



special
collections
DOUGLAS
LIBRARY



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON

KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

47ra #50 - 219

from the Author.

CLERICAL REFORM;

OR,

ENGLAND'S SÁLVATION.



CLERICAL REFORM;
OR,
ENGLAND'S SALVATION;

Shewing Its Necessity

BY

A COMPARATIVE STATE OF THE LANDED PROPERTY,

IN RESPECT TO

TAXES, FUNDS,
MORTGAGES, TITHES, &c.

With a Plan of Annihilating Forty Million of the

NATIONAL DEBT,

BY A SALE OF THE

Mortmain Lands,

And a Total Abolition of Tithes.

CONVOCO AD POPULUM.

BY JOSEPH WILLIAMS, *Esq.*

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

1792.

A N
E P I S T L E D E D I C A T O R Y
T O
H I S R O Y A L H I G H N E S S
The Prince of Wales.

M Y P R I N C E,

AS my character places me above the meanness of adulation and flattery, I shall be acquitted from addressing your Royal Highness on such principles. A Dedication without permission, though qualified by a literary licence, carries with it an appearance of presumption and arrogance; yet, had I applied, and was the request granted, your Royal Highness would have been charged with encouraging pernicious principles, the construction illiberally imposed on every work that breathes a public and independent spirit; a very mistaken and ill-judged construction; especially when we consider that the dignity of the Crown arises from the dignity of the subject, who must have an independency of spirit for a foundation of that dignity; it does not follow, then, that such independence would reject government, but would insure a voluntary

luntary subjection, rather than an opposition. It is wished this will, in some degree, apologize for the liberty taken, resting on the hopes that the nation entertains of a patriotic Prince, whom heaven has ordained to reign over a free people at a future period; and as your Royal Highness has the greatest stake in the welfare of this empire, I humbly lay these tracts and plan of reform for your Royal Highness's inspection.

A kingdom so involved in a labyrinth of distresses and difficulties is not to be relieved by common methods: an attack on the revenues of the church, on the temporalities of the clergy, may at first surprize, but will not, on consideration, meet with the opposition of the vulgar: and you, my Prince, who I hope, ground your belief, even in the scripture, on reason, not being bound to believe any thing against reason, which is given us to be our guide, will see in reason the necessity and utility, so beneficial to the public, of this reform; and be persuaded that there is more prudence in forestalling necessity, than waiting for that dangerous period which, otherwise, must absolutely happen; perhaps, not without convulsions, that may endanger the constitution: I therefore boldly step forwards to propose such a reform, justifiable by the evident necessity of our situation.

In opposition to the Minister's declaration, of not taxing the funds, in opposition to that favourite, though unfortunate system, of supporting a monied influence, as a contrast to the landed property. This plan proposes a diminution of the national debt in the funds, to the amount of thirty or forty millions. I have endeavoured to reconcile my labours by the test of policy, the test of philosophy; two schools, in which, my Prince, I hope you are a student, as they teach true wisdom, but not such policy as Machiavel taught; he was Secretary to Cæsar Borgia, who was his hero; and yet this hero in politics was always in broils, in trouble, and unfortunate; the consequence of politics founded on false principles;—such politics, I fear, have been prejudicial to this country. My Prince, the amiable qualities of your mind, the nobleness

of your nature, and generosity of your temper, are virtues that would adorn private life ; how much more conspicuous are those qualities in your exalted station, with such dispositions and propensities to goodness, we are lead to look up to your Royal Highness in concerns of the greatest consequence ;—as the protector of our liberties, as a Patron of merit, and a mediator between the Sovereign and his people.

Under these ideas, I will observe, by way of complaint to your Royal Highness, that there is no appeal from the Minister to the Sovereign in this country : such an appeal is the prerogative of Nature, and should be the pride of kings, as possessing so divine an attribute, a Minister will treat a subject ill with impunity ; remorseless to every individual who dares to breath a spirit of independence. If I give a memorial to Lord Sydney as Secretary of State, to present to the King, and apply to him frequently for answer, silence and contempt are the returns ; regardless whether I am his superior in birth, fortune, or abilities ; hugging himself in his security of office, after daring to add insult to injury. In such a case Lord Sydney is guilty of a premunire against the great charter of the subject ;—such a charge being proved against him, ought to criminate him in any Court of Justice, as such conduct is the means of alienating the affection of the subject from the Sovereign ; for there can be no greater truism than where protection is denied or withheld, loyalty will be so likewise—may such a minister always meet with the fate of Haman !

My Prince, never part with the scales of justice ; it is a divine attribute, and will endear you more to the public than any other quality that Royalty can boast ;—it is a delegation from the Creator, and which no king should delegate to any earthly being.

It is said, my Prince, that you have been advised, by the great Luminary of the Law, lately retired, as full of honours as of years, not to meddle with politics—an advice that I reprobate : they might as well have kept you in the nursery.

nursery. The acting politics of the times, of your family, and of your country, should be your study and your concern; by them you will gain experience at the expence of others.

FELIX QUEM FACIUNT ALIENA PERICULA CAUTUM.

For the unfortunate find that bought experience comes too late. Lawyers, my Prince, are not the soundest politicians; there is a trait in their professional constitution that confounds the operation of common sense, and subverts a liberal enquiry by logical disputations.—You will learn, my Prince, that honesty is the best policy;—an adage commonly applied to the lowest scenes of life, and yet applicable to the system of the highest; this study will strengthen your mind, and fortify it from being enervated by scenes of pleasure; the heat and bravery of youth may sometimes hurry you, my Prince, beyond the rules of prudence; but if it extends no further than the satisfaction of private appetite, it may obscure, but not supplant the glory of your nature.

All Europe are now in a state of political warfare. The Russians and Austrians are meditating great things, and the other powers, waiting the events and ready to seize every advantage. As from evil often comes good, Great Britain enjoys, at present, benefits from her necessity, of which she makes a merit. Nature has given the means of full security in respect to herself, but her conquests should be circumscribed.—*COERCENDOS IMPERII TERMINOS.*—For her situation is such, that she must always want that mathematical correspondence from the center to the circumference.—Hence the loss of America; and, on this account, our conquest in the East must in time be torn from us. It is fortunate for this country that we have a peaceable King; were he otherwise, the stupid humility we are reduced to, could never produce an exertion of spirit.

If our political connections can draw us into action, they will; but how can we maintain it: a bankruptcy must take place:—how necessary then is it, to

bring our domestic affairs within ſome compaſs of ſettlement. To this end do I write;—to this end your Royal Highneſs, and every Engliſhman ſhould give attention. I wiſh I could oppoſe as well as repreſent the public evils. I hope my repreſentation will advance nothing but truth; otherwiſe I ſhould think myſelf highly criminal in addreſſing your Royal Highneſs, and wiſhing to intereſt you in a cauſe ſo full of public concern and utility. I ſhall be happy in every opportunity of proving myſelf,

Your Royal Highneſs's

moſt obedient,

and devoted Servant,

JOSEPH WILLIAMS.

P R E F A C E

T O T H E

P U B L I C.

ALTHOUGH the field of politics is open to every man, yet there is one enchanted spot that the Minister encircles with a line for himself and his satellites, which is sacrilege for any other person to approach:—render them good offices, and they are affronted; complain of injustice, and they add insult:—offer services to the public, and you alarm such a swarm of servile dependants, that the offices are in an uproar. If a proposal for any public benefit is sent to the Minister, he hands it to some underling, who mutilates it in such a manner as to make it his own, and receives the reward due to the ingenious projector: for that reason, my services I freely give to the public. The subject of the following tracts is of too serious a nature to dress it in any affected style; of too much importance to withhold any discrimination, on account of party or power; and too interesting to the state to warp it with any reserve.—The schemes of an individual may be attended with many defects, but the wisdom of the nation would soon digest it by a determined inspection.

There was a law existing in one of the Italian states, that obliged every man who should propose a new law, to do it with a rope about his neck :— if it proved for the public benefit he was to be rewarded, but if it proved to be prejudicial to the state, he was to be immediately strangled.—Did there such a law exist in this kingdom, I would boldly propose this reform with a rope about my neck ; and if one thousand men, besides the clergy, and those concerned, out of six millions could be found to oppose it, I would submit to be sacrificed for my temerity. I will therefore undertake this Herculean task, and enter the enchanted ground, armed with truth and reason ; break through this charm of prejudice without fear, having no interested views to indulge ;— satisfied with my intentions, and knowing that no degree of merit can screen me from envy and calumny.

In the Spring, 1784, I sent to Mr. Pitt a plan of reform in the Law Department ; it has been mutilated to its present form, which does not in the least tend to rectify the abuses, nor to bring to the revenue a tenth part of the tax proposed. In the Autumn of the same year, I sent him hints for a Clerical Reform.—I have waited four years, and no notice taken of it. I think its importance so great towards the salvation of this nation, that hangs on a precipice, which the slightest accident of internal commotion, or attack of external enemies would totally overthrow, that I now submit it to the public.

It is a reform that involves a large society, who are not remarkable for their self-denying principles, and who are ready to thunder anathemas against any one who plans a diminution of the revenues of the Church, as the greatest sacrilege. It is a reform that a Prelate in the House of Peers declared would be dangerous to society and civil community ; yet another Prelate confessed, that by public and general utility all matters relative to the Church should be regulated.

I am fully persuaded did such a reform contribute in the least to strengthen Prerogative the Minister would have no difficulty or delicacy in enforcing it. The arcana imperii the state mystery should be simplified to common ideas, and prerogative be unequivocally explained, as an executive and not an independant distinct part of the constitution.

Blackstone allows of the liberty of discussing and examining the limits of the king's prerogative, and upon this authority I will have no reserve.

Statutes of different reigns which enforce prerogative ought to be examined as to the grounds and occasion, whether from necessity or to enforce authority, whether from advantages taken in respect to the times, fervility, or how otherwise.

Mr. Blackstone does not trace prerogative to its origin no more than he does tithes. In the north part of America, the Indians, though distinguished by tribes, as possessing certain tracts of land, do not associate for the benefit of civil society, every man erects his wigwam where his fancy or conveniency for fishing and hunting directs, independant of any controul, or any encroachment by another tribe, which seldom happens, or any sign of hostilities from Europeans, whose avarice or ambition are always disturbing the peace of mankind. The Indians convene a meeting by signals of fires, and then they chuse a chief or dictator, but as soon as the danger is over he then loses all his prerogative, and returns to the common mass. This is the origin of power with people who live in a state of nature.

On the declension of the Roman empire the Saxons established themselves in this kingdom, and being a people fond of liberty, introduced

their laws on which Magna Charta was founded; but William the Conqueror, and four of his successors, paid no attention to the Saxon laws, but ruled absolute, though Edward III. revised and restored the Saxon laws, yet did not in the least restrain the military laws, which made part of the Norman prerogative, hence this power of war and peace being a royal prerogative, originating in conquest or tyranny, and maintained by ministerial craft and parliamentary venality. In the course of this work I may say somewhat more on the subject, and here only observe what Mr. Blackstone remarks “ That the enormous weight of prerogative, if “ left to itself, spreads havoc and destruction among all the inferior movements.” He admits of the king’s power to make treaties and leagues, but least it should be detrimental, the constitution interposes a check by the means of parliamentary impeachment of the ministry.

How many occasions have we had without a single example.

Mr. Pitt has intimated an intention of constituting a fund for the emergency of a war. This I consider as an establishment to strengthen prerogative independent of parliament, the greatest violation of the Constitution that ever has been attempted this century past.

I do suppose he has borrowed this idea from what was done in Rome during the consulate. The twentieth part (called *Aurum Viceffimarium*) of the money collected for the public expences was reserved in an inner chamber in the treasury: It was a capital crime to use it but in extreme and desperate necessity, as in a time of war with the Goths or tumult among the people. It was never known to be violated but in the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey. The consuls had no power over it; when they attempted a stretch of prerogative, tribunes were appointed to guard the rights of the people. But our constitution stands on a different

ent basis: No war abroad can surprize us; no invasion can be so sudden as not to permit time for the parliament to meet, to judge of the necessity, and to grant the supplies; under that sanction the Bank of England in a moment can advance to any amount. No tumult of the people can be so alarming as to require such an encrease of power in prerogative necessary.

The present Lord Chancellor, by his office, is guardian of the king's prerogative; he is not less so of the constitution; and, I am convinced he is as tender of the one as he is careful of the other. His abilities are not only solid but brilliant; his integrity, the emanations of his nature, consolidated by reason and resolution, when Lord Thurlow quits his station, whether from intrigue or infirmities, this nation will feel a loss that the depravity of the times cannot repair; and altogether a character that reflects honour to the country, and to the British name.

Whatever the fate of the following work may be, whether favourably received, or critically perused, I shall be consoled with the principle of my intentions; it has been wrote at different periods; it has been the employment of many an heavy hour, when labouring under the pressure of villainy and the ingratitude of a government in whose service I spent the best part of my life. Many circumstances have occurred that prevented an earlier publication.

It had been promised for some time to my friends, they now have it without any affectation of learning or stile. *Ornavi res ipsa negat contenta doceri.* I have endeavoured to undeceive the country from a delusion which ministerial craft holds forth. The splendor of a court, the temporary rise of stocks, are neither proofs nor securities of a country's happiness.

happinefs. In the strides of power, in the venality of representation, in the burthen of taxes, in the great abuses in publick offices calculated for ministerial patronage, we see ruin inevitable, from which

Good Lord deliver us.

A

C O M P A R A T I V E S T A T E

O F T H E

L A N D E D P R O P E R T Y ,

W I T H R E S P E C T T O T H E

T A X E S .

THE great Palladium of English liberty is the Right of Self-Taxation. It is in this our constitution has been so eminently distinguished; it is the soul of parliament, and the intent of representation; it is the hinge of government, and the spring of all its operations. It is the use or abuse of this representation that establishes or destroys the existence of our boasted Liberty. The delegation of power to a representative is the most sacred trust that can be reposed by human confidence; but when I consider the mode of collecting the suffrages—the influence used against free election—and the conduct of the representative the instant the Poll is over, I cannot help regretting that we are so vitiated in our manners, so deprived in our dignity. As government is formed for the protection of the community at large, that community consents to give up part of its property to support that govern-

ment which is to give them protection and security in return. If the delegation violates the trust reposed in it—if the government violates the purport of its formation, and, by corrupting the representative, lays on what impositions it pleases, and verges towards tyranny, it is guilty of a premunire against the Majesty of the People, and the community have a right to recall the delegation; to break the compact, and form a new government, in whose conduct and protection they can rely.—No sophistry can overturn this truism,—Abbé Raynal, though a subject of despotism, yet an advocate for natural liberty, says, whoever thinks otherwise is a slave and a madman.—Yet what avails sentiment and reflection?—the emanations of an honest heart can only bewail the impracticability of redress, and will be considered as corroded with pernicious principles.

