminary regulations, it should be thought that a tax on places is an object worthy of the public attention, I shall be very ready to lend my hand to a reduction of their emoluments.

Having thus, Sir, not so much absolutely rejected, as postponed, the plan of a taxation of office, — my next business was to find something which might be really substantial and effectual. I am quite clear, that if we do not go to the very origin and first ruling cause of grievances, we do nothing. What does it signify to turn abuses out of one door, if we are to let them in at another? What does it signify to promote œconomy upon a measure, and to suffer it to be subverted in the principle? Our ministers are far from being wholly to blame for the present ill order which prevails. Whilst institutions directly repugnant to good management, are suffered to remain, no effectual or lasting reform can be introduced.

I therefore

I therefore thought it necessary, as soon as I conceived thoughts of submitting to you some plan of reform, to take a comprehensive view of the state of this country; to make a sort of survey of its Jurisdictions, its Estates, and its Establishments. Something, in every one of them, seemed to me to stand in the way of all œconomy in their administration, and prevented every possibility of methodizing the system. But being, as I ought to be, doubtful of myself, I was resolved not to proceed in an *arbitrary* manner, in any particular which tended to change the settled state of things, or in any degree to affect the fortune or situation, the interest or the importance, of any individual. By an arbitrary proceeding, I mean one conducted by the private opinions, tastes, or feelings, of the man who attempts to regulate. These private measures are not standards of the exchequer, nor balances of the sanctuary. General principles cannot be debauched or corrupted by interest or caprice; and by those principles I was resolved to work.

Sir, before I proceed further, I will lay these principles fairly before you, that afterwards you may be in a condition to judge whether every object of regulation, as I propose it, comes fairly under its rule. This will exceedingly shorten all discussion between us, if we are perfectly in earnest in establishing a system of good management. I therefore lay down to myself, seven fundamental rules; they might indeed be reduced to two or three simple maxims, but they would be too general, and their application to the several heads of the business, before us, would not be so distinct and visible. I conceive then,

First, That all jurisdictions which furnish more matter of expence, more temptation to oppression, or more means and

instruments of corrupt influence, than
 advantage to justice or political ad-
 ministration, ought to be abolished.

Secondly, That all public estates which are
 more subservient to the purposes of vex-
 ation, overawing, and influencing those
 who hold under them, and to the ex-
 pence of perception and management,
 than of benefit to the revenue, ought,
 upon every principle, both of revenue
 and of freedom, to be disposed of.

Thirdly, That all offices which bring more
 charge than proportional advantage to
 the state; that all offices which may be
 engrafted on others, uniting and sim-
 plifying their duties, ought, in the first
 case, to be taken away; and in the se-
 cond, to be consolidated.

Fourthly, That all such offices ought to be
 abolished as obstruct the prospect of the
 general superintendant of finance; which
 destroy his superintendancy, which dis-
 able him from foreseeing and providing
 for charges as they may occur; from pre-
 venting expence in its origin, checking
 it in its progress, or securing its appli-
 cation to its proper purposes. A mi-
 nister under whom expences can be
 made without his knowledge, can never
 say what it is that he can spend or what
 it is that he can save.

Fifthly, That it is proper to establish an
 invariable order in all payments; which
 will prevent partiality; which will give
 preference to services, not according to
 the importunity of the demandant, but
 the rank and order of their utility or
 their justice.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, That it is right to reduce every establishment, and every part of an establishment (as nearly as possible) to certainty, the life of all order and good management.

Seventhly, That all subordinate treasuries, as the nurseries of mismanagement, and as naturally drawing to themselves as much money as they can, keeping it as long as they can, and accounting for it as late as they can, ought to be dissolved. They have a tendency to perplex and distract the public accounts, and to excite a suspicion of government, even beyond the extent of their abuse.

Under the authority and with the guidance of those principles, I proceed; wishing that nothing in any establishment may be changed, where I am not able to make a strong, direct, and solid application of those principles, or of some one of them. An œconomical constitution is a necessary basis for an œconomical administration.

First, with regard to the sovereign jurisdictions, I must observe, Sir, that whoever takes a view of this kingdom in a cursory manner, will imagine, that he beholds a solid, compacted, uniform system of monarchy; in which all inferior jurisdictions are but as rays diverging from one center. But on examining it more nearly, you find much excentricity and confusion. It is not a *Monarchy* in strictness. But, as in the Saxon times this country was an *heptarchy*, it is now a strange sort of *Pentarchy*. It is divided into five several distinct principalities, besides the supreme. There is indeed this difference from the Saxon times, that as in the itinerant exhibitions of the stage, for want of a complete company, they are obliged to throw

(ened)
 a variety of parts on their chief performer; so our sovereign condescends himself to act, not only the principal, but all the subordinate parts in the play. He condescends to dissipate the royal character, and to trifle with those light, subordinate, ~~acquired~~ sceptres, in those hands that sustain the ball representing the world, or which wield the trident that commands the ocean. Cross a brook, and you lose the king of England; but you have some comfort in coming again under his majesty, though "shorn of his beams," and no more than Prince of Wales. Go to the north, and you find him dwindled to a Duke of Lancaster; turn to the west of that north, and he pops upon you in the humble character of Earl of Chester. Travel a few miles on, the Earl of Chester disappears; and the king surprises you again as Count Palatine of Lancaster. If you travel beyond Mount Edgecombe, you find him once more in his incognito, and He is Duke of Cornwall. So that, quite fatigued and satiated with this dull variety, you are infinitely refreshed when you return to the sphere of his proper splendor, and behold your amiable sovereign in his true, simple, undisguised, native character of majesty.

In every one of these five Principalities, Duchies, Palatinates, there is a regular establishment of considerable expence, and most domineering influence. As his majesty submits to appear in this state of subordination to himself, his loyal peers and faithful commons attend his royal transformations; and are not so nice as to refuse to nibble at those crumbs of emoluments, which console their petty metamorphoses. Thus every one of those principalities has the apparatus of a kingdom, for the jurisdiction over a few private estates; and the formality and charge of the exchequer of Great Britain, for collecting the rents of a country squire.

'squire. Cornwall is the best of them ; but when you compare the charge with the receipt, you will find that it furnishes no exception to the general rule. The duchy and county palatine of Lancaster do not yield, as I have reason to believe, on an average of twenty years, four thousand pounds a year, clear to the crown. As to Wales, and the county palatine of Chester, I have my doubts, whether their productive exchequer yields any returns at all. Yet one may say, that this revenue is more faithfully applied to its purposes than any of the rest ; as it exists for the sole purpose of multiplying offices, and extending influence.

An attempt was lately made to improve this branch of local influence, and to transfer it to the fund of general corruption. I have on the seat behind me, the constitution of Mr. John Probert ; a knight-errant, dubbed by the noble lord in the blue ribbon, and sent to search for revenues and adventures upon the mountains of Wales. The commission is remarkable ; and the event not less so. The commission sets forth, that " Upon a report of the *deputy au-*
 " *ditor* (for there is a deputy auditor) of the
 " principality of Wales, it appeared, that his
 " majesty's land-revenues in the said principality,
 " *are greatly diminished ;*"—and " that upon a *re-*
 " *port* of the *surveyor general* of his majesty's land
 " revenues, upon a *memorial* of the auditor of his
 " majesty's revenues *within the said principality,*
 " that his mines and forests have produced very
 " *little profit either to the public revenue or to indi-*
 " *viduals ;*"—and therefore they appoint Mr. Probert, with a pension of three hundred pounds a year from the said principality, to try whether he can make any thing more of that very *little* which is stated to be so *greatly* diminished. " *A*

“ *beggarly account of empty boxes.*” And yet, Sir, you will remark—that this diminution from littleness (which serves only to prove the infinite divisibility of matter) was not for want of the tender and officious care (as we see) of surveyors general, and surveyors particular; of auditors and deputy-auditors; not for want of memorials, and remonstrances, and reports, and commissions, and constitutions, and inquisitions, and pensions.

Probert, thus armed, and accoutred,—and paid, proceeded on his adventure;—but he was no sooner arrived on the confines of Wales, than all Wales was in arms to meet him. That nation is brave, and full of spirit. Since the invasion of king Edward, and the massacre of the bards, there never was such a tumult, and alarm, and uproar, through the region of *Prestatyn*. *Snowden* shook to its base; *Cader Edris* was loosened from its foundations. The fury of litigious war blew her horn on the mountains. The rocks poured down their goatherds, and the deep caverns vomited out their miners. Every thing above ground, and every thing under ground, was in arms.

In short, Sir, to alight from my Welsh Pegasus, and to come to level ground; the *Preux Chevalier* Probert went to look for revenue, like his masters upon other occasions; and like his masters, he found rebellion. But we were grown cautious by experience. A civil war of paper might end in a more serious war; for now remonstrance met remonstrance, and memorial was opposed to memorial. The wise Britons thought it more reasonable, that the poor, wasted, decrepit revenue of the principality, should die a natural than a violent death. In truth, Sir, the attempt was no less an affront upon the understanding of that respectable people, than

than it was an attack on their property. They chose that their ancient moss-grown castles, should moulder into decay, under the silent touches of time, and the slow formality of an oblivious and drowsy exchequer, than that they should be battered down all at once, by the lively efforts of a pensioned engineer. As it is the fortune of the noble lord to whom the auspices of this campaign belonged, frequently to provoke resistance, so it is his rule and nature to yield to that resistance *in all cases whatsoever*. He was true to himself on this occasion. He submitted with spirit to the spirited remonstrances of the Welch. Mr. Probert gave up his adventure, and keeps his pension—and so ends “the famous history of the revenue adventures of the bold Baron North, and the good Knight Probert, upon the mountains of Venodotia.”

In such a state is the exchequer of Wales at present, that, upon the report of the treasury itself, its *little* revenue is *greatly* diminished; and we see by the whole of this strange transaction, that an attempt to improve it, produces resistance; the resistance produces submission; and the whole ends in pension*.

It is nearly the same with the revenues of the duchy of Lancaster. To do nothing with them is extinction; to improve them is oppression. Indeed, the whole of the estates which support these minor principalities, is made up, not of revenues,

* Here Lord North shook his head, and told those who sat near him, that Mr. Probert's pension was to depend on his success. It may be so. Mr. Probert's pension was, however, no essential part of the question; nor did Mr. B. care whether he still possessed it or not. His point was, to shew the ridicule of attempting an improvement of the Welsh revenue under its present establishment.

and

and rents, and profitable fines, but of claims, of pretensions, of vexations, of litigations. They are exchequers of unfrequent receipt, and constant charge; a system of finances not fit for an œconomist who would be rich; not fit for a prince who would govern his subjects with equity and justice.

It is not only between prince and subject, that these mock jurisdictions, and mimic revenues, produce great mischief. They excite among the people a spirit of informing, and delating; a spirit of supplanting and undermining one another. So that many in such circumstances, conceive it advantageous to them, rather to continue subject to vexation themselves, than to give up the means and chance of vexing others. It is exceedingly common for men to contract their love to their country, into an attachment to its petty subdivisions; and they sometimes even cling to their provincial abuses, as if they were franchises, and local privileges. Accordingly, in places where there is much of this kind of estate, persons will be always found, who would rather trust to their talents in recommending themselves to power for the renewal of their interests, than to incur their purses, though never so lightly, in order to transmit independence to their posterity. It is a great mistake, that the desire of securing property is universal among mankind. Gaming is a principle inherent in human nature. It belongs to us all. I would therefore break those tables; I would furnish no evil occupation for that spirit. I would make every man look every where, except to the intrigue of a court, for the improvement of his circumstances, or the security of his fortune. I have in my eye a very strong case in the duchy of Lancaster (which lately occupied
Westminster

Westminster-hall, and the house of lords) as my voucher for many of these reflections*.

For what plausible reason are these principalities suffered to exist? When a government is rendered complex (which in itself is no desirable thing) it ought to be for some political end, which cannot be answered otherwise. Subdivisions in government, are only admissible in favour of the dignity of inferior princes, and high nobility; or for the support of an aristocratic confederacy under some head; or for the conservation of the franchises of the people in some privileged province. For the two former of these ends, such are the subdivisions in favour of the electoral, and other princes in the empire; for the latter of these purposes, are the jurisdictions of the imperial cities, and the Hanse towns. For the latter of these ends, are also the countries of the States [*Pais d'Etas*] and certain cities, and orders in France. These are all regulations with an object, and some of them with a very good object. But how are the principles of any of these subdivisions applicable in the case before us?

Do they answer any purpose to the king? The principality of Wales was given by patent to Edward the Black Prince, on the ground on which it has since stood. — Lord Coke sagaciously observes upon it, “That in the charter of creating the Black Prince Edward prince of Wales, there is a *great mystery* — for *less* than an estate of inheritance, so *great* a prince could not have, and an *absolute estate of inheritance* in so *great* a principality as Wales (this principality being *so dear* to him) he *should* not have; and

* Case of Richard Lee, Esq; Appellant, against George Venables Lord Vernon, Respondent, in the year 1776.

