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MEMOIRS
OF
THE REIGN OF
GEORGE III.

TO
THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT
ENDING A. D. 1793.

BY W. BELSHAM.

VOL. IV.

SECOND EDITION.

Beneficio quàm metu obligare homines malit; exterarumque gentes fide ac societate
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K. G E O R G E III.

THE established appellations of WHIG and TORRY, as descriptive of the two grand political parties which under these or equivalent terms of distinction will doubtless subsist so long as the present Constitution of Government shall remain, though greatly changed from their original signification, it would nevertheless be fastidious to reject. The gradations of sentiment and principle which mark their progress it is however of indispensable importance occasionally to specify. The principles of Whiggism may indeed in this respect be said to have gained a complete triumph over those of the antient Tories, inasmuch as the once favorite maxims of Toryism—passive obedience, non-resistance, and the divine and indefeasible right of monarchy—have fallen into general contempt. Nor can any doctrines bearing the most distant analogy to these monstrous absurdities be now maintained, without the use of such artificial and

ambiguous phraseology as, however magnificent in sound and show, shall vanish from the touch of reason as mists and vapors from the noon-day sun.

Agreeably then to the vicissitudes which have in a long series of eventful years taken place in the views and sentiments of the opposing parties of the State, a WHIG must now be understood to mean a man who, in addition to the speculative principles of liberty civil and religious which have descended to him from his ancestors, entertains a lively and well-founded jealousy lest the prerogative of the Crown should, in consequence of the prodigious increase of its influence, ultimately absorb the whole power and authority of the other branches of the government, and with them the liberties of the nation at large, in its vast and tremendous vortex. A modern Whig acknowledges and deeply regrets the improvidence of his ancestors in contributing, by the facility of their compliances, to the accumulation of an immense public debt, and the establishment of a standing army, both of which are yet in a state alarmingly progressive. He can scarcely forgive those extravagant ebullitions of loyalty which could sacrifice the most sacred principles of the Constitution to the interest or ambition of the reigning family, in prolonging by a most unjustifiable stretch of power the existence of Parliaments to a term of dangerous duration, and in furnishing to a Minister little scrupulous of expedients,

pedients, and regardless of consequences, the means of universal and unbounded corruption. Whatever palliations of the fatal system then adopted, the peculiarity of that Minister's situation, and the situation of the country at large in a political view, might then afford, had it was affirmed been long since entirely at an end; but the same system is nevertheless resolutely and uninterruptedly pursued, recovering Antæus-like from every apparent or accidental fall with renewed and redoubled vigor.

On the other hand, the modern Tories, although the descendants of those who long entertained a most inveterate enmity against the family upon the throne, and who from motives not of the purest patriotism vehemently opposed in the former reigns the unconstitutional measures of the Whigs, having at length entirely shaken off their old attachments, and being taken into favor and invested with power under the marked and too partial protection of the Court, suddenly became its open and zealous advocates—combining, as far as the spirit of the times would admit, the speculative errors of one party with the practical errors of the other. The necessity of strengthening the prerogative of the Monarch, and of supporting the DIGNITY of the CROWN, was from this time the incessant theme of their argument and declamation. Concessions and indulgencies were in their estimation things incompatible with the majesty of the regal character.

The high, harsh, and peremptory tone of AUTHORITY uniformly marked every act of Government under the almost constant predominance of this dangerous faction during the present reign, from the commitment of a printer, or the prosecution of a libeller, to those measures of provocation and oppression terminating in a war which rent in twain and had well nigh subverted the empire.

This party, now grown strong and confident by an unexpected return of prosperity, assumed with ostentatious audacity the appellation of the KING'S FRIENDS, in which novel capacity they hesitated not to give their eager and ardent support to those measures of Court policy which had been ever reprobated by the Tories of elder days as in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. The STANDING ARMY, so long the theme of their invective and reproach, was now affirmed to be necessary for the preservation of the national tranquillity; the public debt was pronounced a public benefit; the connection with Hanover was honorable and useful; the influence of the Crown was the happy means of consolidating the harmony of the different branches of Government; a long Parliament was said to be attended with no such inconvenient consequences as had been previously and erroneously apprehended; and every attempt to restore that equality in the representation, or rather to remove those glaring inequalities so inconsistent

sistent with the spirit of the Constitution and the practice of former ages, was opposed and rejected by them in terms of unbounded obloquy and detestation, as leading to nothing less than the absolute subversion of Government. They professed on all occasions their dread of innovation and novelty—not adverting to the constant declaration of the antient Tories, that the things to which they objected were themselves innovations wholly extraneous to the Constitution—and that they who merely wished to *restore* were most unjustly accused of a fondness for innovation, or a dangerous propensity to tamper with the Constitution by trying new and hazardous experiments.

Although the high and preposterous notions once prevalent respecting the AUTHORITY of the CHURCH had, in common with the old opinions relative to Civil Government, gradually fallen into disrepute, the Tories of the present reign have been invariably characterized by the strength of their attachment to the Ecclesiastical Establishment, which they are delighted to applaud and extol as a model of purity and perfection. Any suggestions of the expediency of a reform in the Church, whether in relation to the irregularities of its discipline, or the errors of its doctrine as exhibited in a set of obsolete and unintelligible articles of faith, are received by this class of men with a sort of horror, as leading to foul suspicions of sectarian heresy or

atheistical profaneness; while the Dissenters of all denominations are on the contrary viewed by them with eyes of jealousy and hatred, and assiduously held up on all occasions as the inveterate enemies of at least one part of the Constitution, and as the doubtful friends at best of the other: and every idea of enlarging the limits of the toleration allowed them by law, and much more of extending to them the common privileges of citizens, they have uniformly exclaimed against with affected terror and real malignity.

By these grand and leading features are the opposite parties of the present reign clearly discriminated; and whether these parties shall continue to be known under the established denominations of Whig and Tory, whether by the appellations of Court and Country, King's Friends or Patriots, is of little importance, so that the terms be distinctly defined and generally understood; although in different individuals these different systems will of course be blended and diversified by all the possible tints and shades of moral and political variety.

No sooner had the Whigs, after a long and laborious opposition, driven their antagonists the Tories from the helm, and found themselves in full possession of the powers of government and the confidence of the people, than, in consequence of the unfortunate misunderstanding and subsequent conflict of their leaders, they were again broken and
divided;

divided; and each division was under the necessity of strengthening itself by forming new and dangerous connections with their former opponents. On the secession of Mr. Fox, the Earl of Shelburne called in the aid, though in a somewhat covert manner, of the Jenkinson party; and when a fair prospect of supplanting that nobleman in a short time occurred, Mr. Fox scrupled not, to the astonishment and indignation of the kingdom, publicly to coalesce with Lord North and his numerous partisans. The Earl of Shelburne having been far more guarded in his previous declarations, as well as his subsequent political associations, escaped the obloquy which attended the more flagrant inconsistency of his once popular rival; who, by openly connecting himself with that individual Minister of the Crown whom he had so long and so successfully labored to vilify and disgrace, had for ever forfeited his claim to the flattering appellation of "the Man of the People."

On the dismissal of the Coalition Administration, Mr. Pitt, the head of the new Ministry, was in a manner compelled, like his predecessor Lord Shelburne, to admit no inconsiderable proportion of the Tories to share in the honors and emoluments of Government; and the nation, equally enraged at the Whigs and the Tories of the Coalition, willingly excused the re-admission of those Members of the Old Tory Administration who

could plead the recent merit of inveighing against the Coalition, and of opposing the India Bill of Mr. Fox.

From this mixture of Toryism in the new Administration, nevertheless, the most pernicious and direful consequences have ultimately resulted. The reign of the present Monarch has indeed been distinguished by a strange and dreadful fatality; and the deplorable infatuation almost invariably actuating the National Councils, and which has been productive of such mighty mischiefs, may well appear to the contemplative and philosophic mind—penetrating beyond the dark cloud which bounds the view of common observers—the destined means of accomplishing the grand and beneficent purposes of that wisdom in comparison with which the highest human sagacity is as weakness and folly. But these are reflections which more properly appertain to the province of the theologian than the historian.

After the division which took place on the address, and which terminated in the complete triumph of the new Ministry, the business which chiefly for a time occupied the attention of the House and of the Public, was the complaint stated by Mr. Fox respecting the conduct of the High Bailiff of Westminster, who had obstinately and daringly refused to make the return in his favor, although he had upon the face of the poll a majority of 235 votes.