When Augustus assumed the domination of Rome, he left them the shadow of liberty, and took upon him the popular title of Prince of the Senate only. He carried the farce further, and stood a candidate for the Tribuneship, to guard the rights of the people.—His successors followed his steps, and affixed to all their decrees the *Senatus Consultum*. The S. C. of the Romans was as devoted to the Emperor as our Acts of Parliament are to the Minister.—The brightest instance of Roman virtue was calling Cincinnatus from the plough.—A century ago, a man has been taken from his closet, and sent into parliament—then we had a virtuous parliament—no Money-Bill passed the House until the grievances of the people were rectified.—Revolutions are not brought about at once; innovations of power come in by degrees, prepared by general depravity, and a full measure of debasement in all ranks of people, lost to every sense of honour. If a jealous circumspection was ever necessary, it certainly is at this time.

There is a jealousy in the rulers of the land that the spirit of liberty grows rank, when fed by the prosperous exultation of the landed property—by the burthen laid thereon we may judge—all foreign powers may judge of the happiness, of the prosperity, of the security that exists in this government.—

Discontents will magnify the evil ; and though the dignity of the empire will induce us for some time to smother the malignity, yet if it continues long, human nature will revolt, and it must burst out in a flame. The rulers of the land often mistake this apathy for contentment and security, and commonly find out their mistake when too late—until they see their king, their country, and themselves involved in total ruin—the consequence of their ill conduct, mismanagement, and villany.

A Land tax of four shillings in the pound is a perpetual mortgage on every estate in the kingdom ; it is a fixt debt, irredeemable, entailed from father to son—it is a reproachable blot in the escutcheon of liberty—this has depreciated the value of lands—other taxes may be supposed to be temporary or mutable, but this must be permanent. At the conclusion of a war, until the present period, the country gentlemen were not satisfied until one shilling was taken off the land tax ; but, alas ! this peace admits of no such indulgence—taxes are multiplied more than in the time of war. About thirty or forty yeats ago, it was asserted and grounded on several calculations, that in consequence of Taxes, there was paid by the people of England twelve or fourteen shillings out of the pound upon their incomes and expences. It occasioned some serious alarms—to allay which an anonymous pamphlet was published, and dedicated to the Right Hon. W. Pitt, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, wherein, to remove the evil tendency of the above assertions, instead of twelve or fourteen shillings, he makes the taxes amount to no more than half the sum. He makes his calculations on estates of twenty thousand per annum to one hundred per annum ; I herewith insert as a medium, the following :

A gentleman who hath an estate of one thousand pounds a year in land.

	£.	s.	d.
For malt, hops, beer, and cyder - - - - -	11	1	0
Salt - - - - -	0	14	2
Sugar, raisins, currants, and spices - - - - -	1	5	6
Leather - - - - -	0	11	4
Soap and candles - - - - -	2	11	0
Coal's in London - - - - -	2	16	0
Houfes and Windows - - - - -	5	4	0
Drugs, tobacco, glafs, paper, parchment, stamp duties, Post- age of letters, coach, &c. - - - - -	25	0	0
Land-tax, four shillings in the pound - - - - -	200	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£. 249	3	0
Foreign wines, arrack, rum, brandy, coffee, tea, and chocolate	75	0	0
Foreign manufactured silks, linens, cottons, &c. - - - - -	12	10	0
	<hr/>		
Total of taxes	336	15	0

The taxes amount to six shillings and nine-pence in the pound on the annual income.

If the assertion that the taxes amounted to twelve or fourteen shillings in the pound was exaggerated, the calculation made for the Minister's purpose was certainly erroneous and fallacious:—in the foregoing calculation he should have added the Parish Rates, which I cannot suppose but existed at the time, and should come under the denomination of taxes, as his house is liable to an execution for non-payment.

In the City.

Poor-Rates.
 Ground-Rent.
 Paving.
 Cleanfing.
 Lamps.
 Water.
 Watchman.

Additional Taxes for Town and Country.

Stamps.
 Hat-Tax.
 Glove.
 Auctions.
 Servants.
 Carriages, &c. &c.

My comparative ftate of the landed property was not meant to extend to the city, no further than the taxes that affect it: the calculation ftated did not take notice of the poor-rates, bridge-taxes, ftatute duties, tythes, church mife, and other drawbacks, which fhall be explained. The taxes and duties in London and Weftminfter do not claim any commiferation, when I confider the great influx of wealth that commerce brings in—the wholefale merchants fhould be made to contribute amply.—When I confider the falfe weights and tricks of retailers—when I confider the price that is paid for fhion—the million a year belonging to the Civil Lift fpent among them, and at leaft ten millions a year, that fupports government, circulating hourly, the city evidently has the advantage over the country.—The trade and handicraft in London earn double wages, fufficient to maintain them; but the town is fo vitiated from the higheft to the loweft, that honeft induftry is loft in the calls of neceffity; fcarce a tradefman, when his day's work is over, but goes to the porter-houfe; or if he receives his week's wages on Saturday, but feasts or gollips it away on Sunday, and he and his family ftarve for the reft of the week.—London is as a head much too large for the body, therefore muft appear monftrous.—What I contend for is, that the taxes bear harder upon the landed property than any other part of the community.

The taxes ftated at three hundred and thirty-fix pounds out of one thoufand pounds per annum, may certainly be ftated at this time at twelve fhillings in the pound—the carriage, window, and old taxes advanced—
 receipt,

receipt, hat, gloves, and all the new duties added, poor rates, turnpike, statute duties, parish dues likewise included; for every charge is a tax that is not optional.—When I make it appear that a gentleman who has an estate of one thousand a year, has not above two hundred yearly to live upon, two shillings in the pound will be thought a proportionable tax for his situation.—There is a dignity appertaining to every station—take that away, and you level all distinction.

Travelling through the dutchy of Lunenburgh, of which the Emperor is duke, I stopped at a house for refreshment; and entering into discourse with the landlord, I found he had lately made a purchase of the house, a large stone house, with about nine acres of good land, which cost him one hundred louis d'ors, besides the expence of repairing the house.—The house and land was valued at nine pounds per annum—for house and land one guinea and half a crown went to pay all taxes yearly, in war time, or a free gift of fifty thousand pounds to the Emperor; his proportion was three shillings sterling more; so that the utmost he paid was three shillings in the pound, with liberty of vending liquors.—Such a farm in this country would pay more than four times that tax.—Britons, this is your boasted liberty!—You are a free people!—and through the medium of your parliament you are made to scourge yourselves.—The whole of your constitution and liberty is a delusive alliance between hypocrisy and credulity—what is reason?—What is resolution, when the passions of men are so worked upon!—The landed property has no subterfuge of stock-jobbing, no benefit from the millions that government circulates in this great city.—The taxes are collected with an oppressive, pressing hand—the landlord must have great arrears, bad, or unfortunate tenants.—He is born to live upon his estate, which is his profession, being bred to no other.—True patriotism would have exercised its oratorical powers on those subjects, and not have ransacked the eastern world for ill-founded cruelty to torture the effusions of humanity.—True patriotism would have awakened the parliament to a sense of its own dignity—to discriminate between the necessity of supplying
the

the exigencies of government, and the wanton inordinate taxes and impositions, to pension a list, most of whom never rendered an hour's service to their country.—The pension list should yearly be published; it should be the basis of every reform, and the test of every ministerial virtue.—If it is refused, like the subversion of evidence, lay it down for guilt.—My dear countrymen, give not up the pursuit—it is of great importance, not so much in the enormity of the sum, as in the disgracefulness of the objects.

I will take the liberty of making a remark in this place.—Transitions of property, destruction of families, are the forerunners of slavery.—New people have not that regard for the old constitution as those have whose ancestors have bled in the cause of liberty, and laid the foundation of this limited government.—New people, to their acquisitions of wealth, will wish for honours; and those who are incontinently dubbed with honours, will sacrifice every thing to maintain those honours, and to be totally subservient to the court; and our court hath been so prodigal of new creation, and so partial in employing of new men, which alone is sufficient to stamp the character of the Minister, who spares neither the wealth nor honour of the nation in this instance.

The Minister finds the ancient nobility not so pliant to his conformity, therefore to eclipse their power by numbers, makes a new creation, and insults them by upstart honours.—On the same principle the landed influence is subverted and sapped by overloading it with taxes, and confounding the simplicity of industry in the vortex of court and city luxury.

Examine the Court, filled with Placemen and Pensioners, foreign ministers, and Bishops.—Do independent gentlemen appear there from affection?—Do grateful impulses lead men there to shew their attachment to a sense of a happy government?—I fear not—far other feelings, far other sentiments possess the mind of men corroded by long experience and various woes,—

And

And as to the courtiers, they are insensible—they are insensible to what the people feel.—Taken up with the etiquette of ceremony, they draw a circle round themselves, and all without they consider as a species of beings, far, very far inferior to any consideration that can take a moment from their consequence.—The picture I draw is but the faint shadow or outline of a Court, that the country look up to with an indignant eye.

Should it appear that taxes bear harder on the landed property than other parts of the constitution—should encouragement be given more even to commerce or manufactories than to agriculture—should government point its oppression on landed influence, it is an evident proof that it either understands not the true interest or principle of the constitution, or that it premeditatedly undermines it, in order to destroy its existence, and prepare it for slavery or an inglorious revolution.

By these assertions I shall be charged with encouraging the country to entertain perhaps unhappy opinions of the present government.—I would not that apathy should lull us to our utter ruin—that with the loss of our properties we should also lose the power of complaining likewise; what resentment they may have to me for speaking out—I care not—the sacrifice of an individual in the service of his country will act as a spur to awaken in it a proper sense of its danger—the cause of public liberty, the spirit of a free government will emerge, and bloom a virtue that no tyranny can violate.

A Comparative State of the Landed Property, with respect to Mortgages.

A Mortgage is the use of money for which an estate is given as a security, paying a supposed legal interest for the same; it is sanctified by Law, yet attended with some of the greatest evils that can happen in a community. this evil was increased to such a pitch of enormity in the time of Tiberius at Rome,—that, although there was plenty of money, yet being hoarded up by few hands in order to buy land, the very remedy of selling, had the contrary effect, as the value of lands was rated at the purchasers price.—It was so alarming that Tiberius thought it prudent to issue eight hundred thousand pounds out of the treasury, which was lent for three years without interest to such who could give double the security in lands to the value of the debt: the decrease of the lands under such circumstances, and the decay of their wealth, which carried their credit and fame along with it, by this timely assistance recovered breath.

The evils that threatened Rome exist this day in England, without a glimpse of hope of such a remedy as Rome experienced.—These evils caused some serious alarm during the American war in this country; Lord Chancellor Thurlow, on account of the scarcity of money, and the value of land decreasing in proportion, did declare, that no man should be dispossessed of his lands by a mortgagee if the interest was duly paid: such a declaration was a cordial for a moment, but in effect did not avail; the very instant of the declaration, the gentlemen of the Law who fattened by the oppression, scouted the idea, and proved that the Chancellor, absolute as he felt himself, could not interrupt the practice of the courts: to prove what has been advanced, a digression, though it was the authors own case, may not be thought impertinent.

The unfortunate Author of this book having had a mortgage on his estate surreptitiously laid on by the collusion of his own Lawyer, with an avowed enemy, was in the year 1777 served with ejections to obtain possession, when three months interest was not due. The mortgage was in the hands of executors, the acting trustees being a Counsellor and an Attorney, they got possession by the collusion of the mortgagor's Attorney—the mortgagees immediately lowered the rents of the estate 500 per ann. to bring it down to the standard of their interest, that no overplus should go to pay off any part of the principal. They filed a bill of foreclosure, and, after the accounts went before the Master, they saddled three thousand pounds expences on the estate; they put it out of the power of the mortgagor to oppose them, as, when they took possession of the estate, they turned him out into the world, without allowing him a shilling to live upon, and to prevent any opposition to their unparalleled conduct.—It was in vain to apply to men of character in the law, without money.—He had to contend with lawyers—he had the bar against him—he had the practice and discipline of the courts against him.

Notwithstanding, he drew up the form of a petition himself to the Lord Chancellor, who, in the first instance, attended to it; but, when the petition was opened to the court, which went to explain the oppression, and pray relief, the Chancellor asked if the money was ready to pay off the mortgage, the answer was made, that the conduct of the mortgagees put it out of the power of the mortgagor, and prayed to lay the same before the Court; the Chancellor could not admit it, as the law lays down a rule that a mortgagee in possession could not be called to account, until the mortgage was paid, being considered in the eye of the law as proprietor of the Estate; Lord Thurlow, in whom Justice never had a stronger representative, had it not in his power to give relief—If ever the *summum jus* was the *summa injuria*, it certainly was in this instance. " This digression is held out by the Author, as a beacon for mortgagors to avoid, and to undeceive such who

who may suppose, that the great court of equity, absolute as the presiding-judge is, can counteract the large field of villainy that is practised in the bosom of Chancery.

During the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey, the former being Dictator, thought it necessary to go to Rome, to make some reform in respect to credit and usury: money lent on trust could not be paid, and credit was so low, that none could be borrowed; an abolition of debts had alarmed the creditors, as the consequence of a foreclosure had made the debtors very clamorous; therefore, for securing the creditors, as well as the restraining of usury, Cæsar gave orders that arbitrators should be appointed to make estimation of possessions, according as they were valued before the war; and that the creditors should take at that rate for their money.—Here was a lesson for our great Dictator of Chancery, and a ground-work to restrain the merciless conduct of mortgagors, without violating the source of public credit. But whether the Lord Chancellor's decree can, without any ordinance of parliament, break through the practice of the courts, is, perhaps, the difficulty or the question.

There is scarce any estate in England, without a mortgage upon it; and was the same villainy exercised with other estates, and other gentlemen, as with the foregoing instance, this country would be little better than a wilderness, or a land of savages.

The landed property in this kingdom, on an average, is mortgaged to the value of its third part, which makes the debt on an estate of one thousand per annum, at thirty years purchase, amount to ten thousand pounds, the interest five hundred pounds, half of its income, which, with the taxes, being doubled since the commencement of the late war, totally bankrupts the estate; the mortgagee receiving the profits of the estate, pays not one shilling of the five hundred pounds, he takes for interest, to taxes, or in any shape to the aid of government.

That administration should tacitly look on, that it should tax the labourer, manufacturer, trade, and commerce, tax every idea of luxury, nay the conveniencies, and even necessaries of life, yet suffer these leeches and blood suckers of society, to take advantage of the distresses of the country, proves that political, as well as moral justice have lost their energy, and that the whole force of ministerial battery has been levelled at the landed property: otherwise, why not tax mortgagees four shillings in the pound, or dispose of the legal interest of money at four per cent. to enable the landed property to bear the unconscionable load laid upon it.

If we examine the system that has been pursued these thirty years past, we find Ministers have been changed, men of opposite characters, of opposite interests, have got into administration, and yet the same measures have been pursued, the Rockingham and Portland interest opposed, for twenty years, the Butean influence, which at last, as they thought, they overturned, and became ministers themselves; yet the Marquis of Rockingham, in that situation, found himself a mere cypher in the cabinet, the vexation of which, it is supposed, mortally affected him.