“ therefore

“ therefore it was made, *sibi et heredibus suis regibus Angliæ*, that by his decease, or attaining to the crown, it might be extinguished in the crown.”

For the sake of this foolish *mystery*, of what a great prince *could not have less*, and *should not have so much*, of a principality which was too *dear* to be given, and too *great* to be kept—and for no other cause, that ever I could find—this form and shadow of a principality without any substance, has been maintained. That you may judge in this instance (and it serves for the rest) of the difference between a great and a little œconomy, you will please to recollect, Sir, that Wales may be about the tenth part of England in size and population; and certainly not a hundredth part in opulence. Twelve judges perform the whole of the business, both of the stationary and the itinerant justice of this kingdom; but for Wales, there are eight judges. There is in Wales an exchequer, as well as in all the duchies, according to the very best and most authentic absurdity of form. There are in all of them, a hundred more difficult trifles and laborious fooleries, which serve no other purpose than to keep alive corrupt hope and servile dependence.

These principalities are so far from contributing to the ease of the king, to his wealth, or his dignity, that they render both his supreme and his subordinate authority, perfectly ridiculous. It was but the other day, that that pert, factious fellow, the duke of Lancaster, presumed to fly in the face of his liege lord, our gracious sovereign; and *associating* with a parcel of lawyers as factious as himself, to the destruction of *all law and order*, and *in committees leading directly to rebellion*—presumed to go to law with the king. The object

ject is neither your business, nor mine. Which of the parties got the better, I really forget. I think it was (as it ought to be) the king. The material point is, that the suit cost about fifteen thousand pounds. But as the duke of Lancaster is but a sort of *duke Humphrey*, and not worth a groat, our sovereign was obliged to pay the costs of both. Indeed this art of converting a great monarch into a little prince, this royal masquerading, is a very dangerous and expensive amusement; and one of the king's *menus plaisirs*, which ought to be reformed. This duchy, which is not worth four thousand pounds a year at best, to *revenue*, is worth forty or fifty thousand to *influence*.

The duchy of *Lancaster*, and the county palatine of *Lancaster*, answered, I admit, some purpose in their original creation. They tended to make a subject imitate a prince. When *Henry the fourth* from that stair ascended the throne, high-minded as he was, he was not willing to kick away the ladder. To prevent that principality from being extinguished in the crown, he severed it by act of parliament. He had a motive, such as it was; he thought his title to the crown unsound, and his possession insecure. He therefore managed a retreat in his duchy; which *lord Coke* calls (I do not know why) *par multis regnis*. He flattered himself that it was practicable to make a projecting point half way down, to break his fall from the precipice of royalty; as if it were possible for one who had lost a kingdom to keep any thing else. However, it is evident that he thought so. When *Henry the fifth* united, by act of parliament, the estates of his (mother to the duchy, he had the same predilection with his father, to the root of his family honours, and the same policy in enlarging the

the sphere of a possible retreat from the slippery royalty of the two great crowns he held. All this was changed by *Edward the fourth*. He had no such family partialities, and his policy was the reverse of that of Henry the fourth and Henry the fifth. He accordingly again united the duchy of Lancaster to the crown. But when *Henry the seventh*, who chose to consider himself as of the house of Lancaster, came to the throne, he brought with him the old pretensions, and the old politics of that house. A new act of parliament, a second time, dissevered the duchy of Lancaster from the crown; and in that line things continued until the subversion of the monarchy, when principalities and powers fell along with the throne. The duchy of Lancaster must have been extinguished, if *Cromwell*, who began to form ideas of aggrandizing his house, and raising the several branches of it, had not caused the duchy to be again separated from the commonwealth, by an act of the parliament of those times.

What partiality, what objects of the politics of the house of Lancaster, or of Cromwell, has his present majesty, or his majesty's family? What power have they within any of these principalities, which they have not within their kingdom? In what manner is the dignity of the nobility concerned in these principalities? What rights have the subject there, which they have not at least equally in every other part of the nation. These distinctions exist for no good end to the king, to the nobility, or to the people. They ought not to exist at all. If the crown (contrary to its nature, but most conformably to the whole tenor of the advice that has been lately given) should so far forget its dignity, as to contend, that these jurisdictions and revenues are estates of private property, I am rather for acting as if that

groundless claim were of some weight, than for giving up that essential part of the reform. I would value the clear income, and give a clear annuity to the crown, taken on the medium produce for twenty years.

If the crown has any favourite name or title, if the subject has any matter of local accommodation within any of these jurisdictions, it is meant to preserve them; and to improve them, if any improvement can be suggested. As to the crown reversions or titles upon the property of the people there, it is proposed to convert them from a snare to their independance, into a relief from their burthens. I propose, therefore, to unite all the five principalities to the crown, and to its ordinary jurisdiction, to abolish all those offices that produce an useless and chargeable separation from the body of the people,—to compensate those who do not hold their offices (if any such there are) at the pleasure of the crown,—to extinguish vexatious titles by an act of short limitation,—to sell those unprofitable estates which support useless jurisdictions, and to turn the tenant-right into a fee, on such moderate terms as will be better for the state than its present right, and which it is impossible for any rational tenant to refuse.

As to the Dutchies, their judicial œconomy may be provided for without charge. They have only to fall of course into the common county administration. A commission more or less made or omitted, settles the matter fully. As to Wales, it has been proposed to add a judge to the several courts of Westminster-hall; and it has been considered as an improvement in itself. For my part, I cannot pretend to speak upon it with clearness or with decision; but certainly this arrangement would be more than sufficient for Wales. My
original

original thought was to suppress five of the eight judges ; and to leave the chief justice of Chester, with the two senior judges ; and, to facilitate the business, to throw the twelve counties into six districts, holding the sessions alternately in the counties of which each district shall be composed. But on this I shall be more clear, when I come to the particular bill.

Sir, the house will now see whether, in praying for judgment against the minor principalities, I do not act in conformity to the laws that I had laid to myself, of getting rid of every jurisdiction more subservient to oppression and expence, than to any end of justice or honest policy ; of abolishing offices more expensive than useful ; of combining duties improperly separated ; of changing revenues more vexatious than productive, into ready money ; of suppressing offices which stand in the way of œconomy ; and of cutting off lurking subordinate treasuries. Dispute the rules ; controvert the application ; or give your hands to this salutary measure.

Most of the same rules will be found applicable to my second object — *the landed estate of the crown*. A landed estate is certainly the very worst which the crown can possess. All minute and dispersed possessions, possessions that are often of indeterminate value, and which require a continued personal attendance, are of a nature more proper for private management, than public administration.—They are fitter for the care of a frugal land steward, than of an office in the state. Whatever they may possibly have been in other times, or in other countries, they are not of magnitude enough with us, to occupy a public department, nor to provide for a public object. They are already given up to parliament, and the gift is not of great value. Common prudence dictates, even
in

in the management of private affairs, that all dispersed and chargeable estates, should be sacrificed to the relief of estates more compact and better circumstanced.

If it be objected, that these lands at present would sell at a low market; this is answered, by shewing that money is at high price. The one balances the other. Lands sell at the current rate, and nothing can sell for more. But be the price what it may, a great object is always answered, whenever any property is transferr'd from hands that are not fit for that property, to those that are. The buyer and seller must mutually profit by such a bargain; and, what rarely happens in matters of revenue, the relief of the subject will go hand in hand with the profit of the exchequer.

As to the *forest lands*, in which the Crown has (where they are not granted or prescriptively held) the *dominion* of the *soil*, and the *vert* and *venison*; that is to say, the timber and the game, and in which the people have a variety of rights, in common of herbage, and other commons, according to the usage of the several forests;—I propose to have those rights of the crown valued as manorial rights are valued on an inclosure; and a defined portion of land to be given for them; which land is to be sold for the public benefit.

As to the timber, I propose a survey of the whole. What is useless for the naval purposes of the kingdom, I would condemn, and dispose of, for the security of what may be useful; and to inclose such other parts as may be most fit to furnish a perpetual supply; wholly extinguishing, for a very obvious reason, all right of *venison* in those parts.

The forest *rights* which extend over the lands and possessions of others, being of no profit to the crown, and a grievance, as far as it goes, to the
 D subject;

subject; these I propose to extinguish without charge to the proprietors. The several commons are to be allotted and compensated for upon ideas which I shall hereafter explain. They are nearly the same with the principles upon which you have acted in private inclosures. I shall never quit precedents where I find them applicable. For those regulations and compensations, and for every other part of the detail, you will be so indulgent as to give me credit for the present.

The revenue to be obtained from the sale of the forest lands and rights, will not be so considerable, I believe, as many people have imagined; and I conceive it would be unwise to screw it up to the utmost, or even to suffer bidders to inhance, according to their eagerness, the purchase of objects, wherein the expence of that purchase may weaken the capital to be employed in their cultivation. This, I am well aware, might give room for partiality in the disposal. In my opinion it would be the lesser evil of the two. But I really conceive, that a rule of fair preference might be established, which would take away all sort of unjust and corrupt partiality. The principal revenue which I propose to draw from these uncultivated wastes, is to spring from the improvement and population of the kingdom; which never can happen, without producing an improvement more advantageous to the revenues of the crown, than the rents of the best landed estate which it can hold. I believe, Sir, it will hardly be necessary for me to add, that in this sale I naturally except all the houses, gardens, and parks belonging to the crown, and such one forest as shall be chosen by his majesty, as best accommodated to his pleasures.

By means of this part of the reform, will fall the expensive office of *surveyor general*, with all
the

the influence that attends it. By this, will fall *two chief justices in Eyre*, with all their train of dependents. You need be under no apprehension, Sir, that your office is to be touched in its emoluments. They are yours by law ; and they are but a moderate part of the compensation which is given to you for the ability with which you execute an office of quite another sort of importance: it is far from overpaying your diligence ; or more than sufficient for sustaining the high rank you stand in, as the first gentleman of England. As to the duties of your chief justiceship, they are very different from those for which you have received the office. Your dignity is too high for a jurisdiction over wild beasts ; and your learning and talents too valuable to be wasted as chief justice of a desert. I cannot reconcile it to myself, that you, Sir, should be stuck up as a useless piece of antiquity.

I have now disposed of the unprofitable landed estates of the crown, and thrown them into the mass of private property ; by which they will come, through the course of circulation, and through the political secretions of the state, into our better understood and better ordered revenues.

I come next to the great supreme body of the civil government itself. I approach it with that awe and reverence with which a young physician approaches to the cure of the disorders of his parent. Disorders, Sir, and infirmities, there are — such disorders, that all attempts towards method, prudence, and frugality, will be perfectly vain, whilst a system of confusion remains, which is not only alien but adverse to all œconomy ; a system, which is not only prodigal in its very essence, but causes every thing else which belongs to it to be prodigally conducted.

It is impossible, Sir, for any person to be an œconomist where no order in payments is established; it is impossible for a man to be an œconomist, who is not able to take a comparative view of his means, and of his expences, for the year which lies before him; it is impossible for a man to be an œconomist, under whom various officers in their several departments may spend,—even just what they please,—and often with an emulation of expence, as contributing to the importance, if not profit, of their several departments.— Thus much is certain; that neither the present, nor any other first lord of the treasury, has been ever able to take a survey, or to make even a tolerable guess, of the expences of government for any one year; so as to enable him with the least degree of certainty, or even probability, to bring his affairs within compass. Whatever scheme may be formed upon them, must be made on a calculation of chances. As things are circumstanced, the first lord of the treasury cannot make an estimate. I am sure I serve the king, and I am sure I assist administration, by putting œconomy, at least in their power. We must *class services*; we must (as far as their nature admits) *appropriate* funds; or every thing however reformed, will fall again into the old confusion.

Coming upon this ground of the civil list, the first thing in dignity and charge that attracts our notice, is the *royal household*. This establishment, in my opinion, is exceedingly abusive in its constitution. It is formed upon manners and customs, that have long since expired. In the first place, it is formed, in many respects, upon *feudal principles*. In the feudal times, it was not uncommon, even among subjects, for the lowest offices to be held by considerable persons; persons, as unfit by their incapacity, as improper from

from their rank, to occupy such employments. They were held by patent, sometimes for life, and sometimes by inheritance. If my memory does not deceive me, a person of no slight consideration, held the office of patent hereditary cook to an earl of Warwick—The earl of Warwick's soups, I fear, were not the better for the dignity of his kitchen. I think it was an earl of Gloucester, who officiated as steward of the household to the archbishops of Canterbury. Instances of the same kind may in some degree be found in the Northumberland house-book, and other family records. There was some reason in ancient necessities, for these ancient customs. Protection was wanted; and the domestic tie, though not the highest, was the closest.