Mr,

Mr. Fox, however, was not deprived of his seat in Parliament by this infamous procedure, being, through the interest of his friend Sir Thomas Dundas, chosen Member for the Borough of Kirkwall, in the Orkneys; on which occasion Mr. Pitt, in the height of his exultation, gratified his feelings by a sarcastical delineation of his antagonist, as a man on whom a sort of sentence of banishment had passed—who had been driven by the efforts of patriotic indignation as an exile from his native clime, and forced to seek for refuge on the stormy and desolate shores of the “Ultima Thulé.”

On the 24th of May a resolution was moved by Mr. Lee, late Attorney General, “that the High Bailiff of Westminster on the day upon which the writ of election expired ought to have returned two citizens to serve in Parliament for that city.” A violent debate ensued; and the previous question having been moved by Sir Lloyd Kenyon, it was ordered that the High Bailiff should attend the House on the day following. The sole pretext on which that officer rested his defence was, that having ground to suspect the validity of many votes taken in the course of a poll of six weeks duration, he had granted a *scrutiny*, till the termination of which he could not *in conscience* make the return. To this an obvious and decisive answer presented itself. The scrutiny is nothing more than a revision of the poll by the returning officer; and if such
revision

revision is not, and cannot be, completed previous to the period at which the writ is returnable, the officer is bound, by the nature of his office, and the tenor of his oath, to make the return agreeably to the poll as it was actually taken. For if vague presumptions of the nature now alleged were admitted as just causes of procrastination, elections would be thrown entirely into the hands of the returning officer, who, if gained over by the Court, might for any indefinite term prevent those who were obnoxious to the Administration for the time being from taking their seats in Parliament; and the representation of the kingdom would be thus rendered flagrantly corrupt, partial, and imperfect. Had the High Bailiff really felt those *scruples of conscience* by which he pretended to be thus embarrassed, the law of Parliament allowed him to include all the candidates in the same return, which would at once have transferred the task and burden of the decision from his own conscience to the conscience of the House. After long pleadings by counsel at the bar of the House on either part, the motion was renewed, “that the High Bailiff be directed forthwith to make the return.” To the disgrace of the new Administration, this motion was vehemently opposed, and on a division finally negatived—the ayes being 117, the noes 195. It was then moved and carried, “that the High Bailiff do proceed in the scrutiny with all practicable dispatch.”

dispatch." Thus was this business laid at rest during the present session; but the character of the new Minister suffered, in consequence of the part which he took in the conduct of it, an indelible stain. Though as yet of years immature and unhacknied in the ways of men, he was indignantly perceived capable with alacrity and eagerness to justify injustice, and to become an active and voluntary instrument of mean and insidious revenge.

On the 16th of June a motion was made by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge, and seconded by Mr. Alderman Newnham, both of them representatives of the City of London, that a Committee be appointed to enquire into the present state of the representation of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament. The measure itself had the concurrence and support of Mr. Pitt, though the new Minister professed in the usual language of Ministers that the *time* was improper; and indeed the motion appears to have been calculated and designed rather to embarrass the Minister than to promote the proposed object. Mr. Dundas, who had supported the former proposition of Mr. Pitt, luckily found a distinction which enabled him to oppose the present motion, without in the least diminishing his reputation for consistency. His objection was, that the Committee now moved for was a select Committee, whereas the Committee for which he had formerly voted was a

Committee of the whole House. On the division upon the previous question, the numbers were 201 to 127.

The grand business of the present session, however, was the arrangement of a plan for the future government of India. For this purpose, Mr. Pitt on the 6th of July brought in a Bill, founded on the general principles of that rejected by the former Parliament, and to which the Company had now given their slow and reluctant assent. By this Bill a BOARD OF CONTROL, composed of a certain number of Commissioners of the rank of Privy Counsellors, was established, the members of which were to be appointed by the King, and removable at his pleasure. This Board was authorized to check, superintend, and control the civil and military government and revenue of the Company. The dispatches transmitted by the Court of Directors to the different Presidencies were to be previously subjected to the inspection of the Superior Board, and counter-signed by them; and the Directors were enjoined to pay due obedience to the orders of the Board, touching civil and military government and revenues; and in case such orders do at anytime in the opinion of the Directors relate to points not connected therewith, they are empowered to appeal to his Majesty in Council, whose decision is declared final. The Bill moreover enacted, that the appointment of the
Court

Court of Directors to the office of Governor-General, President, or Counsellor in the different Presidencies, shall be subject to the approbation and recall of his Majesty. As to the zemindars, or great hereditary land-holders of India, who had been violently dispossessed of their property, and who, agreeably to the generous and decisive tenor of Mr. Fox's Bill, were to have been universally and peremptorily reinstated in their zemindaries, the present Bill provided only that an enquiry should be instituted in order to restore such as should appear to have been irregularly and unjustly deprived. Lastly, an high tribunal was created for the trial of Indian delinquents, consisting of three Judges, one from each Court, of four Peers and six Members of the House of Commons, who were authorized to judge without appeal—to award in case of conviction the punishments of fine and imprisonment—and to declare the party convicted incapable of serving the East India Company. These were the grand and leading features of the Bill, and the most transient observation sufficed to shew that the objectionable parts of Mr. Fox's Bill had been anxiously and completely avoided. The management of their commercial concerns was left in the hands of the Company, who were divested only of that political power which they had so grossly abused, and of that civil authority to the due exercise of which they were so manifestly

feebly incompetent. And this authority was not transferred to persons who like the Commissioners of Mr. Fox might attempt to establish an unconstitutional influence in Parliament, not merely independent of, but in direct opposition to, the regular and constitutional authority of the Crown; but in the effort to steer clear of the rock of Scylla, it was evident that Mr. Pitt had plunged into the gulph of Charybdis, and that by this Bill a vast accession of influence resulted to the Crown, already possessing a dangerous, formidable and increasing ascendancy over the other branches of the legislature.

Mr. Fox, with his usual powers of discrimination, attacked the weak and exceptionable parts of this Bill, although the utmost energy of his eloquence was found inadequate to excite the general attention of the public to the merits or demerits of the measure in question—prepossessed as they now almost universally were in favor of the Minister with whom it originated, and in whom they placed the most entire and unlimited confidence. Mr. Fox urged with great force and animation, that this Bill established a weak and inefficient government, by dividing its powers. To the one Board belonged the privilege of ordering and contriving measures; to the other, that of carrying them into execution. It was a system of dark intrigue and delusive art. By the negative vested
in

in the Commissioners, the CHARTERED RIGHTS of the Company, on which such stress had been laid, were insidiously undermined and virtually annihilated. If it were right to vest such powers in a Board of Privy Counsellors, let it be done explicitly and openly, and shew the Company and the world, that what they dared to do they dared to justify. Founded on principles so heterogeneous, how could such a government be other than the constant victim of internal distraction? The appeal allowed from the decisions of the Board of Control to the Privy Council was affirmed by Mr. Fox to be palpably nugatory and ridiculous. The Bill he had introduced, exhibited at the first blush the features of openness, fairness, and responsibility. The present plan was full of darkness and disguise. In a covert and concealed mode, an immense patronage was transferred to the Crown, which, instead of correcting abuses, opened a door to every species of collusion and corruption. It was calculated to establish an Indian government of the island of Great Britain. Against the clauses of the Bill respecting the zemindars, Mr. Fox entered his strongest protest. The zemindars ought, in his opinion, to be rated by a fixed rule of past periods, and not of a vague and indefinite future enquiry. The new tribunal Mr. Fox stigmatized as a screen for delinquents; as a palpable and unconstitutional

stitutional violation of the sacred right of Trial by Jury. Since no man was to be tried but on the accusation of the Company or the Attorney-General, he had only to conciliate Government in order to his remaining in perfect security. It was a part of the general system of deception and delusion, and he would venture to pronounce it a "Bed of Justice," where justice would for ever sleep. On the motion of commitment, the numbers were ayes 276, noes 61; and it was carried in triumph to the House of Peers, where, after an opposition vigorous in point of exertion, but feeble in regard of numbers, the Bill passed August 9, 1784. It was accompanied by a protest, in which it was severely branded as a measure ineffectual in its provisions, unjust in its inquisitorial spirit, and unconstitutional in its partial abolition of the Trial by Jury.