The Duke of Portland, in the full zenith of security, as Minister, found himself a feather in the scale of power, and experienced, in the most sudden and mortifying manner, that the crown possessed, in the fullest and most absolute degree, the sole influence in this realm. Had there been, at that period, any real influence and power in the Whig families, it is thought they would have put it to the issue; but it was found impotent and unavailing.—Reflexions that will naturally arise from these circumstances are of too serious a nature for present discussion.

It is to be dreaded, that our jealous circumspections of courtly power are absorbed in our domestick distresses; that we are ready for the yoke, which our Representatives already wear, and have prepared for us.—Five hundred pounds, the fee of a session, which is now increased to eight hundred, obtains

tains in return, eight millions ; shameful villainous, bartering ! But the evil lies at our own doors, when we sell ourselves, and return men, contrary to law, without qualification ; and, contrary to principle, men guilty of self-convicted perjury, what can we expect ?

It must not be forgot, that the revolution of Sweden was accomplished without any popular tumult, without any publick convulsion, and that the King of Sweden received congratulations from this country on his success. And I am an evidence that that Monarch, and his suite at Spa, in the year 1781, considered this country as a country of rebellious turbulent subjects.

The landed property being assailed from every quarter, the exorbitant expenses of drawing up mortgage deeds, and the several modes of evading the penalty of usury, and the quibbles of the lawyer, when preying on our vitals, make it impossible to extricate an estate when once involved : this occasions a publick and sudden transition of property,—a transition from happiness to misery. Oppression and the villainies of men soon take the advantage of the least mismanagement—the most prudent, on the principle of economy, free from folly and credulity, are in some shape involved in the general disaster !

When the landed property is so involved—when no resource is left to remove the malignity, and government looking on with a jaundiced eye, what is to be done ? Certainly the genius of the present administration is so wrapt up in mystery, and the fruits of mystery can be only despair.

This comparative state of the landed property with respect to mortgages, naturally leads reflexion to consider how far the constitution is affected, and how far ministerial oppression is concerned in diminishing or increasing the evil. Every mortgage is a contract of usury, although sanctioned by law ; and, the legal interest for money being fixed at five per cent. if it can be proved that any more is taken, the contract is void, and then it is stamped with

with usury, and the usurer punished by paying treble the sum lent—from this it would follow that no more than five per cent was paid by a mortgagee. Nothing can be more delusive! When a sum of money, supposing ten thousand pounds, is wanted to be raised, no matter for what purpose, application is made to an advertising broker, or to some lawyer; if the latter, he applies to another lawyer, between whom there must likewise be a broker, to whom procuration money must be paid; your lawyer then must have your title-deeds, and he copies them for the other lawyer; he then must lay the same before council; then the deeds must be laid before a conveyancer, who prepares a draft of the mortgage, then the engrossments, with counterparts, to expedite which a *douceur* is necessary, and, if the mortgagee is a stranger in the country where the estate lies, his surveyor must be sent down, no former survey will satisfy; then a receiver must be appointed, if not by agreement, at least when possession is taken by ejectment, which a mortgagee has always in view, who receives five per cent. for collecting the rents—all the charges and expences attending this business falls on the mortgagor. When money is to be raised to pay off the mortgage, the same course of iniquity must be gone through; and I am persuaded, that no mortgage that ever is paid off, but from first to last pays ten per cent. for the same. I once sent to a lawyer, who had expressed an inclination to serve me, to use his endeavours to raise me twenty thousand pounds; in a short time I received a letter from him, wherein he said the money was ready, and that I should have no further trouble or expences about it, on agreeing to pay five per cent. which came to one thousand pounds; this I very readily agreed to, in order to extricate myself out of a scene of villainy that surrounded me—the lawyer went to the mortgagee, whose misrepresentation soon put an end to the business.

There certainly is great error in the law of mortgages: as long as the interest is regularly paid, the mortgagor should never be dispossessed of his land, nor should foreclosures be allowed; if a mortgagee wants his money, he should transfer the mortgage at his own expence, for, if he cannot find

out a person to advance the money, it is morally impossible for the mortgagor to find out any one who will, under the pressure and certain misrepresentation of the former mortgagee, pay it off. As long as the interest is kept down, no outrage on the property ought to be allowed—it is a matter of great importance, and no subject more worthy of being revised by the legislature.

We have asked how far the Constitution can be affected? It is affected by so much as its laws are imperfect, as outrages and violences attack its vitals; the landed property and influence is the base that constitutes the fabrick of the machine; and, were the delegates in parliament true to themselves and uncorruptible, the system of this government would be perfect; prerogative then would be considered as a duty decisive and qualifying; and not very material to the system whether a Sovereign was a fool or a madman; for it is the virtual power of the Crown, and not the person, that the Constitution looks up to.

It is to be considered how far ministerial oppression on the landed property and influence has increased the evil, and enervated the system. The Constitution of this country is comprehensible by the meanest capacity, as well in the aggregate, as in its divisible parts: it is simple, and void of mystery—Truth and honesty require no mystery; yet the Minister makes mystery his political creed, and the affectation of mystery constitutes his political character. Prerogative and the liberties of the people have their prescribed limits and mutual interests; and yet there is an eternal warfare carried on between them. Liberty certainly cannot quarrel with the virtual power of prerogative, because it is part of itself; but that prerogative, over-leaping the bounds prescribed to it, always struggling to convert the virtual power into personal power; prerogative then not only changes its name, but its very essence, assumes another complexion in the monstrous form of despotism
and

and venality is the instrument with all the appendages of luxury and courtly intrigue.

It is wrote of the famous moralist, Seneca, that he made four millions of money in the course of three years, by lending his money on estates in Britain; and on non-payment seizing the estates. The Usurers of our days are as full of alacrity, and display a vicious wantonness in encreasing the sufferings of the distressed.—There are no less than twelve gaming-houses in St. James's-street, under the eye of the sovereign; not to be a member of some of them is not to exist in the line of fashion; and to enrol ones name among them is to sign a death-warrant to ones own ruin.—With what ease might these houses be suppressed? but they are encouraged. When the fatal effects of the infatuation of the die hath reached the ears of power, exclamations have broke out: “ So much for Buckingham—we shall have no more opposition from that quarter.” What with the dice, luxury introduced by nabobs of India, and the nabobs of Whitehall, the Minister's work is half done.

If the Minister has great resources by the sale of crown-lands and other things, why not pay off part of the national debt, and unload the Country of the great burthen of taxes? Eight years of peace expired and nothing done!—certainly this stands in judgment against him; for, whilst the national debt remains in its present situation, it is impossible to give relief to the landed property; agriculture, the greatest of national improvements, is neglected; and liberty, that constitutes the national characteristic, is lost in the vortex of ministerial influence, and the most corrupt venality.—This comparative state of the landed property, with respect to mortgages, shews the necessity of some reform, in such matters as may effect relief, which is in the minister's power, by various means; but by none so effectually as a Clerical reform, as it will be the means of paying off great part of the national debt, and likewise of giving Agriculture its fullest extent, by abolishing tithes, and relieving it from ecclesiastical oppression.

When

When mortgagees receive 5 per cent. for their money, and estates do not pay above three, with the taxes and other drawbacks, which not in the least affect the mortgagees, it is a very plain case that the landed property labours under evils and burthens that cannot easily be remedied without a reform, or interference of the legislation in respect to mortgages in the first instant; I am persuaded, was the land tax only at one shilling in the pound, and the tithes abolished, this island would be a perfect garden, and the wonder of the world: to accomplish so glorious an event a patriot minister is only wanted, who will go seriously to work to pay off the national debt; who will reform and curtail the publick offices; who will convince the king that half the civil list is sufficient to maintain true grandeur; and that a standing army of three or four thousand men, exclusive of the garrisons abroad are full sufficient to answer every exigency that such a constitution as ours would require. How completely happy would such a king be? how highly beloved would such a minister find himself? but these are golden dreams—ambition, avarice, power, interestedness, and a host of goblins that possess the minds of men, make the attempt impossible.

Amongst other evils that attend mortgages, there are none so destructive as when a set of lawyers join together their stocks and get possession of an estate, in this case they draw up their own deeds, under some person's name, in trust, which would answer the end of usury: it is very difficult to know who the real mortgagee is, and more difficult to get out of their hands: a solicitor of character is one of the most respectable members of society, but the nature of the profession is such, that the most upright of them must practise tricks to counteract the villainy of an adversary, or submit to lose the cause; the courts at Westminster Hall find their practices very disgracefull, and yet find it too difficult a task to reform: unfortunate it is for the landed property that no transactions respecting landed connexions can be carried on without their interference, and it is chiefly through their means that mortgages bear so very hard against the landed property.

A Comparative State of the Landed Property, with respect to the Funds.

The fruits of liberty and commerce, so far as they promote the internal welfare of the nation, depend more on the policy of the minister than the publick statutes and laws, which seemingly secure them to us.

Agriculture, manufactures and commerce are so connected together, that the oppression of any one must affect the other two; in vain are we masters of those arts which have raised us to such a degree of perfection, if the high interest of money affects our credit, or the taxes imposed depress the spirit and principle that stimulates the exertions of agriculture, manufactures and commerce.

The landed policy of this nation is, and must be, only a secondary consideration in the ministerial scale, as long as the national debt and funds continue in their present state. There have been hitherto but two ways according to the established constitution, whereby the minister could provide or the expences of government, by raising the supplies within the year, by taxes and duties, or by borrowing, or loans on the funding system; there may be many unacquainted with the foundation and progress of this national debt, I shall therefore, from Lord Stair's and Mr. King's calculations, collect what may explain it, with additional remarks.

King William, who reigned thirteen years, found in the English parliament a constant opposition to all his plans, and taxation was too delicate a point for him to strain: men in general put less estimation on their credit than their money, and his Dutch policy directed him, not only, to supply his

wants, by borrowing money on the national credit, but likewise make that credit serve, in some shape, as a security for his acquired dignity. At his death, in 1702, the national credit was mortgaged for the immense sum of

16 000 000.

Queen Anne, succeeding him, her reign was a continued warfare abroad, for the advantage of other powers, and a continued scene of internal trouble and speculation at home; had not a single plan of paying off the national debt, but added to it, at her death, in 1714, after a reign of twelve years, the sum of

39 000 000.

total debt in 1714

55 000 000.

A peace continued from this time, for I can call the Rebellion in 1715 no war, until the year 1740 an interval of twenty-seven year's peace, in which time, a reduction of nine millions was found, the parliament about the year 1717, having appropriated some taxes towards a sinking fund to pay off the same, the debt then amounted to

46 000 000

At the close of the war in the year 1748 an addition to the national debt appeared of

32 000 000.

total debt in 1748

78 000 000.

A peace of seven years then succeeded, and there appeared during that time a reduction of

3 000 000.

debt at the commencement of the war in 1755

75 000 000.

This war was conducted by Mr. Pitt, his popularity led the parliament, he had the confidence of the nation, and his success work'd up the sanguine temper and spirit of the

people; absolute in his administration, and unlimited in his national expences, which in the last two years of the war was enormous; the expences in 1761 amounted to 26 000 000, exclusive of long annuities, reckoned at 3 000 000,
 Ditto in the year 1762 25 000 000,
 likewise burthened with annuities.

At the close of the war in 1763 an addition to the national debt appeared of	71 000 000.
	<hr/>
total debt in 1763	146 000 000.
Reduced in 1775, after a peace of twelve years	10 000 000.
	<hr/>
	debt in 1775 136 000 000.
After the American war, and closing up the accounts in 1784 the national debt was	272 000 000.
	<hr/>
The interest and the peace establishment will take at least, annually	16 000 000.

How surprising is it then that the revenues, by taxes and duties, amounts to that sum, which certainly must be the case, when no loan nor additional taxes of any signification has been necessary for the present year. It must be observed that the wars of king William, and queen Anne, were carried on at the expence of three millions per annum, only, separate from the peace establishment which amounted to five or six millions; and it is more extraordinary that the popularity of the great Mr. Pitt, or the venality of Lord North durst not in their time raise the supplies by new taxes, whereas the present minister has lately stretched the nerves and sinews of the kingdom and constitution to its utmost pliability, has continued the land-tax four shillings in the pound, in time of peace, contrary to any former precedent. Mr. Pitt has now been

been

minister eight years, during which time we have had wars without hostilities, and peace with continual alarms; his modes of taxation are partial, and his way of soothing the discontent and oppression of one manufacture, is by adding a similar hardship upon another. He converts the prerogative of the crown, which is only a virtual prerogative, to a personal prerogative, in a wanton creation of peers, insulting the ancient nobility by the contamination of men from the lowest order, without abilities, property, or connection, to fill his book of numbers; by which it appears, that two-thirds of the peers are placemen and pensioners at his devotion.

Lord North's Secretary deserted his patron and party, and handed down the cankered list of venality, which the present Secretary of the Treasury, being an adept, has greatly improved upon; and lest this was not sufficient, the Minister insulting the dignity of wisdom and abilities, filled up the different offices and great departments of the state with juvenile associates, without experience, genius, and beardless; who think it sufficient to entertain the senate with wrong quotations of Greek, and puerile declamations, without argument or proper application.

I have observed that trade and commerce suffer much by the interest of money being so high, as it affects credit: Landed property likewise suffers on the same account, as it affects agriculture, and its influence being over-balanced by the funding and moneyed advantages, must prove that administration have erected a machine on wrong principles.—It is not sufficient that a minister's conduct should be clear from oppressing the poor with taxes, but even the rich should be on their guard, lest they should gradually be seduced into a habit of servitude, by suffering the minister to enforce unconstitutional taxes; for habits are taken advantages of by prescription, and long usage reconciles the worst of evils. When a land tax of one shilling was first proposed, it was meant only for one year, and this about a century ago; and in the year 1735, the country gentlemen thought themselves

elves greatly aggrieved by having a land-tax of two shillings, and now it is patiently bore at four, without any seeming disposition of relief.

In Henry the Seventh's time, a guard of fifty archers was thought a great innovation in the constitution, this continued untill the restoration; prerogative must certainly have made very large strides on the constitution, or liberty strangely cajoled to submit to maintain six or seven thousand guards, and a standing army of twenty thousand men. If these are not badges of slavery I know not what are; this I attribute to the influence of the landed interest being so swallowed up by the funds, that excrecence, which has taken so deep a root as to endanger the constitution.

Sessions of parliament are generally closed, or sealed, by a vote of credit for some act of prerogative that has been done, or is intended. The declaration of Rights in particular was pointed against illegal exertions of prerogative, a vote of credit is the consequence of such an exertion, and should be opposed in the first instance, *Obsta principibus*—indeed every opportunity should be embraced to reduce this prerogative to the spirit and design of the constitution—power is of a grasping encroaching nature, and cannot be too strictly watched. The declaration of rights, in particular, says, that election of members shall be free. The late discovery at Westminster Hall of Mr. Pitt and his secretary's interference in the Westminster election it is hoped will be noticed on the meeting of parliament, when some member will move an impeachment and an address to his Majesty, to remove a Minister from his council that could so violate the constitution in its dearest rights—Tacitus gives the following character of Sejanus.