The king's household has not only several strong traces of this *feudality*, but it is formed also upon the principles of a *Body-corporate*. It has its own magistrates, courts, and by-laws. This might be necessary in the antient times, in order to have a government within itself, capable of regulating the vast and often unruly multitude which composed and attended it. This was the origin of the antient court called the *Green Cloth* — composed of the marshal, treasurer, and other great officers of the household, with certain clerks. The rich subjects of the kingdom, who had formerly the same establishments (only on a reduced scale) have since altered their œconomy; and turned the course of their expence, from the maintenance of vast establishments within their walls, to the employment of a great variety of independent trades abroad. Their influence is lessened; but a mode of accommodation and a style of splendour, suited to the manners of the times, has been encreased. Royalty itself has insensibly followed; and the royal household has been carried away by the resistless tide of manners: but with this very material difference.

Private men have got rid of the establishments along with the reasons of them; whereas the royal household has lost all that was stately and venerable in the antique manners, without retrenching any thing of the cumbrous charge of a Gothic establishment. It is shrunk into the polished littleness of modern elegance and personal accommodation. It has evaporated from the gross concrete, into an essence and rectified spirit of expence, where you have tuns of antient pomp in a vial of modern luxury.

But when the reason of old establishments is gone, it is absurd to preserve nothing but the burthen of them. This is superstitiously to embalm a carcass not worth an ounce of the gums that are used to preserve it. It is to burn precious oils in the tomb; it is to offer meat and drink to the dead,—not so much an honour to the deceased, as a disgrace to the survivors. Our palaces are vast inhospitable halls. There the bleak winds, there, “Boreas, and Eurus, and Caurus, and Argestes loud,” howling through the vacant lobbies, and clattering the doors of deserted guard-rooms, appal the imagination, and conjure up the grim spectres of departed tyrants—the Saxon, the Norman, and the Dane; the stern Edwards and fierce Henrys—who stalk from desolation to desolation, through the dreary vacuity, and melancholy succession of chill and comfortless chambers. When this tumult subsides, a dead, and still more frightful silence would reign in this desert, if every now and then the tacking of hammers did not announce, that those constant attendants upon all courts, in all ages, Jobbs, were still alive; for whose sake alone it is, that any trace of ancient grandeur is suffered to remain. These palaces are a true emblem of some governments; the inhabitants are decayed, but the governors and magistrates still flourish. They put me in mind of *Old Sarum*

Sarum, where the representatives, more in number than the constituents, only serve to inform us, that that this was once a place of trade, and sounding with "the busy hum of men," though now you can only trace the streets by the colour of the corn; and its sole manufacture is in members of parliament.

These old establishments were formed also on a third principle, still more adverse to the living economy of the age. They were formed, Sir, on the principle of *purveyance*, and *receipt in kind*. In former days, when the household was vast, and the supply scanty and precarious, the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis, to purchase provision with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of an hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country, and deposited their spoil in an hundred caverns, with each its keeper. There, every commodity, received in its rawest condition, went through all the process which fitted it for use. This inconvenient receipt produced an œconomy suited only to itself. It multiplied offices beyond all measure; buttery, pantry, and all that rabble of places, which, though profitable to the holders and expensive to the state, are almost too mean to mention.

All this might be, and I believe was necessary at first; for it is remarkable, that *purveyance*, after its regulation had been the subject of a long line of statutes, (not fewer, I think, than twenty-six) was wholly taken away by the twelfth of Charles the second; yet in the next year of the same reign, it was found necessary to revive it by a special act of parliament, for the sake of the king's journeys. This, Sir, is curious; and what would hardly be expected in so reduced a court as that of Charles the second, and in so improved a

country as England might then be thought. But so it was. In our time, one well filled and well covered stage-coach, requires more accommodation than a royal progress; and every district at an hour's warning, can supply an army.

I do not say, Sir, that all these establishments whose principle is gone, have been systematically kept up for influence solely: neglect had its share. But this I am sure of, that a consideration of influence has hindered any one from attempting to pull them down. For the purposes of influence, and for those purposes only, are retained half at least of the household establishments. No revenue, no not a royal revenue, can exist under the accumulated charge of antient establishment; modern luxury; and parliamentary political corruption.

If therefore we aim at regulating this household, the question will be, whether we ought to economize by *detail*, or by *principle*? The example we have had of the success of an attempt to economize by detail, and under establishments adverse to the attempt, may tend to decide this question.

At the beginning of his majesty's reign, Lord Talbot came to the administration of a great department in the household. I believe no man ever entered into his majesty's service, or into the service of any prince, with a more clear integrity, or with more zeal and affection for the interest of his master; and I must add, with abilities for a still higher service. Economy was then announced as a maxim of the reign. This noble lord, therefore, made several attempts towards a reform. In the year 1777, when the king's civil list debts came last to be paid, he explained very fully the success of his undertaking. He told the house of lords, that he had attempted to reduce the charges
of

of the king's tables, and his kitchen.—The thing, Sir, was not below him. He knew, that there is nothing interesting in the concerns of men, whom we love and honour, that is beneath our attention.—“ Love,” says one of our old poets, “ esteems no office mean;” and with still more spirit, “ Entire affection scorneth nicer hands.” Frugality, Sir, is founded on the principle, that all riches have limits. A royal household, grown enormous, even in the meanest departments, may weaken and perhaps destroy all energy in the highest offices of the state. The gorging a royal kitchen may stint and famish the negotiations of a kingdom. Therefore, the object was worthy of his, was worthy of any man's attention.

In consequence of this noble lord's resolution, (as he told the other house) he reduced several tables, and put the persons entitled to them upon board wages, much to their own satisfaction. But unluckily, subsequent duties requiring constant attendance, it was not possible to prevent their being fed where they were employed—and thus this first step towards œconomy doubled the expence.

There was another disaster far more doleful than this. I shall state it, as the cause of that misfortune lies at the bottom of almost all our prodigality. Lord Talbot attempted to reform the kitchen; but such, as he well observed, is the consequence of having duty done by one person, whilst another enjoys the emoluments, that he found himself frustrated in all his designs. On that rock his whole adventure split—His whole scheme of œconomy was dashed to pieces; his department became more expensive than ever;—the civil list debt accumulated—Why? It was truly from a cause, which, though perfectly adequate to the effect, one would not have instantly guessed;—It was because the *turnspit in the king's kitchen*
was

*was a member of parliament**. The king's domestic servants were all undone; his tradesmen remained unpaid, and became bankrupt—*because the turnspit of the king's kitchen was a member of parliament*. His majesty's slumbers were interrupted, his pillow was stuffed with thorns, and his peace of mind entirely broken,—*because the king's turnspit was a member of parliament*. The judges were unpaid; the justice of the kingdom bent and gave way; the foreign ministers remained inactive and unprovided; the system of Europe was dissolved; the chain of our alliances was broken; all the wheels of government at home and abroad were stopped;—*because the king's turnspit was a member of parliament*.

Such, Sir, was the situation of affairs, and such the cause of that situation, when his majesty came a second time to parliament, to desire the payment of those debts which the employment of its members in various offices, visible and invisible, had occasioned. I believe that a like fate will attend every attempt at œconomy by detail, under similar circumstances, and in every department. A complex operose office of account and controul, is in itself, and even if members of parliament had nothing to do with it, the most prodigal of all things. The most audacious robberies, or the most subtle frauds, would never venture upon such a waste, as an over careful, detailed guard against them will infallibly produce. In our establishments, we frequently see an office of account, of an hundred pounds a year expence, and another office, of an equal expence, to controul that office, and the whole upon a matter that is not worth twenty shillings.

To avoid, therefore, this minute care which produces the consequences of the most extensive neglect, and to oblige members of parliament to

* *Vide* Lord Talbot's speech, in Almon's Parliamentary Register, vol. vii. p. 79 of the Proceedings of the Lords.

attend

attend to public cares, and not to the servile offices of domestic management, I propose, Sir, to *œconomize by principle*, that is, I propose, to put affairs into that train, which experience points out as the most effectual, from the nature of things, and from the constitution of the human mind. In all dealings, where it is possible, the principles of radical œconomy prescribe three things; first, undertaking by the great; secondly, engaging with persons of skill in the subject matter; thirdly, engaging with those who shall have an immediate and direct interest in the proper execution of the business.

To avoid frittering and crumbling down the attention, by a blind unsystematic observance of every trifle, it has ever been found the best way, to do all things, which are great in the total amount, and minute in the component parts, by a *general contract*. The principles of trade have so pervaded every species of dealing, from the highest to the lowest objects; all transactions are got so much into system; that we may, at a moment's warning, and to a farthing value, be informed at what rate any service may be supplied. No dealing is exempt from the possibility of fraud. But by a contract on a matter certain, you have this advantage—you are sure to know the utmost *extent* of the fraud to which you are subject. By a contract with a person in *his own trade*, you are sure you shall not suffer by *want of skill*. By a *short contract* you are sure of making it the *interest* of the contractor to exert that skill for the satisfaction of his employers.

I mean to derogate nothing from the diligence or integrity of the present, or of any former board of green-cloth. But what skill can members of parliament obtain in that low kind of province? What pleasure can they have in the execution of that

that kind of duty? And if they should neglect it, how does it affect their interest, when we know, that it is their vote in parliament, and not their diligence in cookery or catering, that recommends them to their office, or keeps them in it?

I therefore propose, that the king's tables (to whatever number of tables, or covers to each, he shall think proper to command) should be classed by the steward of the household, and should be contracted for, according to their rank, by the head or cover;—that the estimate and circumstance of the contract should be carried to the treasury to be approved; and that its faithful and satisfactory performance should be reported there, previous to any payment; that there, and there only, should the payment be made. I propose, that men should be contracted with only in their proper trade; and that no member of parliament should be capable of such contract. By this plan, almost all the infinite offices under the lord steward may be spared; to the extreme simplification, and to the far better execution, of every one of his functions. The king of Prussia is so served. He is a great and eminent (though indeed a very rare) instance of the possibility of uniting in a mind of vigour and compass, an attention to minute objects, with the largest views, and the most complicated plans. His tables are served by contract, and by the head. Let me say, that no prince can be ashamed to imitate the king of Prussia; and particularly to learn in his school, when the problem is—“The best manner of reconciling the state of a court with the support of war?” Other courts, I understand, have followed him with effect, and to their satisfaction.

The same clue of principle leads us through the labyrinth of the other departments. What, Sir, is there in the office of *the great wardrobe* (which has

has the care of the king's furniture) that may not be executed by the *lord chamberlain* himself. He has an honourable appointment; he has time sufficient to attend to the duty; and he has the vice chamberlain to assist him. Why should not he deal also by contract, for all things belonging to this office, and carry his estimates first, and his report of the execution in its proper time, for payment, directly to the board of treasury itself? By a simple operation (containing in it a treble control) the expences of a department, which for naked walls, or walls hung with cobwebs, has in a few years cost the crown £. 150,000, may at length hope for regulation. But, Sir, the office and its business are at variance. As it stands, it serves, not to furnish the palace with its hangings, but the parliament with its dependent members.

To what end, Sir, does the office of *removing wardrobe* serve at all? Why should a *jewel office* exist for the sole purpose of taxing the king's gifts of plate? Its object falls naturally within the *chamberlain's* province; and ought to be under his care and inspection, without any fee. Why should an office of the *robes* exist, when that of *groom of the stole* is a sinecure, and that this is a proper object of his department?

All these incumbrances, which are themselves nuisances, produce other incumbrances, and other nuisances. For the payment of these useless establishments, there are no less than *three useless treasurers*; two to hold a purse, and one to play with a stick. The treasurer of the household is a mere name. The cofferer, and the treasurer of the chamber, receive and pay great sums, which it is not at all necessary *they* should either receive or pay. All the proper officers, servants, and tradesmen, may be enrolled in their several departments, and paid in proper classes and times with

with great simplicity and order, at the exchequer, and by direction from the treasury.

The *board of works*, which in the seven years preceding 1777, has cost towards £. 400,000*; and (if I recollect rightly) has not cost less in proportion from the beginning of the reign, is under the very same description of all the other ill-contrived establishments, and calls for the very same reform. We are to seek for the visible signs of all this expence.—For all this expence, we do not see a building of the size and importance of a pigeon-house. Buckingham-house was reprinted by a bargain with the public, for one hundred thousand pounds;—and the small house at Windsor has been, if I mistake not, undertaken since that account was brought before us. The good works of that board of works, are as carefully concealed, as other good works ought to be. They are perfectly invisible. But though it is the perfection of charity to be concealed, it is, Sir, the property and glory of magnificence, to appear, and stand forward to the eye.

That board, which ought to be a concern of builders, and such like, and of none else, is turned into a junto of members of parliament. That office too has a *treasury*, and a paymaster of its own; and lest the arduous affairs of that important exchequer should be too fatiguing, that paymaster has a deputy to partake his profits, and relieve his cares. I do not believe, that either now or in former times, the chief managers of that board have made any profit of its abuse. It is, however, no good reason that an abusive establishment should subsist, because it is of as little private as of public advantage. But this establishment has the grand radical fault, the original sin, that pervades and perverts all our

* More exactly £. 378,616. 10s. 1d. $\frac{3}{4}$.

establishments ;

establishments ;—The apparatus is not fitted to the object, nor the workmen to the work. Expences are incurred on the private opinion of an inferior establishment, without consulting the principal ; who can alone determine the proportion which it ought to bear to the other establishments of the state, in the order of their relative importance.