Amongst those who had chiefly distinguished themselves in the investigation of Indian affairs, and whose indignation had been most strongly awakened at the discovery of the enormous oppression exercised in those distant regions, was Mr. Burke. Agreeably, indeed, to the general cast of his character and genius, Mr. Burke's acuteness of research, and that extensive knowledge of the subject which he had acquired by long and indefatigable attention, was obscured and rendered in a great measure useless, and even
pernicious,

pernicious, by the violence of his passions, and the obstinacy of his prejudices. Not satisfied with exhibiting facts sufficiently atrocious in their own nature in the simple garb of truth, Mr. Burke was eager upon all occasions to impress the public mind, and heighten the general effect, by all the arts of rhetorical amplification and embellishment. So little of philosophy, however, entered into the oratory of this famous speaker, that the effect produced upon the public mind was directly opposite to that which he himself expected and intended. Amidst the blaze of declamation, and the thunders of invective, the ingenuous enquirer after TRUTH found it insuperably difficult to ascertain with precision those points on which the charge of criminality rested. To the most careless observer, it was apparent that in numerous instances facts were distorted and disguised; that the most invidious construction was invariably annexed even to the most indifferent actions; that every thing was seen through the medium of false and artificial colorings; that the dignified candor which gives weight to an accusation was wholly wanting. His calmness was settled rancor; his warmth the phrensy of rage and revenge. Mr. Burke had long singled out Mr. Hastings, late Governor General of India, as the object of his most furious attacks; but from the circumstances now enumerated, the feelings of the pub-

lic were in a considerable degree excited in his favor. Added to this, the successes of the late war in India, contrasted with the defeats and disasters sustained by the nation in all other parts of the globe, cast a certain splendor around the character of Mr. Hastings, who had acquired the popular appellation of the *Saviour of India*, while to appreciate the real merits of his long and eventful administration required a sagacity and diligence of research for which the inclination and ability were, to speak in general terms, equally wanting. Mr. Burke had also entirely lost the degree of credit which he once possessed with the public, by standing forward as the avowed advocate and champion of the detested coalition, of which he was indeed more than suspected to have been the original projector; although the bitterness of his former invectives against the late Minister Lord North could not be exceeded by his most virulent effusions against the more recent object of his intemperate abuse, Mr. Hastings. In a word, Mr. Burke appeared in the view of the public at this period, as a man of talents indeed, but totally destitute of judgment, and even of principle; who, actuated by pride, spleen, and ambition, affected to assume the elevated character of a CICERO, dragging a delinquent of the first magnitude—a VERRES, to public justice: while Mr. Hastings, on the other hand, was regarded as a man deserving

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ing highly of his country, and who had from secret and sinister motives become the unfortunate object of an unjust and iniquitous persecution.

Early in July, the Minister, Mr. Pitt, acquainted the House with the arrival of Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature at Bengal, who had been recalled by the King, in conformity to an Address of that House. Mr. Burke upon this remarked, that the resolutions upon the subject were originally moved and seconded by Sir Adam Ferguson and General Smith, who were not members of the present Parliament. The charge against the delinquent in question having already received the sanction of that House, it might be proper to proceed against him by impeachment. For his own part, however, he totally declined taking the lead in this business. What hope could he, a solitary and unassisted individual, entertain of success, when the Nobleman now presiding in the House of Peers had expressly declared, in relation to the reports in which the proceedings originated, that he regarded them no more than the romance of Robinson Crusoe? He therefore earnestly recommended it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the chief conductor and representative of the executive government, to enforce the resolutions of that House relating to Sir Elijah Impey. But Mr. Pitt totally, and in the most unequivocal terms,

declined any concern in the affair. This was not the only indication of a fixed determination in the present Ministry to discountenance all judicial investigation of the antecedent transactions in India.

On the 28th of July, Mr. Burke moved, That the House should resolve itself into a Committee, to enquire into the facts stated in the different Reports relative to India. He asserted, that his character was at stake. If, as had been suggested, the Reports were mere fables, they were indeed calumnies of the most bold and unprincipled nature, and he himself was an infamous calumniator. The two sets of Reports originating from the different Committees acknowledged as their parents Mr. Dundas and himself. The Right Honorable Gentleman had indeed seen the drawn scymitar lifted up to divide and destroy his offspring without discovering any symptom of emotion. But the spectacle was too horrid for his feelings. He wished to intercept the arm of the executioner, and to receive the bloody and flagitious stroke in his own person: "*Adsum qui feci,*" exclaimed the orator, "*in me convertite ferrum!*" In contempt of this flight of eloquence, Mr. Dundas coolly moved the *Order of the Day*.

Disappointed in this attempt, Mr. Burke two days afterwards brought forward a series of resolutions, intended as a foundation for an enquiry
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into the conduct of Mr. Hastings. On this Mr. Pitt rose, and asked, "How that House, as a House of Parliament, knew as a fact the transactions on which Mr. Burke grounded his motions? If the motions passed, from what office were the papers expected to proceed? To relieve the House from these embarrassments, he said, he should move the *Order of the Day*." This second interruption was more than the patience of Mr. Burke could endure. He affirmed the insensibility of Government to the foul enormities lately perpetrated, and still perpetrating, by our countrymen in the East, to be truly shocking. He deprecated the day that the knowledge of them had come to his mind. The miserable objects it exhibited, nations extirpated, provinces desolated, cities and countries overwhelmed in one mass of destruction, constantly dwelt on his imagination. The cries of the native Indians were never out of his ears; an impression of horror had seized on his mind, which deprived him of sleep, and night and day preyed upon his peace. The reality of the facts stated in the Reports had been impeached. Why then would not the men who denied them stand forward and support their allegations? Oh! what, said this impassioned orator, would I not give to find the scenes of horror there described nothing more than a fiction! To me it would be a discovery more precious and grateful than the discovery of

a new world. He declared, that he wished it for the honor of humanity, from sympathy to millions of suffering and helpless individuals, from an anxious desire to retrieve the honor of the House, and of the country at large, from infamy and execration. He conjured Mr. Pitt to reflect with seriousness on this business. The voice of India cried aloud for justice. He was at a loss, he said, how to account for the callous insensibility of the Minister, at a time of life when all the generous feelings of our nature are most lively and susceptible;—and proceeding in reflections very pointed and personal, he was loudly called to order; and still persevering in his exclamations and reproaches, was at length compelled to sit down, amidst the universal clamor and tumult of the House.

On the dismissal of this unwelcome business, the attention of the House was immediately transferred to a Bill introduced by the Minister, for the more effectual prevention of the practice of smuggling, which had of late years arisen to a most alarming height. This Bill contained various prudential, but somewhat severe regulations. The distance from shore, at which seizures should in future be deemed lawful, was extended, and the constructing of vessels of a certain form and dimension peculiarly calculated for contraband purposes prohibited. But by far the most extraordinary

ordinary part of the present plan was the reduction of the duties paid by the East India Company on the importation of TEA, which was affirmed to be the grand medium of the smuggling traffic; and the consequent imposition of a new duty on windows, already most grievously burdened, to the amount of the deficiency, estimated at no less than six hundred thousand pounds per annum. This was styled by the Minister a Commutation Tax; and the equity of it was defended on the general and vague idea that teas being an article of universal consumption, the weight of the tax would be compensated by a proportional abatement in the purchase of the commodity. Nothing however could be more fallacious than this statement, nor perhaps any impost more oppressive in its practical operation. It is obvious, that in large towns and cities, ground for the purpose of building being very valuable, houses are erected on a comparatively confined scale, and the number of windows is very moderate. But in small towns and villages, where ground is cheap, houses are for the most part constructed on a more convenient model, with ranges of offices, and windows commanding the court-yards, gardens, &c. contiguous to the dwelling. On these peaceful and rural retreats the tax fell heavily indeed; and the miserable effects of it are fully apparent in the multitude of windows stopped up

in farm-houses and other country residences, to the inexpressible injury of the ease, health, and comfort of a very great proportion of the community. But in the metropolis and other opulent and populous towns the tax fell lightly; and in consequence of the greater prevalence of luxury, the reduction of the duty on tea more than compensating in such situations for the addition of the new tax, this measure was applauded as a happy stroke of finance. A vigorous but unavailing opposition to the Bill was nevertheless made by Mr. Fox, who asked, what connection there was between an impost upon tea and an impost upon windows, to entitle the latter to be denominated a commutation for the former? He affirmed it to be the essence of financial injustice and oppression to take off a tax upon luxury, and to substitute in its stead a tax upon that which was of indispensable necessity. Spirits were a leading article of smuggling, and a luxury in common use, as well as tea. But would the Minister venture to pursue the commuting principle of this Bill to its full extent, and abolishing the duties on spirituous liquors, to impose another tax upon windows, and assign as a reason, that all men may be presumed or expected to drink rum and brandy in their own houses? The obligations of this kingdom to the East India Company, and the vast revenue we derived from the commerce carried on by them, had
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been much insisted on; but surely it was at all times easy, without having recourse to their instrumentality, to obtain the same revenue by the same means.