“He was a man indefatigable and patient in the fatigues of business, of a towering pride, and condescending flattery; to outward appearance one of abstinence and moderation, but in his soul a person of insatiable avarice and craving”.

The situation of the landed property, in respect to the funds, is the more to be lamented, as it appears to be an uniform measure; for the advocates for the administration confess, indeed triumph in their declaration, that the resources of this country are great, and that the people can bear a still greater load. If the minister has no other plan than a sinking fund of a million a-year to pay the national debt, the progress must be so insensible that the revenue of 16,000,000 will be a loadstone for at least twenty years, a plain demonstration that our taxes are not so much a matter of necessity as of policy; for, had the minister been serious, the sale of crown lands might have taken place six years ago; which, with a tax of two shillings in the pound on all mortgages, the same on all transfers in the stocks, and straining every power of taxation and duties to the utmost, by this time might have paid off 50,000,000; for this purpose, every landed, trading, or commercial man, would have gladly submitted, and cheerfully given an helping hand. For some little period of time, a suspension of royal grandeur might have added to such a plan; and a saving in the civil list of 500,000*l.* per annum, would have come with a good grace from the throne, as a father who had the welfare of his people at heart—true greatness does not exist in magnificence and ostentation!

The minister holds the funds as sacred, under the specious pretence of public faith; at the shrine of which he positively does sacrifice public liberty, and the happiness and welfare of nine million of people he offers up to the fane of rapacious usurers and stock-jobbers.

The armaments, within these twelve months fitted out, is another misjudged and unconstitutional stretch of Prerogative; they were undertaken on the score of Prerogative; that the power of declaring War and Peace, or even preparing for them, without explaining the necessity, is an exertion that the declaration of rights does not admit in respect to the first armament against Spain. It did too much, or too little; too much if the grounds of complaint did not warrant such a proceeding, and too little if the offending party

did not only give satisfaction, but make reparation for the expences accruing.

The last armament of enforcing a reconciliation between the Porte and Russia was such a farce, that even the chicanery of ministerial policy could not explain to the House of Commons. It has fixed the Minister as the Don Quixote of Europe, and the punch of a Prussian puppet-show! O, Policy, where is thy sting?—O, Britain, where is thy dignity?—You gave a vote of credit, without knowing its purport; and an address of thanks, for what you did not understand, to a minister who did not possess the confidence of the landed, trading, or commercial part of the nation.

The vote of credit for a million, or half a million, did not affect the country so much as the consequence of the armament did its commerce; it warped and threw a damp upon the trade of the country; it retarded the sailing of our shipping; it occasioned unprofitable freights, double wages and double insurance, and gave advantages to Holland, and other maritime powers, in the markets and trade that was in our favour. The questions remain—Have the Spaniards made the reparation? Does the Baltic, or the Levant, open more ports? Have we more privileges at Constantinople, Smyrna, or Alexandria? Will the Turks allow us to carry on the India trade by the Red Sea to the Mediterranean? I do contend that our trade with Russia, and the Baltic, is more beneficial to the trade and commerce of this country, than any other commercial situation; we obtain from thence raw materials, and send them back manufactured, with the advantage of five hundred per cent. in our favour.

The balance of power in Europe formerly was the bane of this country; to which false policy, so much English blood and treasure were sacrificed; this balance of power was to keep the House of Bourbon and
family

family compact within their limits; the affairs of France, Spain, and Austria, are now in such a situation as to free us from any alarm; yet this balance of power has taken a further stride. It takes in not only Europe, but Muscovy, Turkey, Persia, and Indostan; had the Russians taken Constantinople, it would not have affected Great Britain, nor, I may say, Europe; for if her ambition was not satisfied, her arms must have been directed to the East, and not to the West, and our interference may have a contrary effect to what was intended. Our treaty or league with Prussia, was certainly a ministerial and not a national treaty; a natural question arises, had we engaged in a war with Spain, did our stipulations oblige Prussia to march an army into Spain, or were we to receive any subsidy to carry on that war, or was it in the power of Prussia to assist us in any respect? If not, what advantages can England receive from such a treaty? It is hoped the Minister will announce, that Prussia bore part of the expences of the armament, as our interference in that business was owing to Prussian policy.

In the year 1786, Mr. Pitt proposed in the House of Commons, a plan of a new Sinking Fund, of a surplus in the revenues of one million, to redeem the national debt, and commissioners to be appointed, of himself and friends, to buy in stock for the same; however, this surplus was alienable in case of incidents, if the necessities of the state required it:—By this plan, the revenue of four million a year would accrue in twenty-years. Was this an object of efficacy?—by no means. In the same year Mr. Pitt proposed, and flattered the nation with the sale of crown lands, and surveyors had been appointed; but five years have elapsed, and we hear no more of that.—If a surplus of one million arises of the revenue this year, the next, and the next, can Mr. Pitt insure it for twenty-seven, without fresh taxes. Alderman Skinner, and others, proved in the House of Commons and in the City, that fifteen shillings in the pound was paid when the shop-tax was laid on, and that more could not be bore; and I

think I have made it appear, that sixteen shillings in the pound is paid out of the landed property.—Since 1786, many new duties and taxes have been imposed, as well as expences of government increased; it will, therefore, be incumbent on Parliament to interpose, without the chicanery of the Minister—but the etiquette of the house is such, that a motion of such a nature breaks in upon the prerogative of the Minister—for the Minister has his prerogatives as well as the King. If the revenue and expenditure is already settled, and no further taxes can be levied, how will the Minister provide for arrears in the civil list—Prince of Wales' debts, which must be paid—the Princesses' portions when married—the establishment of four more Dukes—an additional establishment for the Prince of Wales when he marries—future armaments, and a number of unforeseen incidents? The Minister's conduct is certainly a paradox, it being an extraordinary way to pay off the national debt, by increasing the national expences. The scheme of Botany Bay is one instance, supposed to be planned by an underling in office, and put into execution without authority of Parliament; an instance of ministerial prerogative, which a free Parliament would never allow: in the first place it is unnatural, unconstitutional. If a member of society is cast out of that society, he certainly has a right to have the world to roam in; Botany Bay is a partial slavery, which is against the constitution, if slavery is admitted; they might in this country be made useful by various means. I shall only mention one, rope yards should be enclosed near all the dock yards in different parts of the kingdom, at Liverpool, Bristol, Plymouth, Portsmouth, &c. The profit to the nation would be very considerable, besides a saving of the great expence of Botany Bay.—The progeny of these wretches—the male part of them, properly taken care of, would be a nursery for the navy—their lineage could be no objection to the Minister, who has been so ingenuous in bringing forwards men not less obscure.

The million a year settled by the Minister to redeem such an amazing debt,

debt, seems to be a delusion not meant to relieve the country, but to keep it involved; it was meant not so much to lessen the funds, as to assist and keep up the price; 2,500*l.* a day of real stock to be bought up, served as a salvolatile to keep up the spirits of the stocks from too great a depression; not but the Commissioners, that is, the Minister, on a great occasion, might keep up the stocks, by laying out 500,000*l.* when he pleases from the sinking fund, so that the collection, disposal, and administration of the public finances is totally in the Minister.—In the year 1786, stocks might have been bought up at 70 in 3 per cent Consols; however, a little patience will reduce them much lower. The French constitution being established, foreigners will prefer their security to England; public calamity will be the consequence. If the Minister can foresee this, to prevent his public disgrace, he must soon alter his political career, and contribute from his fear, what his policy, or principle, so many years hath withheld.

The good or evil tendency of the funds must be proved by the effect it has on the value of land; even the value of commerce must be tried by the same test, as long as our political liberty is dispensed to us by the despotic hand of a Minister.—Happy for Englishmen that our civil liberty is not in the power of a Minister, as our political liberty is; our constitution is the law, and our laws are the constitution. Errors have crept into the practice of the courts, but those errors are so connected with the emoluments and fees of office which prevent their amendment, and yet those errors, are not the errors of the constitution or laws.—The funds are no part of the constitution, but excrescences grown out of the ill habits and bad policy of Ministers, who have violated the constitution in its political liberty, under the banner of the King's prerogative of declaring war and peace, making leagues, granting subsidies, &c. Previous to the reigns of John, and Hen. III, tallage and subsidies were raised by the King's authority; Magna Charta and Declaration of Rights, took away every power of the crown over our properties, to affect our liberty, whether political or civil.

Prerogative was confined to declaring war and peace : this power was implied, but not positive, as the parliament have a concurrent restraining power in refusing the means ;—it is not positive, unless public confidence was so ; it therefore is plain, that the power of making war and peace belongs to the people, and the prerogative of the crown is only a virtual agency, and not a personal authority. What affects the landed property and its influence, is the means the Minister has of raising money by the funds, and mortgaging the public credit. King William, at the Revolution, found himself greatly disappointed ; and that prerogative, without the power of money, was only a bauble ; and his power as King, was little more than it was as Stadtholder. However obstinate Parliament was, respecting his prerogative, he found the means of cajoling them by other shapes, and entailed the curse of funding upon us ; the House of Brunswick here improved upon that plan, and compleatly done us up by the assistance of another fiend, in the shape of venality.

The funds, as they now stand, are mortgages upon the taxes, and no tax can be reduced till the debt for which it is mortgaged is paid off, or other commutative tax laid on ; supposing the minister makes his assertion good, of paying off a milion a year, for six years past, the interest of six millions at five per cent. is 300, 000 pounds, are any taxes to that amount taken off ? or is that sum carried on yearly to the sinking fund ? in that case a much larger sum than six millions in six years ought to be paid off, as a saving by reduction of interest encreases every year ; as this is a national business, parliament should invest the management totally independent of the minister, in case no other plan is adopted to pay off forty or fifty million at once.

A Comparative State of the Landed Property, with respect to the Tythes.

From what period to date the origin of Tythes is a matter that would puzzle my lords the bishops to ascertain; whether they found their prescription from the Mosaic law, or ground their claim on Apostolic institution, they are both erroneous; for judge Blackstone hath said, “if the title of the clergy to tithes rests upon divine right, though such a right certainly commenced, it certainly ceased with the Jewish theology”. By the same parity of reasoning, if they rest their title to tythes on the commencement of Christianity, it likewise becomes void by the nullity of papal authority. It is sufficient to observe that tythes are an imposition on the natural rights of man—a violation of this constitution, that does not admit any depredation on property, unqualified by conditional assent: however it is necessary to shew that tythes were imposed by a conjunction of power and mental slavery, and to prove its inconsistency, and how it is prejudicial to the landed property and general improvement of the country.

For this purpose a review of the early history of Britain, and likewise that of the Romans, as far as concerns their conquests over this country, may assist to suggest whence sprung the origin of tythes, and trace its progress so far as to establish or destroy their title.

The History of Britain, before Cæsar’s invasion, is so obscure that the particulars of its religion cannot be advanced farther than that they were pagans, and that druids presided over their religious rites; and that they offered human sacrifices: so far I can prove, having found a kind of Tumulus in the isle of Anglesea, in the year 1778, in which were bones and

blood

and flesh on an altar—underneath the ruins of another, an urn was found filled with bones that had been burnt, with a sacrificing knife of copper, a long bone to fasten a gown, and a small pin of metal, beautifully enamelled, ran through an ivory reel to fasten the coil; these were inclosed with the bones in the urn, the outside of the urn was gilt with silver: I conclude it must have been a female druid, it being their office to sacrifice—they believed in transubstantiation as the knife being inclosed was the instrument of their office.

Cæsar, giving a reason for his attempt on Britain, in his commentaries, says,—that in his former wars with the Gauls, they had received most of their supplies from the Britains: this proves there was a traffic carried on and an intercourse, yet Cæsar, again, says that he called together merchants from all parts who had trafficked with Britain, but he could obtain from them no intelligence of their harbours, their laws, their customs, their arms or their power. When Cæsar's resolutions were known, and carried into Britain by merchants and others, they sent ambassadors to him, promising hostages, with their readiness to submit; the Britains, he says, were much troubled at the sight of the gallies and motion of the oars—the Britains, it must be supposed, had confined their maritime knowledge to commerce only, it may be supposed that the Britains kept strangers from the knowledge of their internal policy, for the same reason as the Chinese do at this day---that they were not ignorant of the arts and sciences is clear from their use of chariots in war, armed with scythes to their axle-boxes, from their training their horses to war and using spurs.

This description of the Britains and Cæsar, may not be quite applicable to the subject of tithes, except it shews that the first origin of tithes proceeded from the Roman Conquest, at least in this country. When the Romans made any conquest, they exacted a tribute, and took hostages for

the payment; at first they thought this sufficient: this is what Cæsar did in his first expedition—in respect to such provinces as submitted to him; but when Claudius sent to make a conquest of the Britains, and troops were left to be stationary in different encampments, they not only exacted a tribute from the provinces as they overcame them, but likewise obliged them to bring a tenth of their corn into their camp and stations; without this the troops could not subsist; hence the origin of tythes, which appears to be purely a military institution.—From Cæsar's invasion to that of Claudius, was about 90 years. Nero succeeded Claudius, in whose time Arviragus was King in Britain, when Joseph of Arimathea and his brother came to Britain, and first preached the Gospel, which flourished til Dioclesian's time, A. D. 293. Britain being then under the Roman government, their churches were destroyed, their bibles thrown into the fire, and their priests murdered; Amphibolus, with St. Albans, and a thousand saints, were put to death by the Pagans at Litchfield, which derived its name from that action—Golgotha; or, the Field of Blood; or dead bodies. It is probable that those churches were built and endowed by the converts, and the priests or saints, as they were then called, were maintained in the manner that the Methodists are at this day. The Romans who governed, were Pagans; and it might be supposed as their government extended the druidical jurisdiction lost ground; not that the Romans ever persecuted for religion before the innovation of Christianity, and this massacre at Litchfield, seems to be at the instigation, if not performed, by the Romans, as Dioclesian acted the same part by the Egyptians. He was an enemy to science in general—and particularly to astronomy. The Romans possessed the government of Britain 150 years after Dioclesian, during which time the progress of Christianity flourished exceedingly. The Constantines were themselves converted; the Emperors wore the purple; when the Goths swarmed over Europe, the Romans fairly abdicated the conquest of Britain,—before they went Christianity was perfectly established, the clergy lived

in monasteries together : they received from the public treasury a portion of corn that was deposited there. The tribute paid to the Romans upon their abdication was dropt, but the tythes still continued, and became the property of the church : The ecclesiastical power of the Roman Pontiff had greater sway than the secular power ever had, for a title to the crown of England, required to be confirmed by the Pope. Before the division of parishes, the bishops sent the clergy occasionally to preach in the fields; but the tythes were not in them; but after the distribution of parishes, the tythes were located, and certain degrees of the clergy allotted to preside. It appears by this examination, if well grounded, that the imposition of taxes was not laid on by the assent of the people, or their representatives in parliament; therefore it is contrary to the spirit of the constitution, as existing at present, and any custom or prescription that counteracts the essence of a system, certainly requires a reformation.