I propose, therefore, along with the rest, to pull down this whole ill-contrived scaffolding, which obstructs, rather than forwards our public works ; to take away its treasury ; to put the whole into the hands of a real builder, who shall not be a member of parliament ; and to oblige him by a previous estimate and final payment, to appear twice at the treasury, before the public can be loaded. The king's gardens are to come under a similar regulation.

The *mint*, though not a department of the household, has the same vices. It is a great expence to the nation, chiefly for the sake of members of parliament. It has its officers of parade and dignity. It has its treasury too. It is a sort of corporate body ; and formerly was a body of great importance ; as much so, on the then scale of things, and the then order of business, as the bank is at this day. It was the great center of money transactions and remittances for our own, and for other nations ; until king Charles the first, among other arbitrary projects, dictated by despotic necessity, made him withhold the money that lay there for remittance. That blow, (and happily too) the mint never recover'd. Now it is no bank ; no remittance-shop. The mint, Sir, is a *manufacture*, and it is nothing else ; and it ought to be undertaken upon the principles of a manufacture ; that is, for the best and cheapest execution, by a contract, upon proper securities, and under proper regulations.

The *artillery* is a far greater object; it is a military concern; but having an affinity and kindred in its defects with the establishments I am now speaking of, I think it best to speak of it along with them. It is, I conceive, an establishment not well suited to its martial, though exceedingly well calculated for its parliamentary purposes.—Here there is a *treasury*, as in all the other inferior departments of government. Here the military is subordinate to the civil, and the naval confounded with the land service. The object indeed is much the same in both. But when the detail is examined, it will be found that they had better be separated. For a reform of this office, I propose to restore things, to what (all considerations taken together) is their natural order; to restore them to their just proportion, and to their just distribution. I propose, in this military concern, to render the civil subordinate to the military; and this will annihilate the greatest part of the expence, and all the influence belonging to the office. I propose to send the military branch to the army, and the naval to the Admiralty: and I intend to perfect and accomplish the whole detail (where it becomes too minute and complicated for legislature, and requires exact, official, military, and mechanical knowledge) by a commission of competent officers in both departments. I propose to execute by contract, what by contract can be executed, and to bring, as much as possible, all estimates to be previously approved, and finally to be paid by the treasury.

Thus, by following the course of nature, and not the purposes of politics, or the accumulated patchwork of occasional accommodation, this vast expensive department may be methodized; its service proportioned to its necessities; and its payments subjected to the inspection of the superior minister of finance; who is to judge of it on the
result

result of the total collective exigencies of the state. This last is a reigning principle through my whole plan; and it is a principle which I hope may hereafter be applied to other plans.

By these regulations taken together—besides the three subordinate treasuries in the lesser principalities, five other subordinate treasuries are suppressed. There is taken away the whole *establishment of detail* in the household; the *treasurer*;—the *comptroller* (for a comptroller is hardly necessary where there is no treasurer) the *cofferer of the household*;—the *treasurer of the chamber*;—the *master of the household*;—the whole *board of green cloth*;—and a vast number of subordinate offices in the department of the *steward of the household*;—the whole establishment of the *great wardrobe*;—the *removing wardrobe*;—the *jewel office*;—the *robes*;—the *board of works*; almost the whole charge of the *civil branch* of the *board of ordnance*, are taken away. All these arrangements together will be found to relieve the nation from a vast weight of influence, without distressing, but rather by forwarding every public service. When something of this kind is done, then the public may begin to breathe. Under other governments, a question of expence is only a question of œconomy, and it is nothing more; with us in every question of expence, there is always a mixture of constitutional considerations.

It is, Sir, because I wish to keep this business of subordinate treasuries as much as I can together, that I brought the *ordnance - office* before you, though it is properly a military department. For the same reason I will now trouble you with my thoughts and propositions upon two of the greatest *under treasuries*, I mean the office of *paymaster of the land forces* or *treasurer of the army*; and that of the *treasurer*

E of

of the navy. The former of these has long been a great object of public suspicion and uneasiness. Envy too has had its share in the obloquy which is cast upon this office. But I am sure that it has no share at all in the reflections I shall make upon it, or in the reformations that I shall propose. I do not grudge to the honourable gentleman who at present holds the office, any of the effects of his talents, his merit, or his fortune. He is respectable in all these particulars. I follow the constitution of the office, without persecuting its holder. It is necessary, in all matters of public complaint, where men frequently feel right and argue wrong, to separate prejudice from reason; and to be very sure, in attempting the redress of a grievance, that we hit upon its real seat, and its true nature. Where there is an abuse in office, the first thing that occurs in heat is to censure the officer. Our natural disposition leads all our enquiries rather to persons than to things. But this prejudice is to be corrected by maturer thinking.

Sir, the profits of the *pay office* (as an office) are not too great, in my opinion, for its duties, and for the rank of the person who has generally held it. He has been generally a person of the highest rank; that is to say, a person of eminence and consideration in this house. The great and the invidious profits of the *pay-office*, are from the *Bank* that is held in it. According to the present course of the office, and according to the present mode of accounting there, this bank must necessarily exist somewhere. Money is a productive thing; and when the usual time of its demand can be tolerably calculated, it may, with prudence, be safely laid out to the profit of the holder. It is on this calculation, that the business of banking proceeds. But no profit can be derived from the use of money, which does not make it the interest
of

of the holder to delay his account. The process of the exchequer colludes with this interest. Is this collusion from its want of rigour, and strictness, and great regularity of form? The reverse is true. They have in the exchequer brought rigour and formalism to their ultimate perfection. The process against accountants is so rigorous, and in a manner so unjust, that correctives must, from time to time, be applied to it. These correctives being discretionary, upon the case, and generally remitted by the barons to the lords of the treasury, as the best judges of the reasons for respite, hearings are had; delays are produced; and thus the extreme of rigour in office (as usual in all human affairs) leads to the extreme of laxity. What with the interested delay of the officer; the ill-conceived exactness of the court; the applications for dispensations from that exactness, the revival of rigorous process, after the expiration of the time; and the new rigours producing new applications, and new enlargements of time, such delays happen in the public accounts, that they can scarcely ever be closed.

Besides, Sir, they have a rule in the exchequer, which, I believe, they have founded upon a very ancient statute, that of the 51st of Henry III. by which it is provided, "That when a sheriff or bailiff hath began his account, none other shall be received to account, until he that was first appointed hath clearly accounted, and that the sum has been received*." Whether this clause of that statute be the ground of that absurd practice, I am not quite able to ascertain. But it has very generally prevailed, though I am told

* Et quant viscount ou bailliff ait commence de accompler, nul autre ne soit resceu de acconter tanque le primer qe soit assis, eit peraccompte, et qe la somme soit resceu. Stat. 51. ann. dom. 1266.

that of late they have began to relax from it. In consequence of forms adverse to substantial account, we have a long succession of pay-masters and their representatives, who have never been admitted to account, although perfectly ready to do so.

As the extent of our wars has scattered the accountants under the pay-master into every part of the globe, the grand and sure pay-master, Death, in all his shapes, calls these accountants to another reckoning. Death, indeed, domineers over every thing, but the forms of the exchequer. Over these he has no power. They are impassive and immortal. The audit of the exchequer, more severe than the audit to which the accountants are gone, demands proofs which in the nature of things are difficult, sometimes impossible to be had. In this respect, too, rigour, as usual, defeats itself. Then, the exchequer never gives a particular receipt, or clears a man of his account, as far as it goes. A final acquittance (or a *quietus*, as they term it) is scarcely ever to be obtained. Terrors and ghosts of unlaid accountants, haunt the houses of their children from generation to generation. Families, in the course of succession, fall into minorities; the inheritance comes into the hands of females; and very perplexed affairs are often delivered over into the hands of negligent guardians, and faithless stewards. So that the demand remains, when the advantage of the money is gone, if ever any advantage at all has been made of it. This is a cause of infinite distress to families; and becomes a source of influence to an extent, that can scarcely be imagined, but by those who have taken some pains to trace it. The mildness of government in the employment of useless and dangerous powers, furnishes no reason for their continuance.

As

As things stand, can you in justice (except perhaps in that over-perfect kind of justice which has obtained, by its merits, the title of the opposite vice*) insist that any man should, by the course of his office, keep a *bank* from whence he is to derive no advantage? That a man should be subject to demands below, and be in a manner refused an acquittance above; that he should transmit an original sin, and inheritance of vexation to his posterity, without a power of compensating himself in some way or other, for so perilous a situation? We know, that if the pay-master should deny himself the advantages of his bank, the public, as things stand, is not the richer for it by a single shilling. This I thought it necessary to say, as to the offensive magnitude of the profits of this office; that we may proceed in reformation on the principles of reason, and not on the feelings of envy.

The treasurer of the navy is, *mutatis mutandis*, in the same circumstances. Indeed all accountants are. Instead of the present mode, which is troublesome to the officer, and unprofitable to the public, I propose to substitute something more effectual than rigour, which is the worst exactor in the world. I mean to remove the very temptations to delay; to facilitate the account; and to transfer this bank, now of private emolument, to the public. The crown will suffer no wrong, at least from the pay offices; and its terrors will no longer reign over the families of those who hold or have held them. I propose, that these offices should be no longer *banks* or *treasuries*, but mere *offices of administration*.—I propose, first, that the present paymaster and the treasurer of the navy, should carry into the exchequer the whole

* Summum jus summa injuria.

body of the vouchers for what they have paid over to deputy paymasters, to regimental agents, or to any of those to whom they have and ought to have paid money. I propose that those vouchers shall be admitted as actual payments in their accounts; and that the persons to whom the money has been paid, shall then stand charged in the exchequer in their place. After this process, they shall be debited or charged for nothing but the money-balance that remains in their hands.

I am conscious, Sir, that if this balance (which they could not expect to be so suddenly demanded by any usual process of the exchequer) should now be exacted all at once, not only their ruin, but a ruin of others to an extent which I do not like to think of, but which I can well conceive, and which you may well conceive, might be the consequence. I told you, Sir, when I promised before the holydays to bring in this plan, that I never would suffer any man, or description of men, to suffer from errors that naturally have grown out of the abusive constitution of those offices which I propose to regulate. If I cannot reform with equity, I will not reform at all.

For the regulation of past accounts, I shall therefore propose such a mode, as men, temperate and prudent, make use of in the management of their private affairs, when their accounts are various, perplexed, and of long standing. I would therefore, after their example, divide the public debts into three sorts; good; bad; and doubtful. In looking over the public accounts, I should never dream of the blind mode of the exchequer, which regards things in the abstract, and knows no difference in the quality of its debts, or the circumstances of its debtors. By this means, it fatigues itself; it vexes others; it often crushes the

the

the poor; it lets escape the rich; or in a fit of mercy or carelessness, declines all means of recovering its just demands. Content with the eternity of its claims, it enjoys its Epicurean divinity with Epicurean languor. But it is proper that all sorts of accounts should be closed some time or other—by payment; by composition; or by oblivion. *Expedit reipublicæ ut sit finis litium.* Constantly taking along with me, that an extreme rigour is sure to arm every thing against it, and at length to relax into a supine neglect, I propose, Sir, that even the best, soundest, and the most recent debts, should be put into instalments, for the mutual benefit of the accountant and the public.

In proportion, however, as I am tender of the past, I would be provident of the future. All money that was formerly imprested to the two great *pay-offices*, I would have imprested in future to the *bank of England*. These offices should, in future, receive no more than cash sufficient for small payments. Their other payments ought to be made by drafts on the Bank, expressing the service. A cheque account from both offices, of drafts and receipts, should be annually made up in the exchequer, charging the bank, in account, with the cash-balance, but not demanding the payment until there is an order from the treasury, in consequence of a vote of parliament.

As I did not, Sir, deny to the paymaster the natural profits of the bank that was in his hands, so neither would I to the bank of England. A share of that profit might be derived to the public in various ways. My favourite mode is this; that, in compensation for the use of this money, the bank may take upon themselves, first, *the charge of the mint*; to which they are already, by their charter,

obliged to bring in a great deal of bullion annually to be coined.

In the next place, I mean that they should take upon themselves the charge of *remittances to our troops abroad*. This is a species of dealing from which, by the same charter, they are not debarred. One and a quarter *per cent.* will be saved instantly thereby to the public, on very large sums of money. This will be at once a matter of œconomy, and a considerable reduction of influence, by taking away a private contract of an expensive nature. If the bank, which is a great corporation, and of course receives the least profits from the money in their custody, should of itself refuse, or be persuaded to refuse, this offer upon those terms, I can speak with some confidence, that one at least, if not both parts of the condition would be received, and gratefully received, by several bankers of eminence. There is no banker who will not be at least as good security as any paymaster of the forces, or any treasurer of the navy, that have ever been bankers to the public: as rich at least as my lord Chatham, or my lord Holland, or either of the honourable gentlemen, who now hold the offices, were, at the time that they entered into them; or as ever the whole establishment of the *mint* has been at any period.