Mr. Courtenay, a member of the House, distinguished no less by the readiness of his wit than the vigor of his understanding, remarked, that the Bill now before the House was the counterpart of the detestable *Gabelle* or Salt-tax in France. There an impost was laid upon that article, and every man was obliged to take and pay for a certain quantity, whether he wanted it or not. As the present Administration had in other respects degraded the Commons of Great Britain to a level with the Parliaments of France, it was indeed perfectly consistent in them to introduce a similar principle of taxation. The Bill at length passed the House by a very great majority; after no very long interval receiving the royal assent; and it must be confessed, that in a commercial and financial view it has beyond the most sanguine previous calculation answered its intended purpose.

The remaining great operation of finance during this extraordinary session, was the providing for the arrears of the unfunded debt left at the conclusion of the war, amounting to more than twenty millions. This was disposed of partly in the four per cents. and partly in a newly created five per cent. stock, made irredeemable for thirty
years,

years, or until twenty-five millions of the existing funds should be extinguished. The taxes for the payment of the interest of this vast sum were, in the present exhausted state of the national finances, upon the whole allowed to be happily and judiciously chosen. It must not be omitted, that the sum of sixty thousand pounds was in the course of the session voted to his Majesty, to enable him to discharge the debt contracted in the civil list. This was the fourth grant for the same purpose since the accession of the present King. Much altercation arose on this occasion between the old and the new ministry, as to the precise period when this new debt was incurred. All however that the public at large could be fully certified of was, that with a civil list revenue of eight hundred thousand pounds, afterwards increased to nine hundred thousand pounds per annum, exclusive of the revenues arising from the crown lands, more than fourteen hundred thousand pounds had been voted within the space of about fifteen years, for the payment of the debts of the crown. And the stern observation of the famous MILTON could not but forcibly recur in such circumstances to the public recollection—"That the very trappings of a monarchy were more than sufficient to defray the whole expence of a republic."

The last measure which came under parliamentary discussion during the present session, was

a Bill

a Bill introduced by Mr. Dundas, and of a nature perfectly congenial to the urbanity and good humour, which, notwithstanding his political frailties, characterized that able and versatile Minister, for the restoration of the estates forfeited in Scotland, in consequence of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Mr. Dundas declared the measure to be in his opinion worthy of the justice and generosity of Parliament. He said, there was not one of the families comprehended in the scope of it, in which some person had not atoned for the crimes and errors of his ancestors, by sacrificing his blood in the cause of his country; and that the Sovereign had not for a long series of years past a more loyal set of subjects than the Highlanders of Scotland and their Chieftains. Of this the late Lord Chatham was deeply sensible, and that illustrious Statesman had publicly recognized the rectitude of the measure now proposed. And he trusted, that the remains of a system, which, whether directed at first by narrow views or sound policy, ought certainly to be temporary, would be completely annihilated under the administration of his son. He did not however mean, that the estates should be freed from the claims existing against them at the time of forfeiture. This might be regarded as a premium for rebellion. He therefore proposed the appropriation of such sums, amounting to about eighty thousand pounds, to
public

public purposes ; fifty thousand of which he would recommend to be employed in the completion of the grand canal reaching from the Frith of Forth to that of Clyde. This Bill was received in a manner which did honor to the feelings of the House. Mr. Fox in particular, with his usual generosity, bestowed upon it the highest encomiums, and professed himself deterred only by the lateness of the session, from endeavoring to enlarge its operation to what he conceived to be its just and proper extent. Nevertheless, when the Bill was sent to the Lords, it met with a most determined and malignant resistance from the Lord Chancellor, who expatiated with much satisfaction on that maxim of antient wisdom, which pronounced treason to be a crime of so deep a dye, that nothing less was adequate to its punishment than the total eradication of the person, the name, and the family out of the community. Happily, on dividing the House, this Nobleman was left in a small and disgraceful minority, and the Bill finally passed with that public approbation and applause it so justly merited.

An end was put to the session August 20, 1784, the King returning his warmest thanks to the two Houses, for their zealous and diligent attention to the public service. He predicted the happiest effects from the Bill for the better government of India. He spoke in terms of high commendation

tion of the laws enacted for the improvement of the revenue. He thanked his faithful Commons for their provision for the arrears of the Civil List; deploring, nevertheless, in the accustomed style, the *unavoidable burdens* imposed upon his people. He noticed the definitive treaty with Holland, and the peace concluded in India; and trusted, from the assurances of foreign powers, that the present tranquillity would prove of permanent duration.

In the interval between the prorogation of the Parliament and its re-assembly in the course of the ensuing winter, the nation enjoyed a flattering and delightful repose. Highly gratified with the recent change which had taken place, they viewed with unbounded complacency and confidence the Minister now at the head of affairs; and indulged the most fond and sanguine hopes, that under his auspices Britain would be restored to her former enviable state of prosperity and greatness: and the name of PITT, endeared by the recollection of all that can interest the feelings of a generous and grateful people, seemed anew consecrated to patriotism, to liberty, and to virtue.

Ireland, however, at this period exhibited a very dissimilar picture. The political tempest which had agitated that kingdom during the latter years of the late war had not yet subsided.

Much

Much had indeed been acquired, but much also yet remained to be done. The two questions which at the present juncture chiefly occupied the public attention, were those which related to the state of their commerce, and the state of their representation.

So long since as the 1st of July 1783, the delegates of forty-five volunteer corps had assembled at Lisburne, in the county of Antrim, to consider of the measures proper to be adopted, in order to effect a reform in the national representation. A Committee was by them appointed to meet at Belfast, at the head of which presided Colonel Sharman. By this Committee letters were addressed to many persons in the Sister Kingdom, most distinguished for their talents, their virtues, and their zeal in the cause of liberty, requesting their advice and opinion on this important subject; among these were the Duke of Richmond, Lord Effingham, Mr. Pitt, Dr. Price, and Dr. Jebb. The most remarkable of the answers returned to this Committee was that of the Duke of Richmond, who recommended with great force, and in the most decided language, the plan of **UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE**. "All plans merely of a speculative nature," this bold reformer affirmed, "had been found insufficient to interest and animate the great body of the people, from whose earnestness alone any reform was to be expected.

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A long exclusion from any share in the legislation of their country had rendered the great mass of the people indifferent whether the monopoly that subsisted continued in the hands of a more or less extended company; or whether it were divided by them into shares of somewhat more or less just proportion. They had been so often deceived, that they were scarcely now disposed to confide in any set of men. Nothing but self-evident conviction that a measure tended effectually to the recovery of their rights, could, or indeed OUGHT to interest them in its favor."

The meeting at Lisburne was quickly followed by an assembly of Delegates held at Dungannon, for the province of Ulster; at which the Earl of Charlemont, Generalissimo of the volunteer corps throughout the kingdom; Mr. Conolly, considered as the first Commoner in point of property; and the Bishop of Derry, brother to the late Earl of Bristol, nominated in the year 1766 to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, were present. The provinces of Leinster and Munster followed the example of Ulster—a NATIONAL CONVENTION was appointed to be held at Dublin on the 10th of November.

Such was the posture of affairs in that kingdom, when the Parliament of Ireland, recently elected, met on the 14th of October 1783. The Earl of Northington opened the session with a judicious

speech, in which he professed to anticipate the greatest national benefits from the wisdom and temper of the new Parliament. On the very first day of the session the thanks of both Houses were voted to the different volunteer corps of Ireland for their public services: and a farther proof of the independent spirit now prevalent appeared in the resolution proposed by Lord Mountmorres, and which received the sanction of both Houses, "That in the present state of the kingdom, it was expedient that there should be a Session of Parliament held every year."

On the 10th of November the National Convention met agreeably to their appointment. Of this formidable assembly the Earl of Charlemont was elected President. On the motion of the Bishop of Derry, a Committee was forthwith appointed to digest a plan of reform, who in a short time reported their opinion, That every *protestant freeholder*, or leaseholder, possessing a freehold or leasehold for a certain term of years of forty shillings value, resident in any city or borough, should be entitled to vote in the election of member for the same: That decayed boroughs should be enabled to return representatives by an extension of franchise to the neighbouring parishes: That the suffrages of the electors should be taken by the Sheriff or his deputies on the same day at the respective places of election: That pensioners
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of the Crown, receiving their pensions during pleasure, should be incapacitated from sitting in Parliament; that every Member of Parliament accepting a pension for life, or any place under the Crown, should vacate his seat; that each Member should subscribe an oath, that he had neither directly nor indirectly given any pecuniary or other consideration, with a view of obtaining the suffrage of any elector; finally, that the duration of Parliament should not exceed the term of three years. This report was received by the Convention with great applause, and resolutions to the same purport unanimously passed.

On the very next day Mr. Flood, long known by his able and eloquent exertions in the cause of liberty, moved the House of Commons for leave to bring in a Bill for the more equal representation of the people in Parliament. It now appeared that the Coalition Ministers, as yet in the zenith of their power, had formed a fixed determination to oppose to the utmost the encroachments of a dangerous and armed democracy, unknown in their newly assumed capacity to the laws and to the constitution.