There is no ordinance that establishes the right of tythes—unless that of the Council of Latran, in the year 1139, held under Pope Innocent the Second, assisted by a thousand bishops. It was there decreed, that tythes were of divine origin and institution, excluding and excommunicating at the same time, all laymen from holding or receiving any. I suppose my lords the bishops will rest all their zeal on the above decrees; but yet I must rely on the liberality of their education, to acquit me of impiety, when I say, the above decree was contrary to the spirit of nature and civil liberty; contrary to the agency of free will, and the utility of civil society. Had the church been satisfied with the primitive allotment of tythes, as a divine institution, their moderation would challenge respect; but when ambition, power, and temporalities became their object, as will appear when the subject of episcopacy and mortmains are examined, it cannot be a wonder that the laity fail in their religious duties under such examples.

The landed property being taxed four shillings in the pound, having had the burthen of the tythes before, makes 8s. in the pound ; 4s. in the pound being the valuation of all lay impropriations, for in this valuation not only the ground, but the labour, the feed, and the harvest, are included. This is far from being exaggerated---I made an experiment of a ten-acre field, which I let to a tenant for half-a-crown an acre---I took this field into my hands---I manured it and turned it into the finest agriculture, and sowed it with wheat. The tythe which in its rude state would have yielded but half-a-crown, paid to the parson twelve pounds---I beg the parson's pardon, he was only the vicar. The predial tythe made away to a relation of a bishop in former times, who always exposed it to publick sale, so that the church received no benefit from it : this abuse certainly merits a reform. The expences of this field exceeded the usual profits that year twenty pounds, which, with the profit to the church, gave little room for future improvements.

The mode of collecting these tythes is offensive and vexatious, and causes endless disputes. Common farmers are cruelly harassed ; no justice can be done to the land ; the land-tax, tythes, poor rates, and parish duties, oppress every one. Was every man at liberty to improve his lands without the drawbacks, what a garden would this island be ? Government must be supported, but the public debts ought to be cancelled : the church and its clergy ought to be handsomely provided for, but by a different mode to what it is at present.

Gentlemen of landed property in Parliament should exert themselves, and bring on the subject of tythes in a serious manner : the landlord, the farmer, the labourer, are all involved in the cause ; agriculture, and the happiness of the people at large, have an interest in this reform ; it is a national concern, and the future welfare of the country depends upon an honest exertion : tillage and agriculture, being of the first consequence in life, as it procures bread, is materially injured. I have heard of a gentleman, who had bestowed the living of his parish to an ungrateful incum-

bent, but repenting, in revenge, left the whole parish untenanted : and farmers often, from the same spirit, turn their tenements to grazing farms. It therefore is become a national concern, both in respect to common justice, as well as public policy, to annihilate the tythes, and substitute a handsome provision for the clergy, consistent with their order, and the dignity of their sacred function.

These are enlightened times of reformation, and every Monarch in Europe, not excepting the chief pontiff at Rome, submits to a reformation, when it tends to public utility. I quote the example of France, where lessons, very beneficial to this and other states, may be learnt ; not but the reformation wanted in this country may easily be accomplished, without the extremity of a revolution ; though the evil, in respect to our finances, is arrived to that pitch that no nation ever before experienced.

Here is an occasion for a minister to interfere, and to build for himself a monument, which the country would commemorate at their harvest home, *ave perennius*.—Mr. Blackstone having done away the title of divine right to tythes, and what has been advanced in opposition to the decrees of the council of Latran, that the origin sprung from a military institution, enforced by conquest and power, continued and established at a period when the present constitution was not formed, before the people were convened in parliament, when assent was neither asked nor obtained, it cannot be disputed, if tythes are any ways prejudicial to the public good, but a revision, alteration, and reformation may be made, without any violation of divine right. It appears, before the division was made into parishes, which it is supposed was in Egbert's time, the clergy lived together ; and the Christian doctrine being established, was first supported from the public stores and treasury ; but the sway they soon obtained over men's minds, frightened with the vengeance of heaven, and flames of hell, selling indulgencies and passports into heaven ; threw into their hands, not only the power, but almost all the wealth of the kingdom, which they divided and disposed of, according to their own pleasure.

Saint Urban, who flourished under Aurelius Antoninus, ordained, that the church might receive estates bequeathed to them, and that the revenues thereof should be bestowed by equal shares amongst the clergy. This was before the division of parishes: From this time, until the Conquest, neither the kings nor laws had any authority over them.

The advantages taken of men at their confessions, absolutions, indulgencies, and last moments, had such an effect in the earlier part of Christianity, as to throw immense properties, by wills and demises, into the lap of the church. The conversion to christianity became universal. Even the Welsh, among whom the Druids were retired, when they had a separate government, and had not submitted to the English yoke, did nothing, even in their civil as well as their religious government, without the concurrence of the Pope. In the year 940, Howel Dha, king or prince of Wales, perceiving the laws of his country to have grown into great abuses, sent for the archbishop of Menevia, and all the other bishops or chiefs of the clergy, to the number of 140 prelates, and all the barons and nobles of Wales, and caused six men of the wisest and best esteemed in every county to be called before him. They all met him at his own house, called Ty Gwyn ar Taf, that is, the white house on the river Taf; there they examined all the old laws and customs of Wales; to collect out of them such as were proper for the government of the country, retaining what were useful and profitable, expounding what were doubtful and ambiguous, and abrogating those that were hurtful and superfluous. They ordained three sorts of laws; the first, ordering of the king or prince's household; the second, of the affairs of the country and commonwealth; the third, of special customs belonging to particular places and persons. He caused three books of these laws to be wrote out, one for each province of Wales, N. S. and Powisland, which then was a province of Wales. He then caused the Archbishop of St. David's to denounce sentence of excommunication against all who did not observe them. When finished, the prince went to Rome, taking the archbishop of St. David's, the bishop

of Bangor and St. Afaph, and thirteen other of the wisest men in Wales, and had the said laws confirmed by the pope; which being done, and having emptied his purse, he returned home. In this account not a word is said on religion; this was in the clergy's hands, who most probably urged the prince to this pilgrimage and sacrifice to the pope.

William the Conqueror caused a survey of all the land in England to be made, which amounted to sixty thousand two hundred and fifteen knights fees, out of which the church possessed twenty-eight thousand and fifteen. This continued encreasing until Edward the First's reign, when they possessed near half the lands in the kingdom. Edward, fearing the church estate would grow too bulky, made the famous statute of mortmain, which not only affected the church, but all corporations; if, during the time of church government, reforms were thought so necessary, and accomplished, it certainly ought now, when public utility is, or ought to be, the standard of religious order, as well as political consideration. The subject may, with great propriety, undergo a public disquisition: as a fitter time cannot offer; the nation is embroiled in no war, embarrassed in no dilemma but that of distress, which this reform is meant to redress.

Henry VII. opened the door for the reformation which took place in the following reign. The barons were allowed to sell their lands; the people purchased, and, for the first time, came to have not only an interest, but a share in the constitution. It is difficult to say, whether avarice, lust, or ambition, were most predominant in the breast of the eighth Henry, each of which he possessed in the extreme. Martin Luther prepares the minds of men, by opposing the pope's indulgencies and infallibility: the king turns author, and defends the pope against Luther; but meeting with obstructions from the pope, respecting his divorce with Catharine, it fires him with resentment, he throws off the yoke, and the parliament join with him in abolishing papal authority. Henry strikes at the root, destroys the monasteries and abbeys, and sells their lands, which certainly were part of the mortmain.

mortmain. What the church now retain are under the same tencur, and liable to the same reform : they will not pretend to divine right as a title, nor claim the inheritance as a corporate body. Henry the Eighth left the reformation but half finished ; his appetite was gorged with the glut of wealth poured in by the sale of church lands. Had the country been so burthened with taxes, had commerce been so cramped with duties, and the national debt so great, without any other resource to pay it off, in his time, he and his parliament would not have hesitated to have disposed of all the church lands, and otherwise have provided for the clergy. The expediency of this reform rests upon the situation of the country, and the distress the state is in ; but the execution of it, I am sorry to say, is not, at this period, where it ought to be, in the parliament ; for not only the spirit, but the wisdom of the nation, is absorbed in ministerial influence, obtained and upheld by corruption, and clothed in mystery.

I wish not to throw any obloquy on the characters of the clergy ; it is their part to reprehend dissolution of manners ; it is from them, if our philosophy does not teach us, we are to learn, that in virtue we find happiness, as we do misery in vice : is it not from them then, we should expect an acknowledgment of errors in honest terms ? Will they not confess, that a distribution of benefices are unequally provided ? that bishops have too much, and curates too little ? will they not allow that twenty-six bishops in the house of peers is a dead weight against the constitution ? These are circumstances that must be taken notice of, to shew that the abolition of tythes, and the sale of church lands, are absolutely necessary for the salvation of the state. This immediately comes home to the relief of agriculture, to the flourishing of commerce, and in particular to the support of government :—besides this reform in their temporalities, there are certainly some political reforms necessary. The ecclesiastical courts are reliëts of popery, and unnecessary to the present constitution ; and their house of convocation, on every new parliament, a farce, inconsistent with the dignity of the constitution, whose authority is established in the King, Lords, and Commons. As the clergy are

are now become a dependant, and not a ruling part of the constitution, the principle of their convocation is certainly altered. National synods, under the authority of the Popes, or Legates, met independent of the King; but afterwards were summoned by writs, when subsidies were wanted, as they taxed themselves; and as they disputed those summonses, writs of convocation were issued, to secure their obedience to the King's authority. Such has been the origin of convocations; but since the constitution has put them on the same footing with other subjects, and their spiritual authority is not dangerous, it is a wonder that the force of a convocation is kept up; seeing that they are no longer instruments to stir up commotion, nor to enforce obedience from the people, administration should dispense with the convocation; and in this, as well as other things, a reform should take place.

That our government, or any government is immutable, no one will advance; but any degradation of liberty, is an approach to slavery; and in no pretence can that degradation be traced so strong as in the situation of the landed interest, and landed property in this kingdom—desperate evils require desperate remedies. It is in the power of the clergy to make noble sacrifices; no demand that they can make, that is not reconcilable to common understanding, and public utility, can be founded on any principle but priestcraft.

The greatest difficulty that will attend the abolition of tythes, seems to be the secular impropriations, they having become private properties, by the purchase of abbey lands, with the honors, privileges, and emoluments thereunto belonging; though there have been other means of alienating predial tythes from the bosom of the church, to the pockets of the laity; according to the constitution of the church so it is, and must be taken into consideration, to compleat this reform. It is said there are of these 384; to throw them into the general scale of abolition cannot be done, without some equivalent or compensation; to reserve to them the presentation of
such

such parishes, at first view, appears sufficient, as simony is contrary to ecclesiastical law; but upon examination, will certainly be not satisfactory. There are many livings in the gift of individuals, valued at eight or twelve hundred pounds per annum; this is reckoned a provision for a younger branch of the family, or the means of raising money by post obits, on the death of the incumbent, the value of which will be greatly depreciated, if the presentation is limited to government's stipend of two hundred pounds per annum, agreeable to the modification of the plan proposed.

If a fair value of the 384 impropriations should be calculated, and that paid by installments by government, it is feared the sum would be so large, as in a great measure to frustrate the full benefits expected to arise to the public from the pecuniary part of the reform; yet I think a general tax for this purpose would be cheerfully submitted to, for two or three years, as the permanent advantages obtained from it would put new life into agriculture, and a general improvement of the kingdom. I have no doubt but some happier expediency might be found to give general satisfaction in this respect. Where is the being that will not join in emancipating agriculture from the trammels of tithes? In vain does Commerce, fair daughter of Liberty, expand her sails, and explore far distant climes, if, on her return, she finds her sister Agriculture drooping under the unconscionable load of accumulated taxes:—in vain do trade and manufactures exert their daily skill, and supply the nation's traffick, if a tyrant minister can damp their honest labour with the curse of taxes:—much less will arts and sciences prevail; they are the proofs of a nation's happiness, and their hearts at ease. These are Saturnine times, and not the halcyon teats of peace.

The situation of this country can never resume its vigour, unless the landed property recovers its strength; the life and preservation of which is the source of its national prosperity, and the basis of its constitution. I shall now proceed to lay down the plan of this reform, thoroughly persuaded

persuaded that the possibility as well as utility of it, will, on some future occasion, be found as easy and necessary in the practice, as here laid down in speculation. I have pointed out the taxes; pointed out the ill effects the landed property feels from mortgages and usury, and its certain destruction from the trade of funds, that hydra, sprung from ministerial corruption, ever to be lamented as a devouring canker in the constitution; I have pointed out the tythes as a burthen, partial, and impolitic, and on the most laborious part of the community, originating in papal authority, and existing contrary to the established principles of the constitution; I have recurred to facts, and supported them with arguments from plain common sense.

Dr. Watson, bishop of Landaff, has made the following calculation, though considerably lower than Dr. Warner and Dr. Young; I shall follow Dr. Watson, who values the ecclesiastical preferments, or lands in mortmain, of the kingdom, as follows:

	<i>Per Annum.</i>
Landed estate of the University of Cambridge	60,000
Ditto Oxford	120,000
Bishopricks	120,000
Deaneries and Chapters	90,000
Livings	1,100,000
Total	<u>1,490,000</u>

If one million four hundred and ninety thousand pounds was set up to sale, free from tythes, at thirty years purchase, it would sell for	44,700,000
Which sum would purchase stock at 70 to the amount of	<u>58,110,000</u>

From

From what data Dr. Watson estimates his calculation, is of some consequence; whether from the present improved valuation, or from the records or original institutions, I know not. I have not the least doubt, from his abilities and character, that he is as candid as he is perspicuous; but, with the utmost deference to his lordship, I beg to observe, on the first calculations: in respect to the two Universities, they do as much justice to themselves, in making the most of what they have, as other people. I should suppose they lett their lands and premises on lease, and I believe the custom of the two Universities is so; if, therefore, the above calculation is made according to the present rents sett, the value is erroneous; for there is an advance or douceur given upon the lease.

The proportion of leases in Cambridge and Oxford—

7 years renewed—	1 years full profit, besides the rent.
12 years ———	2 years clear rent.
15 years ———	3 years full value.
17 years ———	4 years full value.
18 years ———	5 years full value.
19 years ———	6 years full value.
20 years ———	7 years profits, besides rent.

The foregoing proposition was not only a custom, but a regulation and an ordinance, made in Queen Elizabeth's time, in consequence of the great abuse not only in the universities, but colleges and diocesses; for before her reign, the deans and chapters granted leases as long as ninety-nine years, reserving the old rents, and enriching themselves by large fines, which occasioned the following ordinance, 13 Eliz. 10.