These, Sir, are the outlines of the plan I mean to follow, in suppressing these two large subordinate treasuries. I now come to another subordinate treasury; I mean, that of the *paymaster of the pensions*; for which purpose I re-enter the limits of the civil establishment—I departed from those limits in pursuit of a principle; and following the same game in its doubles, I am brought into those limits again. That treasury, and that office, I mean to take away; and to transfer the
payment

payment of every name, mode, and denomination of pensions, to the *exchequer*. The present course of diversifying the same object, can answer no good purpose; whatever its use may be to purposes of another kind. There are also other lists of pensions; and I mean that they should all be hereafter paid at one and the same place. The whole of that new consolidated list, I mean to reduce to £. 60,000 a year, which sum I intend it shall never exceed. I think that sum will fully answer as a reward to all real merit, and a provision for all real public charity that is ever like to be placed upon the list. If any merit of an extraordinary nature should emerge, before that reduction is completed, I have left it open for an address of either house of parliament to provide for the case. To all other demands, it must be answered, with regret, but with firmness, "the public is poor."

I do not propose, as I told you before Christmas, to take away any pension. I know that the public seem to call for a reduction of such of them as shall appear unmerited. As a censorial act, and punishment of an abuse, might answer some purpose. But this can make no part of *my* plan. I mean to proceed by bill; and I cannot stop for such an enquiry. I know some gentlemen may blame me. It is with great submission to better judgments, that I recommend it to consideration; that a critical retrospective examination of the pension list, upon the principle of merit, can never serve for my basis.—It cannot answer, according to my plan, any effectual purpose of œconomy, or of future permanent reformation. The process, in any way, will be entangled and difficult; and it will be infinitely slow: There is a danger that if we turn our line of march, now directed towards the grand
object,

object, into this more laborious than useful detail of operations, we shall never arrive at our end.

The king, Sir, has been, by the constitution, appointed sole judge of the merit for which a pension is to be given. We have a right, undoubtedly, to canvass this, as we have to canvass every act of government. But there is a material difference between an office to be reformed, and a pension taken away for demerit. In the former case, no charge is implied against the holder; in the latter, his character is flurred, as well as his lawful emolument affected. The former process is against the thing; the second against the person. The pensioner certainly, if he pleases, has a right to stand on his own defence; to plead his possession; and to bottom his title in the competency of the crown to give him what he holds. Possessed, and on the defensive as he is, he will not be obliged to prove his special merit, in order to justify the act of legal discretion, now turned into his property, according to his tenure. The very act, he will contend, is a legal presumption, and an implication of his merit. If this be so (from the natural force of all legal presumption) he would put us to the difficult proof, that he has no merit at all. But other questions would arise in the course of such an enquiry; that is, questions of the merit when weighed against the proportion of the reward; then the difficulty will be much greater.

The difficulty will not, Sir, I am afraid, be much less, if we pass to the person really guilty, in the question of an unmerited pension; the minister himself. I admit, that when called to account for the execution of a trust, he might fairly be obliged to prove the affirmative; and to state the merit for which the pension is given; though on the pensioner himself, such a process would be hard. If in this examination we proceed methodically, and

so as to avoid all suspicion of partiality and prejudice, we must take the pensions in order of time, or merely alphabetically. The very first pension to which we come, in either of these ways, may appear the most grossly unmerited of any. But the minister may very possibly shew, that he knows nothing of the putting on this pension — that it was prior in time to his administration — that the minister, who laid it on, is dead; and then we are thrown back upon the pensioner himself, and plunged into all our former difficulties. Abuses, and gross ones, I doubt not, would appear; and to the correction of which I would readily give my hand; but, when I consider that pensions have not generally been affected by the revolutions of ministry; as I know not where such enquiries would stop; and as an absence of merit is a negative and loose thing, one might be led to derange the order of families, founded on the probable continuance of their kind of income. I might hurt children; I might injure creditors. I really think it the more prudent course, not to follow the letter of the petitions. If we fix this mode of enquiry as a basis, we shall, I fear, end, as parliament has often ended under similar circumstances. There will be great delay; much confusion; much inequality in our proceedings. But what presses me most of all is this; that though we should strike off all the unmerited pensions, while the power of the crown remains unlimited, the very same undeserving persons might afterwards return to the very same list: or if they did not, other persons, meriting as little as they do, might be put upon it to an undefinable amount. This I think is the pinch of the grievance.

For these reasons, Sir, I am obliged to wave this mode of proceeding as any part of my plan. In a plan of reformation, it would be one of my maxims,

maxims, that when I know of an establishment which may be subservient to useful purposes, and which at the same time, from its discretionary nature, is liable to a very great perversion from those purposes, *I would limit the quantity of the power that might be so abused.* For I am sure, that in all such cases, the rewards of merit will have very narrow bounds; and that partial or corrupt favour will be infinite. This principle is not arbitrary; but the limitation of the specific quantity must be so in some measure. I therefore state £.60,000; leaving it open to the house to enlarge or contract the sum as they shall see, on examination, that the discretion I use is scanty or liberal. The whole amount of the pensions of all denominations, which have been laid before us, amount, for a period of seven years, to considerably more than £. 100,000 a year. To what the other lists amount, I know not. That will be seen hereafter. But from those that do appear, a saving will accrue to the public, at one time or other, of £.40,000 a year, and we had better in my opinion to let it fall in naturally, than to tear it crude and unripe from the stalk.*

There is a great deal of uneasiness among the people, upon an article which I must class under the head of pensions. I mean the *great patent offices in the exchequer.* They are in reality and substance no other than pensions, and in no other light shall I consider them. They are sinecures.

* It was supposed by the Lord Advocate, in a subsequent debate, that Mr. Burke, because he objected to an enquiry into the pension list for the purpose of œconomy and relief of the public, would have it withheld from the judgment of parliament for all purposes whatsoever. This learned gentleman certainly misunderstood him. His plan shews, that he wished the whole list to be easily accessible; and he knows that the public eye is of itself a great guard against abuse.

They are always executed by deputy. The duty of the principal is as nothing. They differ however from the pensions on the list, in some particulars. They are held for life. I think, with the public, that the profits of those places are grown enormous; the magnitude of those profits, and the nature of them, both call for reformation. The nature of their profits which grow out of the public distress, is itself invidious and grievous. But I fear that reform cannot be immediate. I find myself under a restriction. These places, and others of the same kind, which are held for life, have been considered as property. They have been given as a provision for children; they have been the subject of family settlements; they have been the security of creditors. What the law respects shall be sacred to me. If the barriers of law should be broken down, upon ideas of convenience, even of public convenience, we shall have no longer any thing certain among us. If the discretion of power is once let loose upon property, we can be at no loss to determine whose power, and what discretion it is that will prevail at last. It would be wise to attend upon the order of things; and not to attempt to outrun the slow, but smooth and even course of nature. There are occasions, I admit, of public necessity, so vast, so clear, so evident, that they supersede all laws. Law being only made for the benefit of the community cannot in any one of its parts, resist a demand which may comprehend the total of the public interest. To be sure, no law can set itself up against the cause and reason of all law. But such a case very rarely happens; and this most certainly is not such a case. The mere time of the reform is by no means worth the sacrifice of a principle of law. Individuals pass like shadows; but the commonwealth is fixed and stable. The difference therefore of to-day and to-morrow, which to private people

people is immense, to the state is nothing. At any rate it is better, if possible, to reconcile our œconomy with our laws, than to set them at variance; a quarrel which in the end must be destructive to both.

My idea, therefore, is to reduce those offices to fixed salaries, as the present lives and reversions shall successively fall. I mean, that the office of the great auditor (the auditor of the receipt) shall be reduced to £. 3,000 a year; and the auditors of the imprest and the rest of the principal officers, to fixed appointments of £. 1,500 a year each. It will not be difficult to calculate the value of this fall of lives to the public, when we shall have obtained a just account of the present income of those places; and we shall obtain that account with great facility, if the present possessors are not alarmed with any apprehension of danger to their freehold office.

I know too, that it will be demanded of me, how it comes, that since I admit these offices to be no better than pensions, I chose, after the principle of law had been satisfied, to retain them at all? To this, Sir, I answer, that conceiving it to be a fundamental part of the constitution of this country, and of the reason of state in every country, that there must be means of rewarding public service, those means will be incomplete, and indeed wholly insufficient for that purpose, if there should be no further reward for that service, than the daily wages it receives during the pleasure of the crown.

Whoever seriously considers the excellent argument of Lord Somers, in the banker's case, will see he bottoms himself upon the very same maxim which I do; and one of his principal grounds of doctrine for the alienability of the domain in England*

* Before the statute of Queen Anne, which limited the alienation of land.

contrary to the maxim of the law in France, he lays in the constitutional policy, of furnishing a permanent reward to public service; of making that reward the origin of families; and the foundation of wealth as well as of honours. It is indeed the only genuine unadulterated origin of nobility. It is a great principle in government; a principle at the very foundation of the whole structure. The other judges who held the same doctrine, went beyond Lord Somers with regard to the remedy, which they thought was given by law against the crown, upon the grant of pensions. Indeed no man knows, when he cuts off the incitements to a virtuous ambition, and the just rewards of public service, what infinite mischief he may do his country, through all generations. Such saving to the public may prove the worst mode of robbing it. The crown, which has in its hands the trust of the daily pay for national service, ought to have in its hands also the means for the repose of public labour, and the fixed settlement of acknowledged merit. There is a time, when the weather-beaten vessels of the state, ought to come into harbour. They must at length have a retreat from the malice of rivals, from the perfidy of political friends, and the inconstancy of the people. Many of the persons, who in all times have filled the great offices of state, have been younger brothers, who had originally little, if any fortune. These offices do not furnish the means of amassing wealth. There ought to be some power in the crown of granting pensions out of the reach of its own caprices. An intail of dependence is a bad reward of merit.

I would therefore leave to the crown the possibility of conferring some favours, which, whilst they are received as a reward, do not operate as corruption. When men receive obligations from
the

the crown through the pious hands of fathers, or of connections as venerable as the paternal, the dependences which arise from thence, are the obligations of gratitude, and not the fetters of servility. Such ties originate in virtue, and they promote it. They continue men in those habits of friendship, those political connections, and those political principles in which they began life. They are antidotes against a corrupt levity, instead of causes of it. What an unseemly spectacle would it afford, what a disgrace would it be to the commonwealth that suffered such things, to see the hopeful son of a meritorious minister begging his bread at the door of that treasury, from whence his father dispensed the œconomy of an empire, and promoted the happiness and glory of his country? Why should he be obliged to prostrate his honour, and to submit his principles at the levee of some proud favourite, shouldered and thrust aside by every impudent pretender, on the very spot where a few days before he saw himself adored?—obliged to cringe to the author of the calamities of his house, and to kiss the hands that are red with his father's blood?—No, Sir, —These things are unfit—They are intolerable.

Sir, I shall be asked, why I do not chuse to destroy those offices which are pensions, and appoint pensions under the direct title in their stead? I allow, that in some cases it leads to abuse; to have things appointed for one purpose, and applied to another. I have no great objection to such a change: but I do not think it quite prudent for me to propose it. If I should take away the present establishment, the burthen of proof rests upon me, that so many pensions, and no more, and to such an amount each, and no more, are necessary for the public service. This is what I can never prove; for it

is

is a thing incapable of definition. I do not like to take away an object that I think answers my purpose, in hopes of getting it back again in a better shape. People will bear an old establishment when its excess is corrected, who will revolt at a new one. I do not think these office-pensions to be more in number than sufficient: but on that point the House will exercise its discretion. As to abuse, I am convinced, that very few trusts in the ordinary course of administration, have admitted less abuse than this. Efficient ministers have been their own paymasters. It is true. But their very partiality has operated as a kind of justice; and still it was service that was paid. When we look over this exchequer list, we find it filled with the descendants of the Walpoles, of the Pelhams, of the Townshends; names to whom this country owes its liberties, and to whom his majesty owes his crown. It was in one of these lines, that the immense and envied employment he now holds, came to a certain duke*, who is now probably sitting quietly at a very good dinner directly under us; and acting *high life below stairs*, whilst we, his masters, are filling our mouths with unsubstantial sounds, and talking of hungry œconomy over his head. But he is the elder branch of an ancient and decayed house, joined to, and repaired by the reward of services done by another. I respect the original title, and the first purchase of merited wealth and honour through all its descents, through all its transfers, and all its assignments. May such fountains never be dried up. May they ever flow with their original purity, and refresh and fructify the common wealth, for ages!

* Duke of Newcastle, whose dining-room is under the House of Commons.