Mr. Yelverton, Attorney General, declared that the question thus introduced did not deserve to be discussed, but that it ought to be regarded as an insult upon the House. If the bill originated, as it was notorious it did, with a body of armed men, they should decidedly set their faces against

receiving it. They did not sit there to receive propositions at the point of the bayonet. He entertained an extreme reverence for the Volunteers, for the essential services they had conferred on their country; but when they formed themselves into a political body, to discuss the modes of reforming Parliament, and to regulate the affairs of the Nation; when they would probe the wounds of the Constitution with the sword, he would be their most determined opponent. The question was now, Whether the National Convention or the Parliament of Ireland were to legislate for the country? What phænomenon was it they had so lately seen? Armed men drawn up in files, preparing the way for other armed men, resorting in fastidious pomp to a general assembly, and displaying all the ostentation of a real Parliament! Would they submit to this? Was it decent for Parliament to enter into any sort of compromise with this Congress? Were the Members of that House free in their deliberations while this Military Congress were sitting? No, it was necessary they should say to the Volunteers—"You have obtained a constitution and commerce; and now, instead of dictating to the Legislature of the kingdom, go to your own homes, change your attire, and turn your swords, no longer needed for the defence of your country, into plough-shares and pruning-hooks."

This speech, seconded by the efforts of Mr. Pelham,

Pelham, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and other zealous partisans of Government, was decisive; and notwithstanding the ardent exertions of the rival patriots, Mr. Flood and Mr. Grattan, the House at a very late hour divided—Ayes 77, noes 157.

Desirous to fix a still farther stigma on the measures of the Convention, it was immediately moved by Mr. Yelverton, “That it was now necessary to declare that this House would support the rights and privileges of Parliament against all encroachments.”

This resolution being carried by a great majority, an Address to the King was moved, expressive of the sense felt by the House of the blessings they enjoyed under his auspices, and assuring him that they were determined to support inviolate the present Constitution with their lives and fortunes.

In this Address the Lords concurred. A protest, however, signed by the Earl of Charlemont and four other Peers, was entered in the Journals of the House against it.

Mr. Flood reported to the National Convention, at their sitting of the 1st of December, the conduct of the House of Commons; but far from displaying any symptoms of resentment, or even surprise, they came only to a tame and unintelligible resolution, “That they would carry on individually such *investigations* as might be necessary

to complete the *plan* of Parliamentary Reform ; not adverting to their recent and unanimous approval of a plan of reform, which they now virtually discarded as incomplete. But their humiliation was yet more apparent in the Address voted on the following day to the King, on the motion of Mr. Flood, in the name of the Delegates of all the Volunteers of Ireland, “ expressive of their duty and loyalty, claiming the merits of their past exertions, and imploring the King that their humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the parliamentary representation of that kingdom remedied by the Legislature in some reasonable degree, might not be attributed to any spirit of innovation, but to a sober and laudable desire to uphold the Constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of their fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms.” This act of passive obedience and submission being ended, the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

So unexpected and extraordinary a termination of a business which had previously wore so menacing and formidable an aspect, merits some attention. The Convention probably did not at all expect a conduct so spirited and decisive on the part of the House of Commons. If they resolved on the prosecution of their plan, in direct contravention to the declared sense of the House, the most alarming consequences might be expected to ensue.

ensue. Exclusive of the personal risque which they must in that case necessarily incur as members of an illegal and TRAITOROUS assembly, they unquestionably neither wished themselves, nor was it by any means clear that their constituents were prepared to support them in any attempt to subvert the established government by force. The prospect of ultimate advantage bore no proportion to the certainty and magnitude of the evil to be encountered. Another consideration of the greatest moment was, that this Convention well knew they did not really possess the confidence of the nation, taking that term in its proper and most extensive sense. It was an undoubted fact that more than two thirds of the inhabitants of the kingdom were Catholics, who, if the proposed plan of reform had been adopted, would receive no benefit from it; and who were of course wholly indifferent as to the success of it. By some daring and decisive spirits it was indeed proposed at the provincial meetings, to place the Catholics in the new order of things precisely upon the same footing with the Protestants. This would indeed have given irresistible weight to the application; but men capable of cool and sober reflection, though firm and zealous friends to safe and moderate reform, were with reason startled at the idea of so novel and hazardous an experiment.—The notion of abstract rights, founded on a false

metaphysic theory, will never operate powerfully but on the minds of speculatists, who, remote from scenes of action and danger, “dream over books, and leave mankind unknown.”

The real practical enquiry with the generality of persons on this grand question of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, as it undoubtedly ought to be on all occasions of a political nature, was—What will be the EFFECT PRODUCED? And it was obvious that the recognition of this claim would at once throw the entire power of the kingdom into the hands of the Catholics; and no credulity could surely reach that degree of infatuation, as to expect a body of men so ignorant, bigoted and ferocious, as the collective mass of the Irish Catholics, to make a wise and temperate use of the power thus preposterously put into their hands.

To reform the Government and Constitution upon Protestant principles, and still to preserve the *Protestant ascendancy*, was all that, in present circumstances, the state of the kingdom would bear; and all that an enlightened benevolence would consequently aim to accomplish. A liberal and patriotic Protestant Government would undoubtedly relieve the Catholics from all positive penalties, and grant them a participation of all civil rights and privileges consistent with a regard to its own safety. And in consequence of the gradual and certain diffusion of knowledge
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under a mild and beneficent government, there was good reason to hope that the time would at no very distant period arrive, when all distinctions might be safely and for ever extinguished. The National Convention saw clearly the dilemma to which it was reduced; but they chose what appeared to them the least of the two evils, and rather than call in the aid of the great body of Catholics, without which their strength was unequal to the contest, they submitted quietly and tamely to the chastisement of that Government whose authority they had insulted, and in a manner deserved: incurring by this means the censure of the moderate for their violence, and of the violent for their moderation.

The Parliament of Ireland adjourned for the Christmas recess, on the 22d of December (1783). Previous to their re-assembling, that memorable ministerial revolution had taken place in England, which advanced Mr. Pitt to the helm of government, and the Duke of Rutland had in consequence superseded the Earl of Northington in the Viceroyalty of Ireland.

On the 13th of March (1784) Mr. Flood renewed his motion, as it was hoped by the friends of parliamentary reform, under more favorable auspices, the new English Minister having distinguished himself as one of its most eloquent and zealous advocates. Mr. Yelverton having been

for his recent services promoted to the high station of Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Mr. Fitzgibbon, who succeeded him in the office of Attorney General, opposed the present motion with equal zeal, though he allowed that as it now came before the House in a regular and constitutional form, supported by numerous petitions from different parts of the kingdom, it was entitled to respect and attention. On the second reading it was nevertheless rejected on a division, by 159 to 85 voices.

This final decision was received with secret satisfaction by those friends of reform who dreaded the emancipation of the Catholics, as an evil yet greater than the permanent-predominance of the present system of influence and corruption. But the murmurs of the majority were distinctly heard. The Ulster Volunteers, who had from the commencement of the business stood conspicuous in the van, presented on a subsequent occasion an address to their General, the Earl of Charlemont, expressing "their satisfaction at the decay of those prejudices which had so long involved the nation in feud and disunion—a disunion, which, by **LIMITING** the **RIGHTS** of **SUFFRAGE**, and circumscribing the number of their citizens, had in a great degree created and fostered the aristocratic tyranny, the source of every grievance, and against which the public voice now unanimously exclaimed."

exclaimed." The Earl of Charlemont, in reply, coldly professed himself "free from every illiberal prejudice against the Catholics, but he could not refrain from the most ardent entreaties to the Volunteers, to desist from a pursuit that would fatally clog and impede the prosecution of their favorite purpose; and besought them not to indulge any opinion which must and would create disunion." This answer being assiduously circulated throughout the kingdom, effectually caused, or most sensibly heightened that disunion which it professed to deprecate. The object itself seemed now relinquished in despair, and the triumph of the Court was complete.

The other grand object to which the attention of the kingdom of Ireland was at this period directed, related to the actual state of her commerce. The free trade granted to the Irish nation had produced none of those advantages respecting which she had indulged such sanguine and credulous expectations. The manufacturers, and lower classes of the people in general, were exposed to all the evils arising from the extremest indigence; and it began to be clearly perceived, that while the present system of commercial intercourse with England subsisted, there was little prospect of a favorable change in the situation of Ireland. While all English manufactures and commodities were imported at a trifling percentage

centage *ad valorem* into the Irish ports, duties amounting nearly to a prohibition were imposed upon the produce or manufactures of Ireland, with ONE very important exception, that of LINEN, on the importation into England. The general voice of the people of Ireland now loudly called for PROTECTING DUTIES, in order to foster the infant manufactures of that country, and to compel the inhabitants to consume the produce of native ingenuity and industry.