All leases, &c. made by any master or fellows of any college, dean and chapter of any collegiate or cathedral church, master or guardian of any hospital, parson, or vicar, or any other, having any spiritual or ecclesiastical living, of any

leases; lands, titles, being parcel of the possessions of said college, to any person, other than for the term of twenty one-years, or three lives shall be utterly void.

In consequence of the foregoing ordinance, the fines for leases were regulated. Whether Dr. Watson threw the lease fines into his calculation, or what the present custom is, I know not; it either fixes valuation, or estranges it very much. An explanation of the institutions of the several colleges would have been very satisfactory, which would have shewn what emoluments the colleges receive from the students, separate from the lands in mortmain, and from whence some judgment might be formed, to what an extent a reformation might be accomplished, leaving a sufficiency to support those seminaries in affluence, and with becoming dignity.

The bishops have, according to the calculation, 120,000*l.* per annum of lands in mortmain: they enjoy likewise the same advantages of setting leases for three lives, or twenty-one years; and, with the utmost deference to their lordships, when any lease relapses, a renewal is made at the accustomed, if not an increased, fine. This and every thing considered, makes it evident the property appertaining to the twenty-four bishops and two archbishops, amounts to the enormous sum of 150,000*l.* per annum. According to the king's books, they are set down at 21,111*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* These, with the immense patronage, are certainly against the principle of Christianity and moderation. I shall have occasion to enter into a fuller discussion on the episcopal œconomy and government of this country, therefore shall proceed to the calculation of what the deans and chapters enjoy.

Dr. Watson must have had a very laborious task to ascertain the lands in mortmain, which the deans and chapters possess; his estimation has been 90,000*l.* which, divided by 26, makes about 3460*l.* to each diocese or cathedral. Considering the great antiquity of the foundations and dona-
tions

tions appertaining to these colleges or cathedrals, it would be impossible, without a parliamentary inquisition, to come at the truth, as the canon law obliges prebends and others to take an oath of secrecy of such things as appertain to their colleges. I have had a great sight into their matters, by having in my possession a manuscript of the statutes belonging to the church of Litchfield, from the first foundation to the year 1631, the 7th of Carolus I. since which, or during the troubles, it came into my family; from which I shall collect what may be useful on this subject.

JURAMENTUM CANONICI.

“ Eg. N. R. ero obediens decano et Cpello Lich. in canonicis man-
 “ datis: jura et libertates Ecclesie Lich. defendam contra universos
 “ pro posse meo; statuta et statuenda et consuetudines antiquas et ap-
 “ probatas, cum ea vel eas noverim observabo; fidelis ero Ecclesie
 “ Lich. secreta capli non revelato; sic me Deus adjuvet et hæc sancta
 “ Dei Evangelica.”

The above oath is, I suppose, administered to the prebends. There are, or were, thirty one prebends: all, except two, which belong to the dean and chapter, are in the collation of the bishop. The rents belonging to all the prebends are, in the primitive or king's books, 394l. 5s. The farm to each prebend is particularly described, with what each was in the king's book; but as the value of many of them are esteemed an hundred fold to what they were in the king's books, I shall transcribe such variation, to shew that the above 394l. 5s. in the king's books, was worth, one hundred and fifty years ago, little less than 10,000l. per annum.

Thomas Laurence, Dr. Theol. Preben.—Sallows, Derbyshire.

A lease thereof was confirmed 19 September, 1550, made unto Geffery Edmonston, for ninety-nine years, but no rent mentioned in the act: the Earl of Shreshbury is

farmer thereof, and it is said the prebend is worth 300l. per annum.

In the king's books - - - - - 56 13 4

Valentine Overton, A. M.—Tarwin, Cash.

He made a lease of it for three lives, dated Postremo January, 1603, yielding 36l. per annum : it is said he had at least 300l. fine. It is esteemed to be worth 200l. per annum.

It is valued in the king's books at - - - - - 26 13 4

John Burges, M. D.—Hanfare, Staffordshire.

The prebend is estimated at 100l. per annum ; the farmers are, Mr. Stapleton, of Coventry ; John Dawes, of Litchfield ; and others.

It is valued in the king's books at - - - - - 14 0 0

Richard Lore, Dr. Theol.—Tashbrooke, Warwickshire.

Worth 60l. Valued in the king's book - - - - - 10 0 0

Stoket Entwich.—Flixton, Lancashire.

Worth 80l. Valued in the king's book - - - - - 7 0 0

Thomas Mild.—Bobinfall,

Worth 50l. per annum. In the king's book - - - - - 1 0 0

Joseph Hill, Bat. Theol.—Berkswicke Whittington.

It is worth at least 100l. per annum : Lord Paget is farmer.

In the king's books - - - - - 13 6 8

David Tuke.—Bishopshall.

It is worth 40l. per annum.

It is in *Libro Primitarum*, at - - - - - 2 0 0

William Rogerfon, Bat. Theol.—Stotfold, Staff. Litch.

Worth 100l. per annum. In the king's books - - - - - 5 0 0

At

At this day the prebendaries farms ought to be worth 10,000*l.* per annum. There is a long list of rents, another of farms, as well as a list of pensions due to the church. A long list of farms belonging to the dean and chapter—there is a list of farms belonging to the choristers particularly.

For wall rents let out by fee firm to Will Lord Paget L. 45 19 0

Altogether the land in mention belonging to the dean chapter, prebendary and church of Litchfield, ought to be worth 20,000*l.* per annum, allowing their value to be double to what they were one hundred and fifty years ago. Dr. Watfon would be confirmed of it, was he to see my manuscript of the statutes, &c. of the church of Litchfield. If the *Juramentum Canonici* is administered to the prebends and chapter, an act of parliament, or a *Quo Warranto*, can only make them produce their books; in respect to Litchfield, not only their receipts, but proper disbursements are fet forth in my manuscript :

Ecclesia hæc Merciore, quæ nunc dicitur Litchfield. furdata fuit. Anno Dom.

657.

The calculations of the land in mortmain, held by the livings, is, according to Dr. Watfon, valued at 1100,000*l.* there are nine thousand nine hundred and nineteen parishes; though St. Urban ordained, that the church revenues should be bestowed by equal shares among the clergy: that regulation continued no longer than the Roman government, for when parochial divisions took place, the rigours of religious severity relaxed among the pastors; temporalities became their object, which they here made a principle of their establishment; jealous in their distribution of things in respect to the world, but partial in respect to themselves.

The errors and corruptions of the church of Rome have been thrown off two hundred years; it only went as far as the tenets and ceremonies of worship,

ship, but in what respects power and temporalities our church retain with as great avidity as the protestant priesthood can maintain and usurp. If a resumption of religious government is in the constitution, as it most certainly is, as much as it was at the first reformation, an abolition of tythes, and a sale of all the mortmain lands may come within the consideration of the legislation. It appears clearly by the abolition, that agriculture will be much benefited—that the general improvement of the country will be the consequence; and by the sale of church lands, sixty million of the national debt may be paid, the interest of which would be a saving of near three million a year to the nation. I shall first state the annual allowance proposed to be made as a compensation to the clergy, according to their several degrees, so that their allowance should be handsome and unequivocal; not what perhaps will satisfy them, but what will be liberal according to every idea of reason. I shall expatiate on the three degrees, of bishops, parochial parsons, and curates, freely discuss their different merits, and proportion their maintenance accordingly, and then point out such means as may be sufficient to establish the same.

As a ground work to build this great reform upon, which I have not the least doubt will one day take place, I propose the following arrangement :

	Per Ann.
Archbishop of Canterbury,	5,000
Ditto of York,	3,000
Twenty-four bishops, 1,000 each, per ann.	24,000
Cathedrals, deaneries, and chapters, 1000l. each,	26,000
University of Oxford,	60,000
University of Cambridge,	30,000
Total annual allowance, to be paid by government,	<u>L. 148,000</u>

The parochial clergy and curates to have their annuities paid by a commutation land tax of one shilling in the pound, according to the present rents, which will be much more than sufficient, with a surplus for building a glebe-house, and church repairs.

It will be necessary to give some reasons for the foregoing arrangement; however futile, puerile, or speculative it may appear, truth will maintain its ground, and utility enforce its authority.

The crown has been stripped of many of its ancient privileges, old customs have been abrogated; many laws have been altered; the religion of the church of England has undergone a thorough change in its tenets, before the protestant doctrine was established: Can it therefore be a surprize, or a matter of sacrilege, if a revision and a reform should be planned, and accomplished in their temporalities? I shall first treat of

E P I S C O P A C Y.

Christianity was sufficiently established before the Romans had quitted England; before christianity, the Romans had their flamens and arch flamens, who presided over their religious rites, after the twelve apostles had ended their missionary, and the Romans themselves were converted, the government of the church, and of christianity, were seated at Rome: In Dioclesian's time they had a monastery at Litchfield, and several places of worship, but they were mostly destroyed. The conquest of Scotland was not so completely attained by the Romans as England, as the Picts wall is a proof; for as soon as the Romans departed, they broke down the wall, and committed such depredations on England, that they called in the Saxons to defend them. England was composed of twenty-three provinces, out of which the Saxons formed the heptarchy. The kingdom of Mercia, I take it, was the most considerable. The first bishop of Mercia was a Scotch-

man;

man; in the year 656, the second bishop was a Scotchman, and the third though an Englishman, had been a Scotch bishop. By this I should suppose that Episcopacy was established in Scotland before it was in England; before the bishops, abbots were next to the Pope's legates in authority, as they presided in the monasteries. About the year 730, Mercia was divided into five bishopricks; and Offa, a king of Mercia, about thirty years after, obtained from the Pope, that the bishop's see at Litchfield should preside over the others, with the title of archbishop. Twenty-seven years after the death of Offa, the archbishoprick was restored again to Lambeth.

However, the bishops were firmly established under the Saxons, acknowledging the Pope as their head; they had got possession, as has been observed, of near half the land in the kingdom, until the reign of Edward the first. When the mortmain took place, Henry the eighth abolished the abbies and monasteries, from which time church government has been totally with the bishops, only acknowledging, as matter of form, that the King, and not the Pope, was the supreme head of the church.

Whether episcopacy is of an Apostolick institution, and is claimed as a divine right, I shall not question, but am willing to admit, as long as our legislature thinks it proper that the government of the church should exist in themselves, as far as visitation, and injunction can preserve order: before the reformation, the authority was solely invested in episcopacy; but I find in Edward the sixth, and Queen Elizabeth's time, commissioners were appointed by the crown to make the visitations, and draw injunctions. In the tenth of Charles the first, Wright, archbishop of Canterbury, in his metropolitan visitation to the diocese of Coventry and Litchfield, in consequence of the dean and chapter's answer to articles of enquiry exhibited to them, gives them seven specific injunctions to be obeyed in the year 1635, and third of his translation.

The privileges of the bishops, as lords of parliament in their secular capacity, is what I wish to investigate; they sit there not as hereditary peers of the realm, but as guardians of the church, not as the constitutional parts of the three estates, not as part of the supreme judicature of the nation, for they cannot vote in the sentence of life or loss of member; and yet they gave their votes for carrying on the American war; but they were silent when the cause of the poor debtors was before them, and that was the cause of humanity, the cause of their functions. The voice of the nation loudly cry out that they are a dead weight in the ministerial scale; twenty-six votes, if under influence, certainly give prerogative a decided advantage against the constitution.—As they seem to be an heterogeneous part of the house of Lords, it is my opinion that the two archbishops should continue there, to be ready not so much to guard the church, but to answer what the house may require, with humility in their carriage, and simplicity in their doctrines, the real ornaments of the orthodox principle of the protestant church.—I have appropriated 5000l. per annum to the first primate, and and 3000l. to the second, full sufficient to maintain their situation with affluence and dignity.

In respect to the twenty-four bishops, I relieve them from any attendance in parliament, their seats there being totally useless, prevents them from looking after their flocks, turning their thoughts from their pastoral callings, to the temporal concerns of political habits. I have allotted them a salary of 1000l. per annum each; this, with their houses and palaces, as they are called, surely is sufficient for all the conveniencies and comforts of life. They preach abstinence, temperance, and contentment; there would be an opportunity of practising those virtues themselves, which they recommend to others; the title of lord they would drop, as it is a lay title, and certainly much inferior to that of bishop, and a title that was totally unknown to the primitive saints, and unassumed by any protestant, or even

catholic clergy, this day in Europe, and only a temporal title, appertaining to the upper house of parliament.

This self-denying advantage is not to be expected ; ambition, that fiend of human happiness, is as prevalent in the breast of bishops as in others ; for there is scarce one of them is satisfied with three or four thousand pounds per annum ; but they must possess a deanery or prebendary, or at least a living in commendam, besides their bishoprick ;—and the wonder is the greater, that if the origin of the archbishops, and twenty-four bishops are examined, there are not above six or seven whose prospects in life at their first entrance into the world was such, but that they would have compounded to have set down contented for the rest of their days, on a comfortable living of two hundred pounds per annum ;—but the evils of ambition are not in them, but in their advancements.

This reform should even go further than their revenues, for they hold an *imperium in imperio* ; they keep courts independent of the common law of the land ; their prerogatives are of a high nature ; all other courts are held by the King's authority ; the bishops' courts are not ; they issue writs in their own name, and not in the King's.—In the courts at Westminster-Hall, there are several judges belonging to each court ; but a bishop in his court is the sole judge, and he has the superior privilege of delegating his authority to another, which no other judge can do. These courts are the relicts of papal jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical censure proceeds to interdiction and excommunication ; so far, sometimes, as to influence the law. They have been very cautious in exercising this arbitrary power since the revolution ; but it still exists, and ought to be reformed :—their extent of jurisdiction is undetermined at this day. Our present metropolitan goes no further than some efforts to correct morality, or to form a prayer, in which he emulates the patriarchs ; for his prayer

prayer for the King's recovery was in their stile, much in the sublime, and attracted general notice. His lordship's elevation caused great discontents among the other bishops, all of whom thought their pretensions superior; one bishop, in particular, took it so much to heart, that he died a martyr to his chagrin; but it was his own fault, his propensity to politics which took a wrong direction, was his bane.

Having done with the bishops, I proceed to the inferior Clergy; and first, of

The PAROCHIAL PRIESTS, or PARSONS.

They demand a very serious consideration, as their reform includes not only the mortmain lands, but likewise the abolition of tythes. To place them in a situation as far from mean dependency as from the arrogance of luxury, is my wish, and should be the wish of every one who holds their sacred function in any degree of obligatory reverence.