Sir, I think myself bound to give you my reasons as clearly, and as fully, for stopping in the course of reformation, as for proceeding in it. My limits are the rules of law; the rules of policy; and the service of the state. This is the reason why I am not able to intermeddle with another article, which seems to be a specific object in several of the petitions; I mean the reduction of exorbitant emoluments to efficient offices. If I knew of any real efficient office, which did possess exorbitant emoluments, I should be extremely desirous of reducing them. Others may know of them. I do not. I am not possessed of an exact common measure between real service and its reward. I am very sure, that states do sometimes receive services, which is hardly in their power to reward according to their worth. If I were to give my judgment, with regard to this country, I do not think the great efficient offices of the state to be overpaid. The service of the public is a thing which cannot be put to auction, and struck down to those who will agree to execute it the cheapest. When the proportion between reward and service, is our object, we must always consider of what nature the service is, and what sort of men they are that must perform it. What is just payment for one kind of labour, and full encouragement for one kind of talents, is fraud and discouragement to others. Many of the great offices have much duty to do, and much expence of representation to maintain. A secretary of state, for instance, must not appear sordid in the eyes of the ministers of other nations; neither ought our ministers abroad to appear contemptible in the courts where they reside. In all offices of duty, there is, almost necessarily, a great neglect of all domestic affairs. A person in high office can rarely take a view of his family-house.

If

If he sees that the state takes no detriment, the state must see that his affairs should take as little.

I will even go so far as to affirm, that if men were willing to serve in such situations without salary, they ought not to be permitted to do it. Ordinary service must be secured by the motives to ordinary integrity. I do not hesitate to say, that, that state which lays its foundation in rare and heroic virtues, will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption. An honourable and fair profit is the best security against avarice and rapacity; as in all things else, a lawful and regulated enjoyment is the best security against debauchery and excess. For as wealth is power, so all power will infallibly draw wealth to itself by some means or other: and when men are left no way of ascertaining their profits but by their means of obtaining them, those means will be increased to infinity. This is true in all the parts of administration, as well as in the whole. If any individual were to decline his appointments, it might give an unfair advantage to ostentatious ambition over unpretending service; it might breed invidious comparisons; it might tend to destroy whatever little unity and agreement may be found among ministers. And after all, when an ambitious man had run down his competitors by a fallacious shew of disinterestedness, and fixed himself in power by that means, what security is there that he would not change his course, and claim as an indemnity ten times more than he has given up?

This rule, like every other, may admit its exceptions. When a great man has some one great object in view to be achieved in a given time, it may be absolutely necessary for him to walk out of all the common roads, and if his fortune permits it, to hold himself out as a splendid example. I am told, that something of this kind is

now doing in a country near us. But this is for a short race; the training for a heat or two, and not the proper preparation for the regular stages of a methodical journey. I am speaking of establishments, and not of men.

It may be expected, Sir, that when I am giving my reasons why I limit myself in the reduction of employments, or of their profits, I should say something of those which seem of eminent inutility in the state; I mean the number of officers who by their places are attendant on the person of the king. Considering the commonwealth merely as such, and considering those officers only as relative to the direct purposes of the state, I admit that they are of no use at all. But there are many things in the constitution of establishments, which appear of little value on the first view, which in a secondary and oblique manner, produce very material advantages. It was on full consideration, that I determined not to lessen any of the offices of honour about the crown, in their number or their emoluments. These emoluments, except in one or two cases, do not much more than answer the charge of attendance. Men of condition naturally love to be about a court; and women of condition love it much more. But there is in all regular attendance, so much of constraint, that if it were a mere charge, without any compensation, you would soon have the court deserted by all the nobility of the kingdom.

Sir, the most serious mischiefs would follow from such a desertion. Kings are naturally lovers of low company. They are so elevated above all the rest of mankind, that they must look upon all their subjects as on a level. They are rather apt to hate than to love their nobility, on account of the occasional resistance to their will, which will be made by their virtue, their petulance, or their pride. It must indeed be admitted, that many of
the

the nobility are as perfectly willing to act the part of flatterers, tale-bearers, parasites, pimps, and buffoons, as any of the lowest and vilest of mankind can possibly be. But they are not properly qualified for this object of their ambition. The want of a regular education, and early habits, and some lurking remains of their dignity, will never permit them to become a match for an Italian eunuch, a mountebank, a fidler, a player, or any regular practitioner of that tribe. The Roman emperors almost from the beginning, threw themselves into such hands; and the mischief increased every day till its decline, and its final ruin. It is therefore of very great importance (provided the thing is not overdone) to contrive such an establishment as must, almost whether a prince will or not, bring into daily and hourly offices about his person, a great number of his first nobility; and it is rather an useful prejudice that gives them a pride in such a servitude. Though they are not much the better for a court, a court will be much the better for them. I have therefore not attempted to reform any of the offices of honour about the king's person.

There are, indeed, two offices in his stables which are sinecures. By the change of manners, and indeed by the nature of the thing, they must be so; I mean the several keepers of buck-hounds, stag-hounds, fox-hounds, and harriers. They answer no purpose of utility or of splendor. These I propose to abolish. It is not proper that great noblemen should be keepers of dogs, though they were the king's dogs. In every part of my scheme, I have endeavoured that no primary, and that even no secondary service of the state, should suffer by its frugality. I mean to touch no offices but such as I am perfectly sure, are either of no use at all, or not of any use in the least assignable proportion to the burthen with which they load the

revenues of the kingdom, and to the influence with which they oppress the freedom of parliamentary deliberation; for which reason there are but two offices which are properly state offices, that I have a desire to reform.

The first of them is the new office of *third secretary of state*, which is commonly called *secretary of state for the colonies*.

We know that all the correspondence of the colonies had been, until within a few years, carried on by the southern secretary of state; and that this department has not been shunned upon account of the weight of its duties; but on the contrary, much sought, on account of its patronage. Indeed he must be poorly acquainted with the history of office, who does not know how very lightly the American functions have always leaned on the shoulders of the ministerial *Atlas*, who has upheld that side of the sphere. Undoubtedly, great temper and judgment was requisite in the management of the colony politics; but the official detail was a trifle. Since the new appointment, a train of unfortunate accidents has brought before us almost the whole correspondence of this favourite secretary's office, since the first day of its establishment. I will say nothing of its auspicious foundation; of the quality of its correspondence; or of the effects that have ensued from it. I speak merely of its *quantity*; which we know would have been little or no addition to the trouble of whatever office had its hands the fullest. But what has been the real condition of the old office of secretary of state? Have their velvet bags, and their red boxes, been so full, that nothing more could possibly be crammed into them?

A correspondence of a curious nature has been lately published †. In that correspondence, Sir,

† Letters between Dr. Addington and Sir James Wright.

we find, the opinion of a noble person, who is thought to be the grand manufacturer of administrations; and therefore the best judge of the quality of his work. He was of opinion, that there was but one man of diligence and industry in the whole administration—it was the late earl of Suffolk. The noble lord lamented very justly, that this statesman, of so much mental vigour, was almost wholly disabled from the exertion of it, by his bodily infirmities. Lord Suffolk, dead to the state, long before he was dead to nature, at last paid his tribute to the common treasury to which we must all be taxed. But so little want was found even of his intentional industry, that the office, vacant in reality to its duties long before, continued vacant even in nomination and appointment for a year after his death. The whole of the laborious and arduous correspondence of this empire, rested solely upon the activity and energy of Lord Weymouth.

It is therefore demonstrable, since one diligent man was fully equal to the duties of the two offices, that two diligent men will be equal to the duty of one. The business of the new office which I shall propose to you to suppress, is by no means too much to be returned to either of the secretaries which remain. If this dust in the balance should be thought too heavy, it may be divided between them both; North America (whether free or reduced) to the northern secretary, the West Indies to the southern. It is not necessary that I should say more upon the inutility of this office. It is burning day light. But before I have done, I shall just remark, that the history of this office is too recent to suffer us to forget, that it was made for the mere convenience of the arrangements of political intrigue, and not for the service of the state; that it was made, in order to give a

lour to an exorbitant increase of the civil list ; and in the same act to bring a new accession to the loaded compost heap of corrupt influence.

There is, Sir, another office, which was not long since, closely connected with this of the American secretary ; but has been lately separated from it for the very same purpose for which it had been conjoined ; I mean the sole purpose of all the separations and all conjunctions that have been lately made — a job. — I speak, Sir, of the *board of trade and plantations*. This board is a sort of temperate bed of influence ; a sort of gently ripening hot-house, where eight members of Parliament receive salaries of a thousand a year, for a certain given time, in order to mature at a proper season, a claim to two thousand, granted for doing less, and on the credit of having toiled so long in that inferior laborious department.

I have known that board, off and on, for a great number of years. Both of its pretended objects have been much the objects of my study, if I have a right to call any pursuits of mine by so respectable a name. I can assure the house, and I hope they will not think that I risk my little credit lightly, that, without meaning to convey the least reflection upon any one of its members past or present, — it is a board which, if not mischievous, is of no use at all.

You will be convinced, Sir, that I am not mistaken, if you reflect how generally it is true, that commerce, the principal object of that office, flourishes most when it is left to itself. Interest, the great guide of commerce, is not a blind one. It is very well able to find its own way ; and its necessities are its best laws. But if it were possible, in the nature of things, that the young should direct the old, and the inexperienced instruct the knowing ; if a board in
the

the state was the best tutor for the counting-house; if the desk ought to read lectures to the anvil, and the pen to usurp the place of the shuttle—yet in any matter of regulation, we know that board must act with as little authority as skill. The prerogative of the crown is utterly inadequate to its object; because all regulations are, in their nature, restrictive of some liberty. In the reign indeed, of *Charles the first*, the council, or committees of council, were never a moment unoccupied, with affairs of trade. But even where they had no ill intention (which was sometimes the case) trade and manufacture suffered infinitely from their injudicious tampering. But since that period, whenever regulation is wanting (for I do not deny, that sometimes it may be wanting) parliament constantly sits; and parliament alone is competent to such regulation. We want no instruction from boards of trade, or from any other board; and God forbid we should give the least attention to their reports. Parliamentary enquiry is the only mode of obtaining parliamentary information. There is more real knowledge to be obtained, by attending the detail of business in the committees above stairs, than ever did come, or ever will come from any board in this kingdom, or from all of them together. An assiduous member of parliament will not be the worse instructed there, for not being paid a thousand a year for learning his lesson. And now that I speak of the committees above stairs, I must say, that having till lately attended them a good deal, I have observed that no description of members give so little attendance, either to communicate, or to obtain instruction upon matters of commerce, as the honourable members of the grave board of trade. I really do not recollect,
that

that I have ever seen one of them in that sort of business. Possibly, some members may have better memories ; and may call to mind some job that may have accidentally brought one or other of them, at one time or other, to attend a matter of commerce.

This board, Sir, has had both its original formation, and its regeneration, in a job. In a job it was conceived, and in a job its mother brought it forth. It made one among those shewy and specious impositions, which one of the experiment-making administrations of *Charles the second* held out to delude the people, and to be substituted in the place of the real service which they might expect from a parliament annually sitting. It was intended also to corrupt that body whenever it should be permitted to sit. It was projected in the year 1668, and it continued in a tottering and rickety childhood for about three or four years, for it died in the year 1673, a babe of as little hopes as ever swelled the bills of mortality in the article of convulsed or overlaid children, who have hardly stepped over the threshold of life.

It was buried with little ceremony ; and never more thought of, until the reign of *King William*, when in the strange vicissitude of neglect and vigour, of good and ill success that attended his wars, in the year 1695, the trade was distressed beyond all example of former sufferings, by the piracies of the French cruisers. This suffering incensed, and, as it should seem, very justly incensed, the house of commons. In this ferment they struck, not only at the administration, but at the very constitution of the executive government. They attempted to form in parliament a board for the protection of trade ; which, as they planned it, was to draw to itself a great part, if
not

not the whole, of the functions and powers, both of the admiralty, and of the treasury; and thus, by a parliamentary delegation of office and officers, they threatened absolutely to separate these departments from the whole system of the executive government, and of course to vest the most leading and essential of its attributes in this board. As the executive government was in a manner convicted of a dereliction of its functions, it was with infinite difficulty, that this blow was ward-ed off in that session. There was a threat to renew the same attempt in the next. To prevent the effect of this manœuvre, the court opposed another manœuvre to it; and in the year 1696, called into life this board of trade, which had slept since 1673.

This, in a few words, is the history of the regeneration of the board of trade. It has perfectly answered its purposes. It was intended to quiet the minds of the people, and to compose the ferment that then was strongly working in parliament. The courtiers were too happy to be able to substitute a board, which they knew would be useless, in the place of one that they feared would be dangerous. Thus the board of trade was reproduced in a job; and perhaps it is the only instance of a public body, which has never degenerated; but to this hour preserves all the health and vigour of its primitive institution.