On the 31st of March Mr. Gardiner, member for the county of Dublin, in an able speech depicted the distresses of the kingdom, traced the cause, and pointed out the remedy. He contrasted the condition of the people of Ireland with that of the people of England. He asked, "What was the reason of so vast a difference? Were Irishmen less capable by nature of earning a livelihood than their neighbors? Was there any disadvantage in the nature of their climate, or was the situation of their country, a situation adapted to render them the general mart of Europe, such as to prevent their prosperity? No people were more laborious, more ingenious, or more active. There was not any branch of manufacture in which they were encouraged, that they had not carried to an high degree of perfection. If then the evil did not arise from any of these causes, to what was it to be attributed, but to the vast importation of
foreign

foreign articles, by which a home consumption was denied, and their manufactures nipped in the bud? Mr. Gardiner therefore called upon the House to copy the conduct of England, of France, and other commercial countries, by *protecting* their manufactures at home. From an adherence to the system now recommended, England, notwithstanding the pressure of an immense debt of two hundred and forty millions, had attained, to a pitch of greatness truly astonishing."

At the conclusion of his speech, Mr. Gardiner moved for an high duty on woollens imported into the kingdom.—This, after a very warm debate, was negatived by a vast majority; and the whole system of *protecting duties* ridiculed and reprobated as futile, visionary, and pernicious. At the failure of this second grand attempt at relief and reform, the disappointment of the people kindled into rage, and the short-lived popularity of the new Viceroy, founded on the extreme unpopularity in Ireland, no less than in England, of the preceding Coalition Ministry, was now in the space of a month—*a little month*—entirely at an end.

Such was the state of the metropolis at this period, that it was thought necessary to countermand the embarkation of several regiments destined to the East Indies, and to furnish the garrison of Dublin, consisting of about 4000 regular troops, with thirty rounds of powder and ball
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per man. Before the end of the session an address was unanimously voted by the House of Commons to the Sovereign, representing the distressed state of the kingdom, and praying for the establishment of a more advantageous system of commerce between Ireland and Great Britain; and on the 14th of May 1784 the Parliament was prorogued. The last measure adopted by this assembly seemed in some measure to calm the violence of the people, and to suspend the effervescence of their anger and discontent.

On the 7th of June an extraordinary meeting of the aggregate body of the citizens of Dublin was convened by the Sheriffs, in which they came to several important resolutions, declaratory of “the clear, original, and imprescriptible right of the people of Ireland to a frequent election, and an equal representation. They call upon the nation to unite with them in the measures necessary to its introduction, and in presenting petitions to the King for a dissolution of the existing Parliament. They assert, that the force of the State consists in the union of the inhabitants—that an equal participation in ALL the rights of a man and a citizen was proper, henceforth, to engage all the members of the State to co-operate efficaciously for the greatest general good. Finally, that it would be of the happiest consequence to the prosperity of the State, and the maintaining of civil liberty, to extend to
their

their brethren, the Roman Catholics, the RIGHT of SUFFRAGE *as fully as* was compatible with the maintenance of the PROTESTANT GOVERNMENT.

In an address to the people of Ireland, they propose the election of five delegates from each county, city, and considerable town, to meet in Dublin, October 25 next ensuing, in NATIONAL CONGRESS. On the 9th of August, Resolutions nearly similar were agreed to at a general meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Dublin; and a petition was also voted by them to the King for a dissolution of the present Parliament. On application being made to the Lord Lieutenant to transmit these petitions to England, his Grace without hesitation "declared it to be his duty so to do. At the same time he informed them that he should not fail to accompany them with his entire disapprobation, as they included unjust and indecent reflections upon the Laws and the Parliament of Ireland, and as they tended to foment fatal dissensions among the people."

The town of Belfast, distinguished much more for its zeal than its discretion in the cause of liberty, nearly at the same time voted a petition of a nature most extraordinary, and in the highest degree exceptionable, to the King, which they transmitted to Mr. Pitt, in order to its being presented by the Minister to the Sovereign. The prayer of the petition was, "That the King would
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be pleased to dissolve the present, and to issue the writs necessary for the assembling of a new Parliament, ACCORDING to the PLAN of REPRESENTATION which should be agreed upon in the NATIONAL CONGRESS of the 25th of October." Mr. Pitt in reply very calmly and forcibly remarked, "That he had undoubtedly been and still continued a zealous friend to a reform in Parliament, but he must beg leave to say that he had been so on grounds very different from those adopted in the petition. What was *there* proposed he considered as tending to produce still greater evils than any of those which the friends of reform were desirous to remedy. He had great concern in differing so widely on this subject from a body of men who professed to be guided by motives of loyalty and reverence for the Constitution: but animated himself by the same motives, and sincerely anxious for the prosperity and freedom of every part of the British Empire, he had thought it his duty to communicate to them his sentiments with fairness and precision."

Conscious of its strength, notwithstanding the extreme unpopularity of its measures, the Government of Ireland did not long content itself with a cold expression of disapprobation at the proceedings now in contemplation. The 20th of September had been fixed upon as the day for electing five delegates to represent the city of Dublin in

NATIONAL

NATIONAL CONGRESS. A short time previous to the intended meeting, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney General, wrote a letter to the Sheriffs, "expressing his astonishment at having read a public summons signed by them for this purpose—and declaring them responsible for such outrageous breach of their duty to the laws of their country, and signifying his resolution to proceed officially against them." The Sheriffs, in a consternation at this menace, refused to take any part in the business. After some embarrassing and delay, five delegates were nevertheless chosen, and a resolution passed, declaring the conduct of the Attorney General to be a violation of Magna Charta. The Attorney General, holding this resolution in contempt, actually filed informations against the High Sheriffs of various counties, for convening and presiding at similar meetings. Notwithstanding all obstacles, the NATIONAL CONGRESS met on the 25th of October (1784). After a session of three days only, finding their numbers on the return very incomplete, they adjourned to the 20th of January 1785; having previously passed several resolutions, importing, that the appointment of that assembly, and the steps that had been taken, were in entire conformity with the Constitution of Ireland.

On the same day commenced the second session of the Parliament of Ireland; and in a short time

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Mr. Orde, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, laid before the House, in a series of propositions, the grand commercial regulations digested, during the recess, into a regular system. There were two plans obviously and radically different, on which a permanent arrangement might be formed on the basis of equality—1. A system of mutual prohibition. 2. A system of mutual admission. The propositions, eleven in number, moved by Mr. Orde, were framed in conformity to the latter, and beyond comparison the wiser of these opposite systems.

An arrangement founded on the basis of mutual prohibition, or, in the more favorite and fashionable language, *of protecting duties*, would have been fatal to the great staple manufactory of LINENS imported into England, not only duty-free, but with the positive advantage of a bounty. On the system of prohibition Ireland would have been totally deprived of the Colonial traffic; and the city of Cork, the emporium of the kingdom, and the grand mart of the West Indian and victualling trade, would have been precipitated from the height of prosperity into the depth of distress and ruin. It would have amounted to a virtual declaration of national enmity and hostility; and there was good reason to fear lest Ireland should have sunk under the weight of so unequal and dangerous a competition.

tion. On the other hand, the system of amicable equalization was open to very plausible and even serious objections.

Such was the prodigious inferiority of Ireland in almost every branch of traffic, that were the high prohibitory importation duties repealed by England, there was but little ground to hope that Ireland would for many years to come find herself materially or sensibly benefited. It was urged by Mr. Flood and other Members in the opposition, that the greater object was now about to be sacrificed to the less; Ireland had asked for bread, and England had given her a stone; she had asked for protecting duties, and she was offered equalization; amid a parade of concession the real *desideratum* was withheld. This might be compared to the procedure of a certain company of strolling players, who advertised the tragedy of Hamlet, in which the part of Hamlet was by particular desire to be omitted. By the proposed regulations Ireland was indeed at liberty to send her woollens to Leeds and Halifax, and her coals to Sunderland and Newcastle. England would not suffer, even under the new system, the exportation of her raw wool to Ireland; but then Ireland was at liberty, when the quality of her wool was improved, and the price lowered, to retaliate, by prohibiting the exportation of Irish wool to England—and this was called equality. The starving woollen manufacturer of Ireland was

in the mean time left to perish; and if he presumed to complain, he was told that he ought to rest satisfied, for that the linen manufacture would under the new system flourish more than ever.