I have allotted for the parson of a parish a salary of 100*l.* per annum, only, with the addition of a parsonage-house, and an acre of land, adjoining to the church, to be erected at the expence of the parish. I likewise appropriate to him as follows, fees for marrying, christening, and burying, to be regulated by an act of parliament:

			£.	s.	d.	
A lord of any degree, for	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Marrying,} \\ \text{Christening,} \\ \text{Burying,} \end{array} \right\} \text{each}$	-	10	0	0	
Baronet and knight		ditto	-	5	0	0
Esquire, or any one qualified for a commissioner of turnpike		-	-	2	0	0
A gentleman or freeholder	-	-	1	0	0	
Farmer	-	-	0	10	0	
Labourer or peasant	-	-	0	5	0	
Pauper, to be paid by the vestry	-	-	0	5	0	

The emoluments arising from the foregoing circumstances would be according to the population and extent of the parish ; and from thence the living more or less profitable, and contributed by the community, unavoidable as well as optional. In this situation they would enjoy all the comforts of life, enjoy the *otium cum dignitate*; the duties of every parish will be a pleasure, and no fatigue : the dreams of pluralities will not disturb their repose, nor envy empoison their minds, by a neighbouring parish affording any temptation to their wishes ; they would be the happiest of mankind—no unseasonable demand for taxes—no lawyers to fee, to support disputed titles—no tenants to rack or distrain for rents—no ill blood fomented by the collection of tythes, for even small tythes would be exploded : they are no more to consider the church as a freehold, nor to vote at any election, for it is too well known that they are under the influence of the bishops, as the bishops are of the minister, who are, and have been, upon every occasion, instrumental to him ; and through them there have been greater violations of the natural rights and liberties of mankind, than any other channel :

What ecclesiastic, or what man is there, who is not a slave, or void of reflection, that has the power of acting only by restraint, that would not wish to be without such power ? It is a free agency that constitutes natural liberty : this the God of Nature has given man, by endowing him with rationality ; and it is tyranny in the extreme for any man, power, or instrument, to enforce any restraint that is contrary to the laws of society. Freed from the power of restraint, the clergy should think themselves happy ; and being put into such a situation, as to free them from hope of preferment, and fear of resentment, is offering them contentment and happiness, in lieu of power and turmoil.

[I may be so unfortunately understood, as if I wish to put the clergy in a passive and negative situation : in what respects secularity, I most certainly do ;

do; but in what concerns respectability, — , and veneration, I would place them on the pinnacle of human admiration, not on the ground of mystery and inspiration, but on a simplification of their conduct corresponding with the duties of moral rectitude.

The Church of England, I hold, when free from ecclesiastical discipline, in its practical doctrine, to come home to human rationality more than any other sect of Christianity, free from the ceremony of Catholic imposition, as well as the canting rhapsody of fanaticks, or any other sect of schismaticks. There is, or should be, in all governments, a form in religious matters, which the executive part should not depart from; allowing toleration to be exercised, as far as it may not interfere with the established form, that is absolutely necessary to constitute the system of a well regulated government. This is my confession, as far as can be required from external form; the internal adoration of Divinity, proceeding from the emanations of philosophical enquiry, is, independent of habits contracted by education, or of doctrines imposed by tenets of faith, unproblematical, and unintelligible to the doctors, who are themselves confounded in their very attempts of explanation in every man's own mind.

The clergy, who are ready to join in the cry of any reform or discontent, on this occasion, I am persuaded, will thunder their anathemas against me, and, when it affects themselves,

Tuæ res agitur paries cum proximus ardet.

However, a general reform, at once, must occasion too great a consternation; it might be accomplished so as not to affect the present incumbents; when a vacancy happens, the tythes of that parish to be abolished, and the parish to be assessed one shilling in the pound; and the living would soon be accepted on the terms proposed: the glebe lands, or lands in mortmain to be sold, and stocks to be bought up. The reform to take place
in

in every parish as the present incumbent died, or was otherwise provided for, it would be a slow but certain method; the assessment of one shilling in the pound, according to the present setting. It would be in a Committee of the House of Commons to consider whether the parish, by their vestry, should pay the salary out of the one shilling in the pound assessed by them, or whether the assessment should be by government, and the clergy paid by the collector of the land-tax. This tax on the landed property is a commutation for the tythes, which they would submit to cheerfully. The parish would wish to have the nomination of their own clergy, but that would be attended with electioneering disputes; besides, it being an innovation upon prerogative for many years, certainly the patronage should be in the crown.

The next thing to be considered is some provision for the

CURATES.

Their situation is a scandal to religion and episcopacy, a shame to the parochial clergy who employ them, and a reproach to government, that hath not thought of some regulation in their favour—eight or ten thousand men, who have classical education, and admitted into holy orders, without any establishment, and exposed to a very precarious subsistence, without the least part of the great revenues of the church allotted to them, make them a very lamentable picture in society. The number of pluralities, and the pride of incumbents who have great livings, occasions an absolute necessity for curates to officiate for them; but if this reform should take place, incumbents should in general do their own duties, and nothing but age or infirmity would then necessitate assistance. Every curate, when ordained, should be registered for some particular parish, with a number of supernumeraries belonging to every cathedral, to be recommended by the bishop, as chaplains to the army and navy, and private tutors in noblemen's families,

families, when required. The parish curates should be residents, and the accommodation-tax of the parish should take them in, as well as the parochial incumbent, and allow the curate twenty pounds per annum. A school should be kept in every parish by the curate; he should study and teach the nature of the soil, and agriculture. Education would be according to what the parent could afford: a peasant can contrive to have his child taught to read at ten shillings a year, arithmetic and writing ten more; and such who could bear the expence of forty shillings a year, to be taught the classics. No school should be kept in the parish but by the curate. When the curate officiates for the incumbent, he should be allowed half the fees; if he reads the service or preaches, he should likewise be paid. If the incumbent agrees with him as an assistant altogether, he should allow him twenty pounds per annum; this, with his salary and school, I should suppose sixty pounds per annum, which would be a decent provision until they got a parish, or some other preferment. The supernumeraries upon the list should be such as could maintain themselves without the salary, until a chaplaincy or tutorship was provided for them.

I am led to consider the subject (of education), as the bias of a nation's character depends greatly upon it. Governments, whether monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical, require peculiar systems of education, adapted to each—in a democratic government, that has its base on an agrarian, or an equality, where a man's property is equally divided between his children, you know very little of peasants and labourers, agriculture is carried on by reciprocal assistance, and menial services generally by slaves, a carpenter may be the leading orator; a soldier who serves in the rank this year, takes his turn the next as leading captain: in respect to their education, it must be nearly equal, all have a little classical knowledge, but great excellence cannot be expected, because rewards are wanting, as spurs to emulation. I consider the spirit of commerce unfriendly to democracy, as it
introduces

introduces wealth, and wealth luxury and power, that are certainly enemies to equality.

Aristocracy, on the other hand, has for its base the feudal system, as they hold their properties from the King or Conqueror, as we find at the conquest under particular military services; so they let their lands to vassals, under such tenures, that subjects them to their lord's pleasure: under them peasants and labourers were as slaves, and agriculture had very little exertion, went no further than temporary necessity and conveniency. Education, at such a period, under such a system, must be very much circumscribed.

The clergy being the instruments to keep the people in awe and ignorance, arts and sciences were cramped, manufactories just budding, erudition confined to the clergy, and even their studies chiefly directed to Theology, which rather darkened than enlightened the understanding, wrote in a language the people did not comprehend, and explained in a manner unintelligible to themselves: education in aristocracy admits of no literature among the people—arts and sciences can have but little encouragement, though trade and manufactures may, as necessary to feed the luxury and pride of the aristocrats; but the most extraordinary kind of aristocracy exists in episcopacy, who, even in monarchies contrive to maintain an *impressio in imperio*; and it is difficult to say, which they affect most, wealth or power.

Monarchy is a third state of government; I mean absolute monarchy in a particular state; for in the general acceptation, a democracy or aristocracy may exercise monarchy over their conquests or colonies:—but monarchical government is the extreme of power lodged in one man, exercised by the sword; for without the sword it cannot maintain itself. The laws, the
properties,

properties, and the lives are in the monarch: I do not see that learning or literature are suppressed under monarchy, or cramp'd in any respect; but when it meddles with government: arts and sciences under monarchy ought to flourish, because rewards that stimulates them, are more liberally bestowed; but husbandry, agriculture, and manufactures, under monarchy, want that spirit of liberty to urge exertions, which can never happen when the fruits of their labour are not secured, but at the mercy of tyranny.

It is the spirit of liberty, abstracted from democracy, dignity abstracted from aristocracy, and limitation of power from monarchy, when combined together, constitute the completest system of a good government. The most perfect democracy now existing is to be found in America; there education is near equal.

The models of aristocracy are Holland and Venice; education there is partial, being maritime and commercial countries, the lower class of people have their biases inclined to a sea-faring life from childhood, and have little or no share in the government.

The most complete system of monarchy in Christendom, in my opinion, is Prussia, for there it is wove into the constitution, every subject, as soon as born, is enrolled a soldier, and a soldier is almost synonymous with slave:— he being solely an instrument of power: husbandry, trade, manufactures, arts and sciences, have their life or death at the caprice of the monarch; and education takes no part in the characteristic of the government.

The constitution of Great Britain was not originally formed according to the present system, but has grown by repeated reforms; some by accident, and others by the happy conjunctures of circumstances and times: in short, from a chaos of barbarity, ignorance and tyranny, into a constructure, little short of perfection. It is a model that the French are building upon, but they endeavour to correct prerogative on too broad a scale, and to

build on democracy without any materials of aristocracy. The foundation will not admit of opposite principles, without an intermediate cement, therefore cannot be of any long duration.

I have dwelt on a long digression, to prove the necessity and usefulness of parish schools; that the curates should from obligation, and not choice, instruct the parish he belongs to, as education in this country forms a part of its characteristic: that the lower class should be taught to read, by which they will perceive, that the conduct of Kings are reprehensible as well as their own; and that their situations may be envious by the highest: on this the liberty of the press is built, which is the bulwark of our boasted constitution, wherein the conduct of a duke may be animadverted by a cinder wench in a dust cart.

The education of this country builds a ladder for the lowest mechanics to mount the highest pinnacle of the church, the army or the law, and to arrive at the highest dignities that stand near the throne. You may find in a porter-house deep erudition; sound politicians, and critics, in the company of tradesmen and mechanics, delivering their sentiments with freedom, and without fear. This proves that education strongly marks the characteristic of liberty, the constitution, and country.

One shilling in the pound commutation tax, according to the present setting and value of land, will sufficiently support the parochial clergy and curates, without any trouble or provision from the administration.

I have appropriated 1000l. per annum for chapters, deans, and prebends. I confess myself ignorant of their necessity, as well as functions, but as they were attendances on Romish ceremonies, and as they are relics of Popish luxury, I must consider them as superfluities, that Protestant simplicity and moderation may well dispense with, as it is not my intention

to carry on this reform beyond œconomy in their temporalities, I do not wish to bring it home to ecclesiastical discipline. I have allotted 1000*l.* per annum to each cathedral, to be disposed of among them at the bishop's discretion; if he can do without them, so much the more to his profit.

I conceive there will be more difficulty in treating with the two universities, than all the other parties; they will plead charters, plead prescriptions, and call this a sacrilegious attack upon the great seminary of the nation. I will not enter into any discussion respecting their utility, but I will remind them, that their possessions are mortmain lands, and that the parliament and king can dispose of them as the monasteries and abbies were of old; and that other plans, if found more beneficial to the community, might be formed; but this I neither wish nor do foresee can happen. Dr. Watson has calculated the possessions of Oxford to amount to 120,000*l.* per annum. I have devoted these possessions to the use of the nation, and allotted to Oxford a commutation allowance of 60,000*l.* per annum. This immense sum, with the students' expences, is sufficient to support the university in affluence and becoming dignity. However, to shew that I am not ignorant of their supposed power, as well as their degradation, when they chuse to exert that power, on an independant authority, I here publish the following instance:—

Anno 1687-8.

The vice-chancellor of the university of Cambridge, was cited before the commissioners following, for refusing to admit Albion Francis to the degree of professor of arts, upon the King's mandamus, without taking the oath, having the King's dispensation for it.

Commissioners present in the Council Chamber,
 Lord Chancellor Jeffries,
 Lord Sunderland, President of the Council.

Earl of Huntington,
Lord Mulgrave,
Bishop of Durham,
Bishop of Rochester,
Chief Justice Herbert.

The persons who appeared before the Commissioners, and represented the Senate.

Dr. Jo. Peachell, Master of Magdalen College, Vice-Chancellor
Dr. Jo. Echerd, Master of Catharine Hall
Dr. Hump. Bobington, Fellow of Trinity.
Dr. Thos. Small, Fellow of Jesus College, Professor of Practical Divinity.
Dr. William Cope, Dr. of Civil Law, and Fellow of Jesus College
Mr. Jo. Bellers, Fellow of St. John's College, and University Orator.
Mr. Isaac Newton, Fellow of Trinity, Mathematical Professor.
Mr. James Smith, Fellow of Queen's College.
Mr. George Stanhope, Fellow of King's College.

The vice-chancellor pleaded the several statutes which enjoined the oath to be taken, and also to the jurisdiction of the college, the statute for taking away the high commission court, and all other courts of the like nature; and notwithstanding he gave some instances of persons stopt upon refusal of the oath, and King's mandamus on their behalf recalled, yet he was deprived of his vice-chancellorship, and suspended from his mastership of Magdalen College during the King's pleasure, and the profits thereof ordered to the use of the house, and Dr. Balden, master of Emanuel, was erected vice-chancellor in his stead, upon the order brought by Mr. Atterbury to Cambridge.

It must be confessed, that the foregoing instance was a stretch of personal prerogative in the crown, and a *quo warranto* still remains. I do not purpose that the crown alone should exercise its prerogative in respect to this reform, but that it should be the work and act of the united legislation, proceeding from absolute necessity, and for the public good.

I acknowledge myself ignorant of collegiate discipline, and of the necessity of their extent ; but I presume the first origin of our two universities, was at a time when men's minds were tyrannized by priestcraft, when theology was the general study, which was taught in Latin, and expounded to the vulgar in doctrines that conveyed terror and absurdity. The study of physic had likewise its imposition, as the doggrel Latin used in prescriptions, is a proof at this day. The laws of the land were likewise wrote in the Latin tongue ; the original of Magna Charta, is likewise in that language : the foundation of collegiate education rested on divinity, physic, and law : the English language had no concern in collegiate erudition : the English language was ever stigmatized under the appellation of the vulgar tongue ; and it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century, that it became an object of improvement ; nor did it arise to any degree of refinement and elegance, until the present century, when a Swift, a Pope, Steel and Addison, improved its barbarous system to a standard of purity. I do not perceive that the universities had any share in the revolution, or improvement of the English tongue ; but that they are even now wedded to scholastic pedantry, and the dead languages. It appears plainly, that collegiate education forms no part of the characteristic of our constitution ; therefore their æconomical reform should be regulated agreeable to their present utility.

Architecture, chemistry, anatomy, navigation, mathematics, indeed the useful arts and sciences in general, are attained without an university education. There are some, such as logic and rhetorick, ethicks, and metaphysics,

taphycks, that have their root there, which serve very little out of the colleges, to make mankind wiser or happier; and to keep up their forms, certainly a much less sum than two hundred thousand pounds per annum, might serve. The two universities, undoubtedly, have very little less income to keep up their establishments.