This board of trade and plantations has not been of any use to the colonies, as colonies; so little of use, that the flourishing settlements of New England, of Virginia, and of Maryland, and all our wealthy colonies in the West Indies, were of a date prior to the first board of Charles the second. Pennsylvania and Carolina were settled during its dark quarter, in the interval between the extinction of the first, and the formation of the
the

the second board. Two colonies alone owe their origin to that board. Georgia, which, till lately, has made a very slow progress; and never did make any progress at all, until it had wholly got rid of all the regulations which the board of trade had moulded into its original constitution. That colony has cost the nation very great sums of money; whereas the colonies which have had the fortune of not being godfathered by the board of trade, never cost the nation a shilling, except what has been so properly spent in losing them. But the colony of Georgia, weak as it was, carried with it to the last hour, and carries, even in its present dead pallid visage, the perfect resemblance of its parents. It always had, and it now has, an *establishment* paid by the public of England, for the sake of the influence of the crown; that colony having never been able or willing to take upon itself the expence of its proper government, or its own appropriated jobs.

The province of Nova Scotia was the youngest and the favourite child of the board. Good God! What sums the nursing of that ill-thriven, hard-visaged, and ill-favoured brat, has cost to this wittol nation? Sir, this colony has stood us in a sum of not less than seven hundred thousand pounds. To this day it has made no repayment — It does not even support those offices of expence, which are miscalled its government; the whole of that job still lies upon the patient, callous shoulders of the people of England.

Sir, I am going to state a fact to you, that will serve to set in full sunshine the real value of formality and official superintendance. There was in the province of Nova Scotia, one little neglected corner; the country of the *neutral French*; which having the good fortune to escape the fostering care both of France and England, and to
have

have been shut out from the protection and regulation of councils of commerce, and of boards of trade, did, in silence, without notice, and without assistance, increase to a considerable degree. But it seems our nation had more skill and ability in destroying, than in settling a colony. In the last war we did, in my opinion, most inhumanly, and upon pretences that in the eye of an honest man are not worth a farthing, root out this poor innocent deserving people, whom our utter inability to govern, or to reconcile, gave us no sort of right to extirpate. Whatever the merits of that extirpation might have been, it was on the footsteps of a neglected people, it was on the fund of unconstrained poverty, it was on the acquisitions of unregulated industry, that any thing which deserves the name of a colony in that province, has been formed. It has been formed by overflowings from the exuberant population of New England, and by emigration, from other parts of Nova Scotia of fugitives from the protection of the board of trade.

But if all of these things were not more than sufficient to prove to you the inutility of that expensive establishment, I would desire you to recollect, Sir, that those who may be very ready to defend it, are very cautious how they employ it; cautious how they employ it even in appearance and pretence. They are afraid they should lose the benefit of its influence in parliament, if they seemed to keep it up for any other purpose. If ever there were commercial points of great weight, and most closely connected with our dependences, they are those which have been agitated and decided in parliament since I came into it. Which of the innumerable regulations since made had their origin or their improvement in the board of trade? Did any of the several East India bills

bills which have been successively produced since 1767, originate there? Did any one dream of referring them, or any part of them thither? Was any body so ridiculous as even to think of it? If ever there was an occasion on which the board was fit to be consulted, it was with regard to the acts, that were preludes to the American war, or attendant on its commencement: those acts were full of commercial regulations, such as they were; — the intercourse bill; the prohibitory bill; the fishery bill? If the board was not concerned in such things, in what particular was it thought fit that it should be concerned? In the course of all these bills through the house, I observed the members of that board to be remarkably cautious of intermeddling. They understood decorum better; they know that matters of trade and plantations are no business of theirs.

There were two very recent occasions, on which, if the idea of any use for the board had not been extinguished by prescription, appeared loudly to call for their interference.

When commissioners were sent to pay his majesty's and our dutiful respects to the congress of the United States, a part of their powers under the commission were, it seems, of a commercial nature. They were authorized in the most ample and undefined manner, to form a commercial treaty with America on the spot. This was no trivial object. As the formation of such a treaty would necessarily have been no less than the breaking up of our whole commercial system, and the giving it an entire new form; one would imagine, that the board of trade would have sat day and night, to model propositions, which, on our side, might serve as a basis to that treaty. No such thing. Their learned leisure was not in the least interrupted, though one of the members

of the board was a commissioner, and might, in mere compliment to his office, have been supposed to make a shew of deliberation on the subject. But he knew, that his colleagues would have thought he laughed in their faces, had he attempted to bring any thing the most distantly relating to commerce or colonies before *them*. A noble person, engaged in the same commission, and sent to learn his commercial rudiments in New York, (then under the operation of an act for the universal prohibition of trade) was soon after put at the head of that board. This contempt from the present ministers of all the pretended functions of that board, and their manner of breathing into its very soul, of inspiring it with its animating and presiding principle, puts an end to all dispute concerning their opinion of the clay it was made of. But I will give them heaped measure.

It was but the other day, that the noble lord in the blue ribbon carried up to the house of peers, two acts, altering, I think much for the better, but altering, in a great degree, our whole commercial system. These acts, I mean, for giving a free trade to Ireland in woollens and in all things else, with independent nations, and giving them an equal trade to our own colonies. Here too the novelty of this great, but arduous and critical improvement of system, would make you conceive that the anxious solicitude of the noble lord in the blue ribbon, would have wholly destroyed the plan of summer recreation of that board, by references to examine, compare, and digest matters for parliament—You would imagine, that Irish commissioners of customs and English commissioners of customs, and commissioners of excise, that merchants and manufacturers of every denomination, had daily crowded
 their

their outer rooms. *Nil horum.* The perpetual virtual adjournment, and the unbroken sitting vacation of that board, was no more disturbed by the Irish than by the plantation commerce, or any other commerce. The same matter made a large part of the business which occupied the house for two sessions before; and as our ministers were not then mellowed by the mild, emollient, and engaging blandishments of our dear sister, into all the tenderness of unqualified surrender, the bounds and limits of a restrained benefit naturally required much detailed management and positive regulation. But neither the qualified propositions which were received, nor those other qualified propositions which were rejected by ministers, were the least concern of theirs, or were they ever thought of in the business.

It is therefore, Sir, on the opinion of parliament, on the opinion of the ministers, and even on their own opinion of their inutility, that I shall propose to you to *suppress the board of trade and plantations*; and to recommit all its business to the council from whence it was very improvidently taken; and which business (whatever it might be) was much better done and without any expence; and indeed where in effect it may all come at last. Almost all that deserves the name of business there, is the reference of the plantation acts, to the opinion of gentlemen of the law. But all this may be done, as the Irish business of the same nature has always been done, by the council, and with a reference to the attorney and solicitor general.

There are some regulations in the household, relative to the officers of the yeomen of the guards, and the officers and band of gentlemen pensioners, which I shall likewise submit to your consideration,

consideration, for the purpose of regulating establishments, which at present are much abused.

I have now finished all, that for the present I shall trouble you with on the *plan of reduction*. I mean next to propose to you the *plan of arrangement*, by which I mean to appropriate and fix the civil list money to its several services according to their nature; for I am thoroughly sensible, that if a discretion, wholly arbitrary, can be exercised over the civil list revenue, although the most effectual methods may be taken to prevent the inferior departments from exceeding their bounds, the plan of reformation will still be left very imperfect. It will not, in my opinion, be safe to permit an entirely arbitrary discretion even in the first lord of the treasury himself: It will not be safe to leave with him a power of diverting the public money from its proper objects, of paying it in an irregular course, or of inverting perhaps the order of time, dictated by the proportion of value, which ought to regulate his application of payment to service.

I am sensible too, that the very operation of a plan of œconomy which tends to exonerate the civil list of expensive establishments, may in some sort defeat the capital end we have in view, the independence of parliament; and that in removing the public and ostensible means of influence, we may increase the fund of private corruption. I have thought of some methods to prevent an abuse of surplus cash under discretionary application; I mean the heads of *secret service*, *special service*, *various payments*, and the like; which, I hope, will answer, and which in due time I shall lay before you. Where I am unable to limit the quantity of the sums to be applied, by reason of the uncertain quantity of the service, I endeavour to confine it to its *line*; to secure

an indefinite application to the definite service to which it belongs; not, to stop the progress of expence in its line, but to confine it to that line in which it professes to move.

But that part of my plan, Sir, upon which I principally rest, that, on which I rely for the purpose of binding up, and securing the whole, is to establish a fixed and invariable order in all its payments, which it shall not be permitted to the first lord of the treasury, upon any pretence whatsoever, to depart from. I therefore divide the civil list payments into *nine* classes, putting each class forward according to the importance or justice of the demand, and to the inability of the persons entitled to enforce their pretensions; that is, to put those first who have the most efficient offices, or claim the justest debts; and, at the same time, from the character of that description of men, from the retiredness, or the remoteness of their situation, or from their want of weight and power to enforce their pretensions, or from their being entirely subject to the power of a minister, without any reciprocal power of aweing, ought to be the most considered, and are the most likely to be neglected; all these I place in the highest classes: I place in the lowest those whose functions are of the least importance, but whose persons or rank are often of the greatest power and influence.

In the first class I place the *judges*, as of the first importance. It is the public justice that holds the community together; the ease, therefore, and independence of the judges, ought to supersede all other considerations, and they ought to be the very last to feel the necessities of the state, or to be obliged either to court or bully a minister for their right: They ought to be as *weak solicitors on their own demands*, as strenuous assertors of the
the

the rights and liberties of others. The judges are, or ought to be, of a *reserved* and retired character, and wholly unconnected with the political world.

In the second class I place the foreign ministers. The judges are the links of our connections with one another; the foreign ministers are the links of our connection with other nations. They are not upon the spot to demand payment, and are therefore the most likely to be, as in fact they have sometimes been, entirely neglected, to the great disgrace, and perhaps the great detriment of the nation.

In the third class I would bring all the tradesmen who supply the crown by contract, or otherwise.

In the fourth class I place all the domestic servants of the king; and all persons in efficient offices, whose salaries do not exceed two hundred pounds a year.

In the fifth, upon account of honour, which ought to give place to nothing but charity and rigid justice, I would place the pensions and allowances of his majesty's royal family, comprehending of course the queen, together with the stated allowance of the privy purse.

In the sixth class, I place these efficient offices of duty, whose salaries may exceed the sum of two hundred pounds a year.

In the seventh class, that mixed mass, the whole pension list.

In the eighth, the offices of honour about the king.

In the ninth and the last of all, the salaries and pensions of the first lord of the treasury himself, the chancellor of the exchequer, and the other commissioners of the treasury.

If by any possible mismanagement of that part

of the revenue which is left at discretion, or by any other mode of prodigality, cash should be deficient for the payment of the lowest classes, I propose, that the amount of those salaries where the deficiency may happen to fall, shall not be carried as debt to the account of the succeeding year, but that it shall be entirely lapsed, sunk, and lost; so that government will be enabled to start in the race of every new year, wholly unloaded, fresh in wind and in vigour. Hereafter, no civil list debt can ever come upon the public. And those who do not consider this as saving, because it is not a certain sum, do not ground their calculations of the future on their experience of the past.

I know of no mode of preserving the effectual execution of any duty, but to make it the direct interest of the executive officer that it shall be faithfully performed. Assuming, then, that the present vast allowance to the civil list is perfectly adequate to all its purposes, if there should be any failure, it must be from the mismanagement or neglect of the first commissioner of the treasury; since, upon the proposed plan, there can be no expence of any consequence, which he is not himself previously to authorize and finally to control. It is therefore just, as well as politic, that the loss should attach upon the delinquency.

If the failure from the delinquency should be very considerable, it will fall on the class directly above the first lord of the treasury, as well as upon himself and his board. It will fall, as it ought to fall, upon offices of no primary importance in the state; but then it will fall upon persons, whom it will be a matter of no slight importance for a minister to provoke—it will fall upon persons of the first rank and consequence in the kingdom; upon those who are nearest to the king, and frequently

frequently have a more interior credit with him than the minister himself. It will fall upon masters of the horse, upon lord chamberlains, upon lord stewards, upon grooms of the stole, and lords of the bedchamber. The household troops form an army, who will be ready to mutiny for want of pay, and whose mutiny will be *really* dreadful to a commander in chief. A rebellion of the thirteen lords of the bedchamber would be far more terrible to a minister, and would probably affect his power more to the quick, than a revolt of thirteen colonies. What an uproar such an event would create at court! What *petitions*, and *committees*, and *associations* would it not produce! Bless me! what a clattering of white sticks and yellow sticks would be about his head—what a storm of gold keys would fly about the ears of the minister—what a shower of Georges, and Thistles, and medals, and collars of S. S. would assail him at his first entrance into the antichamber, after an insolvent Christmas quarter. A tumult which could not be appeased by all the harmony of the new-year's ode. Rebellion it is certain there would be; and rebellion may not now indeed be so critical an event to those who engage in it, since its price is so correctly ascertained at just a thousand pound.