By the last proposition it was resolved, “ that whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom should produce above the amount of the regular peace establishment, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the EMPIRE, in such manner as the Parliament of Ireland shall direct.” This was inveighed against as a palpable collusion—an artifice by which a revenue was to be raised in Ireland, to be afterwards applied to the advantage of Great Britain. Had England, it was asked, ever entered into a war on the account of Ireland? Had she ever equipped a ship more than she would have done had Ireland been sunk into the abysses of the ocean? Were Ireland entirely independent of and unconnected with England, it was forcibly asserted that the Minister who should form a treaty of commerce with England on the foundation of these resolutions, would deserve to be impeached for sacrificing the essential interests of Ireland. In the heat and passion of debate, it was affirmed to be fortunate for Mr. Orde that he was at present in a civilized country; had he brought forward his plan in a Polish Diet, he would not have lived to carry back his answer.

Notwithstanding these reasonings and invectives, the good sense and moderation of the House were well satisfied with the concessions made by England, so far surpassing what the most sanguine expectation a few years since could have ventured to indulge. The propositions were received not only with approbation, but with joyful applause, and were ultimately ratified by a very decisive majority of the House. In the mean time the NATIONAL CONGRESS had continued its sittings almost unregarded. In a brief and final address to the people of Ireland, this assembly observed, "that if the abuses of former Parliaments did not inspire a distrust of those which were to come—if the venerable opinion of those illustrious men who were now no more, and the assistance of those whose present labors co-operated with them in the same pursuit, had no influence to awaken their fears, to animate their efforts, and to invigorate their hopes, this and every other endeavor must sink into oblivion; and they would shortly repose in indolent acquiescence, under such a representation as would gall themselves and their posterity with increasing taxes and oppressions."

After long delay Mr. Flood, on the 12th of May (1785), presented once more his Bill for effecting a Reform in the Representation, somewhat varied from that of the last year. A previous motion of the same senator, "that it be an instruction

to the Committee appointed to prepare the Bill, that no borough in the province of Connaught having less than forty, or in the other provinces having less than seventy electors, should be permitted to return more than one Member to Parliament," was negatived without a division. On the introduction of the Bill Mr. Brownlow observed, "that he greatly doubted indeed whether there was virtue enough in that House to pass the Bill; but whatever might be its fate, he would be bold to affirm, that sooner or later the reform so repeatedly denied WOULD and MUST be given." Mr. Flood remarked, "that when his first Bill of Reform was presented to that House, the objection was, that it was presented on the point of a bayonet—the *air-drawn dagger* of Macbeth had appeared to the affrightened imagination and conscience of the House. These apprehensions had at length subsided; a more favorable treatment might now therefore be reasonably expected. At least he called on the House to permit the printing of the Bill, that the voice of the public might be heard respecting it; and not, like mutes in a seraglio, to strangle it on that day while in the act of challenging a fair and free trial and discussion." The Bill was nevertheless with little ceremony rejected, on a division of 112 to 60 voices.

It is now proper to revert to the state of affairs in England. On the 24th of January (1785) the session.

session was opened with a speech from the Throne, the principal feature of which was the recommendation of the King to the two Houses of Parliament, "to apply their earnest attention to the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland as are not yet finally arranged." The first business which attracted the notice of the House of Commons was the state of the Westminster Scrutiny, which had now existed for a period of eight months. In this time two parishes only had been scrutinized—the result was, that 105 votes had been struck off the poll of Mr. Fox, and 87 from that of Sir Cecil Wray, the examination of which was not yet closed. Fifteen parishes more remained for future investigation, so that there existed but little apparent probability that the question relative to the return would be decided before the next general election. The miserable imbecility of what was now for the first time dignified by the appellation of the COURT OF SCRUTINY, was exposed in the most sarcastic and contemptuous terms. The High Bailiff had no power to summon witnesses, to impose an oath, or to commit for contumacy. The scrutiny was evidently a mere personal act of revision, and the High Bailiff himself declared that he acted under the sole authority of the resolution of that House.

Mr. Pitt, however, condescended to vindicate the proceedings of this mock judicature, and main-

tained with unaltered countenance, "that the expediency of the scrutiny was amply justified by the experiment." Mr. Fox, with generous and indignant warmth, replied, "that he well remembered the day when he congratulated the House on the acquisition of Mr. Pitt's splendid abilities; it had been his pride to fight in conjunction with him the battles of the Constitution; he had been ever ready to recognize in the Right Hon. Gentleman a formidable rival, who would leave him far behind in the pursuit of glory—but he had never expected that this rival would become his persecutor. He thought he had possessed an elevation of mind wholly incompatible with so low and grovelling a passion. He considered the present measure with regard to Westminster, as a *succedaneum* to expulsion. The case of the Middlesex election, so much reprobated, had at least the merit of being more manly; for the procedure now adopted accomplished the same end of expulsion, without daring to exhibit any charge against the person expelled."

The motion of Mr. Welbore Ellis, "that the High Bailiff do attend at the bar of this House," was at length negatived, February 9, (1785) by a majority of 174 to 135 voices. This being such a majority as by no means discouraged future efforts, a similar motion was soon after made by Colonel Fitzpatrick; this was negatived by a majority of nine voices only. And on the 3d of March, being a
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third time repeated by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge, it was carried in the affirmative, ayes 162, noes 124; leaving the Minister, and the veteran phalanx of courtiers and *King's friends*, in one of the most disgraceful minorities ever known in the British House of Commons.

Mr. Fox now as Member for Westminster moved to expunge the resolutions of the 8th of June last, relative to this business, from the Journals of the House; but the Minister, now seriously alarmed, summoned all his strength to oppose this attempt to redeem the honor of the House thus wilfully and wantonly degraded; and on a division it was carried in the negative, ayes 139, noes 244. Fortunately for Mr. Pitt, the public attention was quickly turned to another and higher subject of political discussion, in which he appeared in a light far different—such indeed as tended to revive in his favor all the former flattering prepossessions of those who viewed the late proceedings in Parliament with inexpressible regret and astonishment.

On the 18th of April (1785) Mr. Pitt brought forward his final plan for a reform in the representation, in some degree varying from his preceding attempts, and in all respects guarded, temperate, and judicious. “He rose, he said, with hopes infinitely more sanguine than he had ventured to entertain at any former period. There never was a moment when the minds of men were more en-

lightened on this interesting topic, or more prepared for its discussion. He declared his present plan of reform to be perfectly coincident with the spirit of those changes which had taken place in the exercise of the elective franchise from the earliest ages, and not in the least allied to the *spirit of innovation*. So far back as the reign of Edward I. before which the component orders of the representative body could not be distinctly traced, the franchise of election had been constantly fluctuating. As one borough decayed and another flourished, the first was abolished and the second invested with the right. Even the representation of the counties had not been uniform. King James I. in his first proclamation for calling a parliament, directed that the Sheriffs should not call upon such decayed and ruined Boroughs to send Members to that Parliament. For this discretion, as vested in the Crown, he was certainly no advocate; but he wished to establish a permanent rule to operate like the discretion out of which the Constitution had sprung—that the principle on which it was founded should be rescued from the accident and caprice in which it was unhappily involved. He wished to bring forward a plan that should be complete, gradual, and permanent; a plan that not only corrected the inequalities of the present system, but which would be competent to preserve the purity it restored, and give to the Constitution not only consistency,

consistency, but, if possible, immortality. It was his design that the actual number of the House of Commons should be preserved inviolate. His immediate object was to select a certain number of the decayed and rotten boroughs, the right of representation attached to thirty-six of which should be transferred to the counties, in such proportions as the wisdom of Parliament might prescribe; and that all unnecessary harshness might be avoided, he recommended the appropriation of a fund of one million to be applied to the purchasing of the franchise of such boroughs, on their voluntary application to Parliament. When this was effected, he proposed to extend the bill to the purchasing the franchise of other boroughs, besides the original thirty-six; and to transfer the right of returning Members to large towns, hitherto unrepresented, upon their petitioning Parliament to be indulged with this privilege."

The other most important particulars of Mr. Pitt's plan were the admitting of copyholders to an equality with freeholders, and the extending the franchise in populous towns, where the electors were few, to the inhabitants in general. The result of this plan was to give one hundred Members to the popular interest in the kingdom, and to extend the right of election to one hundred thousand persons, who, by the existing provisions of the law, were excluded from it. This was a very wise and excellently

lently digested plan, which did great honor to the framer; and the eloquence, ability, and vigor, with which it was supported, left no reasonable ground of doubt as to the sincerity with which it was brought forward.