I should lament, if my remarks on the universities should be construed as an attack on literature or the sciences; or that the œconomy of this reform should warp the genius of erudition, by a narrow and illiberal encouragement or provision; yet, on free enquiry, a distinction may be drawn between profusion and parsimony; and I have no difficulty in saying, that the lights of genius have shone stronger and oftener from a garret than the over-fed stalls of theology.

The two universities became incorporated bodies, first sent representatives into parliament, in the year 1603, first of James the First. Oxford has four hundred and fifty electors; of doctors and masters:—Cambridge three hundred and forty, likewise in the doctors and masters of arts. In Oxford there are twenty colleges, and five public halls; professors and officers innumerable: in Cambridge, sixteen colleges, professors, and officers in great abundance. It must be observed, that the universities, if the chancellorship should be vacant, chuse the prime minister of the day. In 1768 the Duke of Grafton was minister, and was chose chancellor of Cambridge. In 1772, Lord North was chose the chancellor of Oxford, he being then prime minister. The present minister, Mr. Pitt, is member for the university of Cambridge. Whether the universities throw themselves under the patronage of the minister, to protect them in their luxurious situations, or they worship him as the mannon of the day, or both, is certainly matter of policy.

According to Dr. Watson's account, Oxford possesses in mortmain lands besides other advantages, 120,000*l.* per annum; which, divided between twenty colleges and five halls, gives to each 5000*l.* per annum. Certainly half the sum would be sufficient for maintenance and dignity; or if half the colleges were suppressed, would not the other half be sufficient to answer every end of such an institution? I am almost confirmed in this opinion, when I consider, that the pursuits of many sciences are in a manner taken out of their hands and direction: a College of Physicians, a Corporation of Surgeons, Royal Society, Antiquarian Society, academies for navigation, mathematics, and every other scientific branch, are propagated at the expence of a spirited and opulent public, whilst the universities that were originally framed for these purposes, are left to their luxurious ease, unobserving and heedless of all public calamities.

If I have misconceived the situation of the two universities, I certainly never was more mistaken; but if my description bears any analogy to truth, they are very proper objects to œconomical reform, as it has begun in the king's household, and in the public offices, I see no reason why it should not take place in every department of the state, the revenues of which might be converted to public utility, particularly to the great object of liquidating the national debt, to which every sinister, every interested advantage, should yield. I shall bear every obloquy cast upon me with patience and calm resignation, if a single hint of what I write will be considered in a patriotic view—whether this reform will be accomplished *in toto*, partially, or not at all, is not possible for me to say—I have endeavoured to point out the necessity, the rationality, and feasibility; I have kept as clear as possible from the discipline of the church, as well as the tenets of its doctrine.

That the landed property, agriculture, and husbandry, on which manufactures, trade, and commerce hang, suffer, and are greatly depressed, by
 taxes.

taxes, mortgages, funds, and tythes, is what no advocate for administration or despotism can be hardy enough to deny.

To bring relief from taxation is impossible, without a reduction of the national debt; and that cannot be done without a reform in parliament, without independency there, to curb ministerial influence.

The oppression of mortgages on the landed property cannot be removed but by a new code of laws, digested and secured by parliament; but where are the advocates to be found to combat the men of the law, who find their harvest in the oppression; or where is the power that can cope with the monied influence, supported by ministerial policy? The relief the landed property can expect from the evils that arise from the funds can only be looked for by a reduction of the national debt, or from a patriotic minister, who will make the funds participate in a full proportion of taxes.

The relief the landed property would derive from the abolition of tythes, must be obvious to every individual, and it must be an inveterate obstinacy in a minister who will not give his helping hand: was there a necessity to swell this work, volumes might be wrote on each article of taxes, mortgages, funds, and tythes; but it is sufficient for the intention, to shew the necessity and utility, to bring a reform home, where abuses and inconveniences are apparent.

A resumption of the mortmain lands will be a pill not very palatable to the bishops, and a retrenchment of their power much less so. Philip the Fifth of France excluded the Bishops from seats in their parliament, that they might have more time to attend to their sacred functions; but the reasons I have for the secession of our bishops from our parliament, are founded on a political more than a religious cause, as by their absence the
 constitutional

constitutional balance will have a chance of a more just equilibrium, and relieve them from a servile attendance, incompatible with their dignified occupation.

An economical reform in the universities is opening a field, I fear, for great controversy: it must be expected; but it ought to be considered that private advantages should yield to public utility. It cannot be supposed that these evils can be remedied at once; a complication of disorders, and some of them chronic, will require time and constant application; if there was once a beginning, we might say the work was half done.

About the year 1783, Mr. Pitt spoke in the House of Commons, on a reform of Parliament; Mr. Wyvil, a clergyman in Yorkshire stood forwards a great advocate for the measure, and corresponding committees were appointed in several counties; but at this juncture Mr. Pitt was taken into the administration, since which, his reform, Mr. Wyvil's patriotism, and the committees of correspondence was no more heard of; and nothing more appeared but a pamphlet with my name, on Parliamentary Reform, which was distributed about. I found myself out of pocket ten pounds, and the merit of my intentions was my only consolation.

Probably this reform will meet the same fate; however, it has employed my time, which otherwise would have been more tedious, it being for some years past sacrificed to the chicanery and delays of the law.

Doctors Commons is a Court Ecclesiastical, heavily complained of, it being a relic of Popery, and assuming an *imperium in imperio*, a spiritual court that punishes fornication, adultery, and blasphemy; determines cases of marriages, whether lawful or unlawful, and helps a man to get rid of his wife, when he is tired of her, if he has money enough to pay for it. This account I have borrowed, not being conversant in their practices; but I

know it is univerſally reprobated and deteſted : whether any emoluments would ariſe to the public by its ſuppreſſion, I know not, but the grievance and tyranny of it calls loudly for a reform.

Another nuifance to the public are the ſelect veſtries, ſprung from Popery, and ſupported by eccleſiaſtical tyranny ; men of the loweſt occupations aſſuming to themſelves an authority not known in any other department of the ſtate, they not only nominate, but perpetuate themſelves, and ſolely by their arbitrary will and pleaſure, make diſtreſs, and ſell the goods immediately. I have known them do this for a ſhilling, in an inſtance where they had no right to the demand, it being done in the name of Dr. Parker, of St. James's pariſh. The clerk of the veſtry, and a beadle, forced their way into a lady's houſe, and obliged her to give a ſhilling for the parſon : the lady frequented St. James's chapel, and paid a ſhilling there every Sunday ſhe went : in calling at the veſtry to know their authority, they reſuſed to ſhew any. The cheats and oppreſſions they exerciſe in every pariſh, on the uninformed inhabitants, ought certainly to be taken into this reform. Government has been compared to a delicate garden that requires frequent weeding, otherwiſe it will be over-run with evils. But who are to watch over the luxuriancy, or who to cheriſh the weak and oppreſſed ? The Great are above ſuch attention, and the caterpillars of office devour whatever comes in their way. Committees are too buſily employed to reward or remark the ſervices offered by voluntary individuals ; therefore they muſt ſeek, and be content in their own feelings, and find merit in their intention.

I hope I ſhall not be accuſed of impiety when I conſider the church eſta- bliſhment ought to be analogous to the military eſta bliſhment in a political diſtribution of government, in forming its ſyſtem of a conſtitution. The Officers of the Army, whoſe lives are ever ready to be devoted for their country, have their rights as Citizens almoſt loſt in the ſubordination of their Station the leaſt deviation from honour is puniſhed by a court martial ;

their

their education required to be that of gentlemen, their expences and habits of living proportioned to such a character ; yet what is their allowance ? when subalterns, Sixty or Eighty pounds per annum, only ; in such a situation, on such a subsistence I passed Seventeen years of my life, and after being a Captain, on One Hundred and Eighty Two pounds per annum for five years I was obliged to quit my profession, to satisfy my insulted honour ; which would be the case with hundreds had they the means of subsisting otherwise. I have the satisfaction to think that my services ought to have met with different treatment. What situation in the Church could be so very humiliating ? take a Subaltern's expences from his Regimentals it reduces his subsistence beneath any Curate, and his situation ten times more distressing.

I have put Parochial clergy, in point of allowance, on a par with a Captain, who has one hundred and eighty two pounds per annum : respectability in life depends, on both sides, more on their conduct than their stations. Generals, when they have Regiments, during the peace establishment have not One thousand pounds per annum. I have allotted each Bishop one thousand pounds per annum, besides his palace, and other advantages ; and I likewise think their stations in the State, considered politically, should be nearly equal.

The Right Reverend Bench may say that they are a part of the Constitution, and the Military are not ; if so, a standing Army is a violation of the Constitution, and the Bishops have been an instrumental part. The Right Reverend Bench will not say that the Parliament have no right to infringe the Constitution in them, by taking away the Mortmain lands and otherwise regulating them agreeable to publick utility ; if they do, they will join with me, that Parliament is not above law and the Constitution, but is only the Expounder and Protector of the Law : and yet we find daily that Parliament abrogate old Laws, and enact new, which shews that it is above the Laws and Constitution ; and therefore may without difficulty accomplish this reform, so very beneficial to the publick weal —

I have

I have mentioned the Military not that I am an advocate for a large body of Troops in time of Peace ; an innovation brought in at the Restoration. From Henry the Seventh's time to the Restoration, a period of Two hundred years, Fifty Archers composed the Standing Troops and Guards of this Kingdom in times of Peace ; but since the establishment is fixed by Parliament I think their situation very uncomfortable.

Lord Bolinbroke's observation on the French Nobility might with propriety be applied to English Officers, that on receiving their Commissions they become the Children of Tribute, and a Sacrifice to war—that the magnitude of their characteristic is comprised in making love, dancing and fighting, and should they acquire knowledge superior to these they might acquire what might be prejudicial to them.

The Bishops in every diocess being free from all temporal concerns should be considered as censors of morals and manners, which being represented by them to the magistrates, who would, by calling for securities, and by their authority reclaim them. Ecclesiastical censure should totally be abolished, and every concern of Religion be simplified to the meanest capacity. Forms and ceremonies, which cover the nakedness of publick actions, in respect to the church, should give way to truth and purity; and terror, which has been always held up to the people, should be exchanged for lenity and favorable constructions.

The Druids, according to Cæsar's account, by their office had authority over Temporalities as well as Religious matter; they had the power of rewarding virtue and punishing vice; they taught Astronomy, the nature of the world and power of the Divinity—Philosophy gave them wisdom, the enlightened age of Christianity cannot do more. The Druids, in publick and private life, used the Greek tongue, to conceal their learning from the vulgar. The early æra of Christianity likewise, for the same reason, taught Theology in this country in Latin, and to this day in the universities are the
same

same mystery—it is not given to Man, it is not given to Bishops more than other men, as they do not pretend to inspiration, to go farther than good works; and I have no difficulty in saying that every instance of power, luxury, or prehemency in Episcopacy, is a relict of Paganism and of Popery, inconsistent with our Constitution, which requires a simplification of all its parts. Whatever the Constitution may suffer in its liberty by Law, it cannot now be supposed to suffer by faith, for religious liberty reprobates every idea of Spiritual slavery—for where that exists there can be no liberty.

The view I have in offering my services to the publick is to open the eyes of all to the two greatest objects of national concerns; the paying off the National debt by the sale of Mortmain lands, and making the community at large happy by an Abolition of Tithes. To accomplish one or the other depends on a Reformation in Parliament, for wesee, the Representation not being independent, oppression comes with an heavier hand when Parliament is made the scourging instrument.

I am persuaded, I shall have it to lament, that my labours will have no effect with this Administration, who admit of no innovation but their own, yet my future labours shall not be wanting to give every information to the Publick, and awaken their jealous circumspection of Ministerial delusion. One thing is certainly allowed and applicable, as publick calamities and difficulties encrease remedies lose their efficacy, and honorable endeavours are stamped with reproachful epithets—but this can have no weight with the true Patriot—*Non vultus instantis tyranni, mente quatit solida.*

Never having associated myself with any opposition to Government, having no connexion with any courtier, I think myself, from my independent spirit, qualified, as far as my abilities, to give a fair and candid representation of the political as well as domestick state of the nation as any other subject; where I am deficient even my errors may awaken the genius

of more able advocates—whilst I live I shall annually repeat my admonition for a total Abolition of Tithes, a Resumption of the Mortmain Lands, an œconomical reform of the Clergy, and a spiritual reform in the Senate : that every constitutional question may not only have a fair debate, not to be done away by the order of the day, but by a division; that the country may see and judge who are the friends, and who the enemies, of the Constitution, uninfluenced by place or pension.

That this city, and indeed the country are divided with factions respecting the conduct of the Minister is certainly truth, and though at present it goes no farther than opinion it is still fermenting, and I foresee will not, in a short time, be kept within bounds of moderation. Ministerial power, or ministerial prudence, cannot ensure security when the minds of the people are so corroded, the poor with necessity and the rich with luxury and satiety—to such who look on human affairs with a philosophic eye, power loses its influence, pride its vanity, and even wealth its great consequence; truth appears naked, and affectation discovers its delusion: this strips the Minister of his mystery, the Bishop of his pageantry, and gives to reason its free power of action: the minds of men will then have their full exertion.

It is not only the duty but the interest of the Sovereign to keep the people as free from taxes as possible—the exigencies of the government is one thing, the Civil List is another; 500 000 pounds is certainly sufficient to answer all the dignity and grandeur of a Royal household—for some years past the income of the Royal Family has not been much less, all things considered, than 1400 000 pounds per annum. The Taxes being reduced to some moderation would enable the people to bear this burthen without regret—the Sovereign should be studious in courting popularity, and be satisfied that the love of his people will give him more satisfaction than the hoarding of millions, which in the end may be the cause of destruction more than safety—it is the misfortune of Kings, who are so surrounded with flattery, that truth finds no admittance, or reception in royal palaces.

If it is thought sufficient for a minister to establish his character in the senate by a Philipic speech, and to harangue in a Ciceronian style—If an annual charge from a bishop to his diocese is all that is required from him, if the price of a peerage is fervility, and if an enormous taxation in the time of profound peace, with a flourishing commerce, is the ultimate characteristic of this country, I have no difficulty in saying that all is delusion; and that we have only a counterfeit shew of liberty.

To encourage and maintain a division among the great men of the realm, and that the heir apparent should be in the opposition to the administration, has been the Machievallian politics these sixty years past, and which I pronounce to be delusion.

That it should be required that the friends of sovereignty should wear a red collar, as a badge of their attachment, was casting a reflection on those who did not bask in the sun-shine of Royal favour, and declared Royal patronage not general, but partial; could it then be a wonder that a standard of dress was erected in the blue and buff, in opposition to the moderate and rational part of the community?—they are both become the objects of laughter and ridicule.

Let it be remembered that when the late unfortunate king of Sweden erected the standard of despotism, he had a badge of distinction; all his friends wore a white ribbon on the arm—however despotism may reign over slavery, however high sovereignty may carry it over liberty for a time, the fate of the king of Sweden proves that.

FINIS CORONAT OPUS.