Sir, this classing, in my opinion, is a serious and solid security for the performance of a minister's duty. Lord Coke says, that the staff was put into the treasurer's hand, to enable him to support himself when there was no money in the exchequer, and to beat away importunate solicitors. The method, which I propose, would hinder him from the necessity of such a broken staff to lean on, or such a miserable weapon for repulsing the demands of worthless suitors, who, the noble lord in the blue ribbon knows, will

bear many hard blows on the head, and many other indignities, before they are driven from the treasury. In this plan, he is furnished with an answer to all their importunity; an answer far more conclusive, than if he had knocked them down with his staff—" Sir, (or my Lord), you
 " are calling for my own salary—Sir, you are
 " calling for the appointments of my colleagues
 " who sit about me in office—Sir, you are going
 " to excite a mutiny at court against me—you
 " are going to estrange his majesty's confidence
 " from me, through the chamberlain, or the
 " master of the horse, or the groom of the stole."

As things now stand, every man, in proportion to his consequence at court, tends to add to the expences of the civil list, by all manner of jobs, if not for himself, yet for his dependents. When the new plan is established, those who are now suitors for jobs, will become the most strenuous opposers of them. They will have a common interest with the minister in public œconomy. Every class, as it stands low, will become security for the payment of the preceding class; and thus the persons, whose insignificant services defraud those that are useful, would then become interested in their payment. Then the powerful, instead of oppressing, would be obliged to support the weak; and idleness would become concerned in the reward of industry. The whole fabric of the civil œconomy would become compact and connected in all its parts; it would be formed into a well organized body, where every member contributes to the support of the whole; and where even the lazy stomach secures the vigour of the active arm.

This plan, I really flatter myself, is laid, not in official formality, nor in airy speculation, but in real life, and in human nature, in what
 2 " comes

“ comes home (as Bacon says) to the business
 “ and bosoms of men.” You have now, Sir,
 before you, the whole of my scheme, as far as
 I have digested it into a form, that might be in
 any respect worthy of your consideration.—I in-
 tend to lay it before you in five bills*. The
 plan consists, indeed, of many parts; but
 they stand upon a few plain principles. It is a
 plan which takes nothing from the civil list with-
 out discharging it of a burthen equal to the sum
 carried to the public service. It weakens no one
 function necessary to government; but on the
 contrary, by appropriating supply to service, it
 gives it greater vigour. It provides the means
 of order and foresight to a minister of finance,
 which may always keep all the objects of his
 office, and their state, condition, and relations,
 distinctly before him. It brings forward accounts
 without hurrying and distressing the accountants:
 whilst it provides for public convenience, it regards
 private rights. It extinguishes secret corruption
 almost to the possibility of its existence. It de-
 stroys direct and visible influence equal to the
 offices of at least fifty members of parliament.
 Lastly, it prevents the provision for his Majesty’s
 children, from being diverted to the political pur-
 poses of his minister.

These are the points, on which I rely for
 the merit of the plan: I pursue œconomy in a
 secondary view, and only as it is connected with
 these great objects. I am persuaded, that even
 for supply, this scheme will be far from unfruit-
 ful, if it be executed to the extent I propose it.
 I think it will give to the public, at its periods,
 two or three hundred thousand pounds a year;
 if not, it will give them a system of œconomy,

* Titles of the Bills read.

which is itself a great revenue. It gives me no little pride and satisfaction, to find that the principles of my proceedings are, in many respects, the very same with those which are now pursued in the plans of the French minister of finance. I am sure, that I lay before you a scheme easy and practicable in all its parts. I know it is common at once to applaud and to reject all attempts of this nature. I know it is common for men to say, that such and such things are perfectly right—very desirable; but that, unfortunately, they are not practicable. Oh! no, Sir, no. Those things which are not practicable, are not desirable. There is nothing in the world really beneficial, that does not lie within the reach of an informed understanding, and a well directed pursuit. There is nothing that God has judged good for us, that he has not given us the means to accomplish, both in the natural and the moral world. If we cry, like children for the moon, like children we must cry on.

We must follow the nature of our affairs, and conform ourselves to our situation. If we do, our objects are plain and compassable. Why should we resolve to do nothing, because what I propose to you may not be the exact demand of the petition; when we are far from resolved to comply even with what evidently is so? Does this sort of chicanery become us? The people are the masters. They have only to express their wants at large and in gross. We are the expert artists; we are the skilful workmen, to shape their desires into perfect form, and to fit the utensil to the use. They are the sufferers, they tell the symptoms of the complaint; but we know the exact seat of the disease, and how to apply the remedy, according to the rules of art. How shocking would it be to see us pervert our skill, into a
sinister

sinister and servile dexterity, for the purpose of evading our duty, and defrauding our employers, who are our natural lords, of the object of their just expectations. I think the whole not only practicable, but practicable in a very short time. If we are in earnest about it, and if we exert that industry, and those talents in forwarding the work, which I am afraid may be exerted in impeding it—I engage, that the whole may be put in complete execution within a year. For my own part, I have very little to recommend me for this or for any task, but a kind of earnest and anxious perseverance of mind, which, with all its good and all its evil effects, is moulded into my constitution. I faithfully engage to the house, if they choose to appoint me to any part in the execution of this work, which (when they have made it theirs by the improvements of their wisdom, will be worthy of the able assistance they may give me) that by night and by day, in town, or in country, at the desk, or in the forest, I will, without regard to convenience, ease, or pleasure, devote myself to their service, not expecting or admitting any reward whatsoever. I owe to this country my labour, which is my all; and I owe to it ten times more industry, if ten times more I could exert. After all I shall be an unprofitable servant.

At the same time, if I am able, and if I shall be permitted, I will lend an humble helping hand to any other good work which is going on. I have not, Sir, the frantic presumption to suppose, that this plan contains in it the whole of what the public has a right to expect, in the great work of reformation they call for. Indeed, it falls infinitely short of it. It falls short, even of my own ideas. I have some thoughts not yet
fully

fully ripened, relative to a reform in the customs and excise, as well as in some other branches of financial administration. There are other things too, which form essential parts in a great plan for the purpose of restoring the independence of parliament. The contractors bill of last year it is fit to revive; and I rejoice that it is in better hands than mine. The bill for suspending the votes of customhouse officers, brought into parliament several years ago, by one of our worthiest and wisest members, * (would to God we could along with the plan revive the person who designed it.) But a man of very real integrity, honour, and ability will be found to take his place, and to carry his idea into full execution. You all see how necessary it is to review our military expences for some years past, and, if possible, to bind up and close that bleeding artery of profusion: but that business also, I have reason to hope, will be undertaken by abilities that are fully adequate to it. Something must be devised (if possible) to check the ruinous expence of elections.

Sir, all or most of these things must be done. Every one must take his part.

If we should be able by dexterity or power, or intrigue, to disappoint the expectations of our constituents, what will it avail us? we shall never be strong or artful enough to parry, or to put by the irresistible demands of our situation. That situation calls upon us, and upon our constituents too, with a voice which *will* be heard. I am sure no man is more zealously attached than I am to the privileges of this house, particularly in regard to the exclusive management of money. The lords have no right to the disposition, in any sense, of the public purse; but they have

* W. Dowdeswell, Esq; chancellor of the exchequer, 1765.

gone further in † self-denial than our utmost jealousy could have required. A power of examining accounts, to censure, correct, and punish, we never, that I know of, have thought of denying to the House of Lords. It is something more than a century since we voted that body useless: they have now voted themselves so. The whole hope of reformation is at length cast upon *us*; and let us not deceive the nation, which does us the honour to hope every thing from our virtue. If *all* the nation are not equally forward to press this duty upon us, yet be assured, that they all equally expect we should perform it. The respectful silence of those who wait upon your pleasure, ought to be as powerful with you, as the call of those who require your service as their right. Some, without doors, affect to feel hurt for your dignity, because they suppose, that menaces are held out to you. Justify their good opinion, by shewing that no menaces are necessary to stimulate you to your duty. — But, Sir, whilst we may sympathize with them, in one point, who sympathize with us in another, we ought to attend no less to those who approach us like men, and who, in the guise of petitioners, speak to us in the tone of a concealed authority. It is not wise to force them to speak out more plainly, what they plainly mean. — But, the petitioners are violent. Be it so. Those who are least anxious about your conduct, are not those that love you most. Moderate affection and satiated enjoyment, are cold and respectful; but an ardent and injured passion, is tempered up with wrath, and grief, and shame, and conscious worth, and the maddening

† Rejection of Lord Shelburne's motion in the House of Lords.

sense of violated right. A jealous love lights his torch from the firebrands of the furies.—They who call upon you to belong *wholly* to the people, are those who wish you to return to your *proper* home; to the sphere of your duty, to the post of your honour, to the mansion-house of all genuine, serene, and solid satisfaction. We have furnished to the people of England (indeed we have) some real cause of jealousy. Let us leave that sort of company which, if it does not destroy our innocence, pollutes our honour: let us free ourselves at once from every thing that can increase their suspicions, and inflame their just resentment: let us cast away from us, with a generous scorn, all the love-tokens and symbols that we have been vain and light enough to accept;—all the bracelets and snuff-boxes, and miniature pictures, and hair-devices, and all the other adulterous trinkets that are the pledges of our alienation, and the monuments of our shame. Let us return to our legitimate home, and all jars and all quarrels will be lost in embraces. Let the commons in parliament assembled, be one and the same thing with the commons at large. The distinctions that are made to separate us, are unnatural and wicked contrivances. Let us identify, let us incorporate ourselves with the people. Let us cut all the cables and snap the chains which tie us to an unfaithful shore, and enter the friendly harbour, that shoots far out into the main its moles and jetties to receive us. — “War with the world, and peace with our constituents.” Be this our motto and our principle. Then indeed, we shall be truly great. Respecting ourselves, we shall be respected by the world. At present all is troubled and cloudy, and distracted, and full of anger and turbulence, both abroad and at home:

but the air may be cleared by this storm, and light and fertility may follow it. Let us give a faithful pledge to the people, that we honour, indeed, the crown; but that we *belong* to them; that we are their auxiliaries, and not their task-masters; the fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, not lording over their rights, but helpers of their joy: that to tax them is a grievance to ourselves, but to cut off from our enjoyments to forward theirs, is the highest gratification we are capable of receiving. I feel with comfort, that we are all warmed with these sentiments, and while we are thus warm, I wish we may go directly and with a chearful heart to this salutary work.

“ Sir, I move for leave to bring in a Bill, “ For
 “ the better regulation of his Majesty’s civil
 “ establishments, and of certain public of-
 “ fices; for the limitation of pensions, and
 “ the suppression of sundry useless, expensive,
 “ and inconvenient places; and for applying
 “ the monies saved thereby to the public
 “ service.” *

Lord North stated, that there was a difference between this bill for regulating the establishments, and some of the others, as they affected the antient patrimony of the crown; and therefore wished them to be postponed, till the King’s consent could be obtained. This distinction was strongly controverted; but when it was insisted on as a point of decorum *only*, it was agreed to postpone them to another day. Accordingly, on the Monday following, viz. Feb. 14, leave was given, on the

* The motion was seconded by Mr. Fox.

motion

motion of Mr. Burke, without opposition, to bring in

1st, “ *A bill for the sale of the forest and other crown lands, rents, and hereditaments, with certain exceptions; and for applying the produce thereof to the public service; and for securing, ascertaining, and satisfying, tenant-rights, and common and other rights.*”

2d, “ *A bill for the more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality of Wales, and the county palatine of Chester, and for the more commodious administration of justice within the same; as also, for abolishing certain offices now appertaining thereto; for quieting dormant claims, ascertaining and securing tenant-rights; and for the sale of all forest lands, and other lands, tenements, and hereditaments, held by his Majesty in right of the said principality, or county palatine of Chester, and for applying the produce thereof to the public service.*”

3d, “ *A bill for uniting to the crown the duchy and county palatine of Lancaster; for the suppression of unnecessary offices now belonging thereto; for the ascertainment and security of tenant and other rights; and for the sale of all rents, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, and forests, within the said duchy and county palatine, or either of them; and for applying the produce thereof to the public service.*”——*And it was ordered that*

Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, Sir George Savile, Colonel Barrè, Mr. Thomas Townshend, Mr. Byng, Mr. Dunning, Sir Joseph Mawbey, Mr. Recorder of London, Sir Robert Clayton, Mr. Frederick Montagu, the Earl of Upper Offory, Sir William Guise, and Mr. Gilbert, do prepare and bring in the same.

At the same time, Mr. Burke moved for leave to bring in—4th, “ *A bill for uniting the dutchy*”
“ *of*

“ of Cornwall to the crown ; for the suppression of
 “ certain unnecessary offices now belonging thereto,
 “ for the ascertainment and security of tenant and
 “ other rights ; and for the sale of certain rents,
 “ lands, and tenements, within or belonging to the
 “ said dutchy ; and for applying the produce
 “ thereof to the public service.”

But some objections being made by the surveyor general of the dutchy - concerning the rights of the Prince of Wales, now in his minority, and Lord North remaining perfectly silent, Mr. Burke, at length, though he strongly contended against the principle of the objection, consented to withdraw this last motion for the *present*, to be renewed upon an early occasion.

T H E E N D.

ENGLISH
OXFORD
LIBRARY

English
Library