The most important animadversion in the course of the debate to which this motion gave rise, was made by Mr. Fox, who, justly remarking "that government was not a property, but a trust," strongly objected to the idea of purchasing franchises of boroughs, which from their insignificance were no longer entitled to send Members to Parliament—"whatever was given for constitutional purposes should be resumed when those purposes were no longer answered." With this and some other less important exceptions, Mr. Fox bestowed upon the plan of the Minister a very just and liberal tribute of praise; and it yet remains a doubt, whether, upon the ground of *expediency*, Mr. Pitt was not fully justified in proposing that regulation which the more unaccommodating and decided policy of Mr. Fox disdained to approve.

On the other hand, the whole plan was reprobated and ridiculed by Mr. Powys, as "the mere knight-errantry of a political Quixote. It was an example, a precedent, an incitement, to the wildest and most paradoxical *nostrums* that speculative theorists could devise. They got by it what Archimedes wanted—a foundation for their inventions—
a fulcrum

a *fulcrum* from which they could throw the Parliament and Constitution of England into the air. He could not contemplate it with any degree of patience. He should not treat it, therefore, with the ceremony of calling for the order of the day; but as its purposes were so hostile to the Constitution, so menacing and unqualified, he would meet the question in front by giving it a direct and unequivocal contradiction. It cannot be supposed, owing to the superior force of such *arguments* as these, that on a division, after a long-protracted debate, the Bill was rejected by a majority of 248 to 174 voices.

In consequence of the very able reports presented from time to time by the Commissioners of Accounts appointed by Act of Parliament, Mr. Pitt in the course of the present session brought in three several Bills, for the better auditing and examining the public accounts, and for the regulation and reform of the public offices, which passed both Houses with much applause, and no material opposition. The balances of the Navy and Ordnance Offices were by these Bills ordered, as those of the Paymaster of the Forces by a former regulation, to be paid into the Bank. The antient mode of proceeding by the Auditors of the Imprest was abolished as wholly frivolous and nugatory, though the perquisites of the Auditors were estimated at no less than 34,000*l.* annually in times of peace, and during

ing the war they had risen to a height incredibly enormous. A new and efficient commission of examination and control was instituted; many of the inferior departments of office, or heads of service, were consolidated; and the whole now assumed the appearance of a regular and rational system.

The remaining part of the floating arrear of debt, consisting of navy bills and ordnance debentures, was now funded on five per cent. stock; and the interest, amounting to above four hundred thousand pounds per annum, was provided by fresh taxes; one of which, a tax on retail shops, calculated at one hundred and twenty thousand pounds per annum, proved singularly obnoxious. It was said to be, under a new denomination, neither more nor less than a partial house tax; and the whole body of retail traders were universally agreed, that it was utterly impracticable, for obvious reasons, to indemnify themselves by raising the price of their different commodities upon the consumer. By way of recompense or *douceur* to the shop-keeper, Mr. Pitt proposed, by a deed of unprecedented oppression, proceeding certainly from prejudice or inattention rather than any fixed malignity of design, to revoke and take away the licence from all *hawkers and pedlars*, whom he styled "a pest to the community, and a nursery and medium for the preservation of illicit trade."

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That this class of traders were engaged in, and derived their chief support from illicit practices, was a very heavy and serious charge, and ought to have been clearly proved at the bar of the House, in order to have justified a measure of such unexampled severity, and of a nature so highly penal. Far from being the *pests* of society, an impartial and disinterested person can discern in these itinerant traders, only an industrious class of men, who pursue an occupation perfectly innocent in itself, and highly useful to the inhabitants of small towns and villages, who would otherwise find it difficult to procure the various articles of merchandize with which they are thus occasionally supplied. Upon what principle of equity or justice any government could exercise the power of preventing these people from enjoying the fruits of their honest labor, and of devoting them to remediless ruin, it is surely difficult, or rather impossible, to discover.

Mr. Fox, struck with the inhumanity and utter indefensibility of the proposed regulation, generously and powerfully pleaded, in conjunction with Mr. Dempster, Mr. Courtney, and other Gentlemen, though with very incomplete success, in behalf of this friendless and unprotected description of men. In the result, the prohibition was changed to a heavy duty, which combined with other severe restrictions would, *it was hoped*, effect the same ultimate

timate purpose. "Had we been informed," says a very intelligent and truly philanthropic writer (Lord Gardenstone,) speaking of this prohibitory regulation, "that Nadir Sha, or any other oriental despot, had invented a tax for the purpose of exterminating the object of it; we should naturally have exclaimed, that this was the extremity of oppression." The principle of this Bill was in the course of the debate truly affirmed by Mr. Dempster to be no less iniquitous than that of the expulsion of the Moriscoes from Spain, or of the Huguenots from France.

But the subject which chiefly engaged the attention of Parliament during the present session was, the projected plan of commercial intercourse with Ireland. In the opening of this important business, Mr. Pitt made some excellent observations on "the species of policy which had been long exercised by the English government in regard to Ireland, the object of which was, to debar her from the enjoyment and use of her own resources, and to make her completely subservient to the interest and opulence of this country. Some relaxation of this system had taken place indeed at an early period of the present century;—more had been done in the reign of King George II. but it was not till within a very few years that the system had been completely reversed. Still however the future intercourse between the two kingdoms

doms remained for legislative wisdom to arrange, and the PROPOSITIONS moved by Mr. Orde in the Irish Parliament, and ratified by that assembly, held out, he said, a system liberal, beneficial, and permanent *. If the question should be asked, whether,

* These famous Propositions, eleven in number, were in purport and substance, and divested of their technical form, as follows:

I. That it is the opinion of this Committee, that it is highly important to the general interest of the British empire, that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland be encouraged and extended as much as possible, and for that purpose, that the intercourse and commerce be finally settled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. That all articles, *not* the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, should be imported into each kingdom from the other, reciprocally, at the same duties to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their product; and that all duties originally paid on the importation into either country respectively, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other.

III. That no prohibition should exist in either country against the importation of any article of the other, and that the duty on importation should be precisely the same in both countries, except where an addition may be necessary in consequence of an internal duty on any such article of its own consumption.

IV. That where the duties on articles of the product of either country are different on the importation into the other, they should be reduced where they are highest to the amount payable in the other; and that all such articles should be exportable from the kingdom into which they shall be imported as free from

whether, under the accumulation of our heavy taxes, it would be wise to equalize the duties, and to enable a country free from those taxes to meet us in their own market and in ours, he would answer, that Ireland, with an independent Legislature, would no longer submit to be treated with inferiority. A great and generous effort was to be made by this country, and we were to choose
between

from duty, as the similar commodities or home manufacture of the same kingdom.

V. That in all cases where either kingdom shall charge articles of its own consumption with an internal duty; the same articles, when imported from the other, may be charged with a duty adequate to countervail the internal duty.

VI. That no prohibition or new duty shall hereafter be imposed in either kingdom on the *importation* of any article the product of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to countervail the duties on internal consumption.

VII. That no prohibitions or new duties shall be hereafter imposed on the *exportation* of any article of native growth, except such as either kingdom may think expedient from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuit; and also, except where there now exists any prohibition not reciprocal, or duty not equal; in every such case, the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raised so as to make them equal.

VIII. That no bounties whatever should be payable in either kingdom on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensation for duties paid; and that no bounty should be granted in Ireland on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations,
tions,

between inevitable alternatives. Our manufactures however were so decidedly superior to theirs, that the immunities proposed would be in fact, and for many years to come, productive of little alteration. It would require time for the acquisition of both capital and skill; and as these increased, the difference between the price of labor there and in this country would be incessantly diminishing. After all, there might, he admitted, be some branches of manufacture in which Ireland might rival and perhaps excel England. But

tions, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Britain; or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation for duties paid internally, over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

IX. That the importation of articles from foreign States should be regulated in each kingdom, so as to afford an effectual preference to similar articles of the growth and produce of the other.

X. That it is essential to the commercial interests of Ireland, to prevent as much as possible an accumulation of national debt; that therefore it is highly expedient that the annual revenue of this kingdom shall be made equal to its annual expence.

XI. That whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom, after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks, shall produce above the sum of six hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds in each year of peace, wherein the annual revenue shall equal the annual expence, and in each year of war, without regard to such equality, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the empire, in such manner as the Parliament of Ireland shall direct.

this ought not to give us pain. We must calculate from general and not from partial views. Above all, we should learn not to regard Ireland with an eye of jealousy. It required little philosophy to reconcile us to a competition which would give us a rich customer instead of a poor one. The prosperity of the sister kingdom would be a fresh and inexhaustible source of opulence to us."

These comprehensive and liberal ideas, so opposite to the wisdom and policy of past ages, were on this great and interesting occasion received by the British House of Commons with general complacency and approbation, and by the Public at large with apparent tranquillity and acquiescence. The vastness of the plan, and the multiplicity and complexity of the objects which it embraced, seemed to keep the public mind in a kind of suspense; and for near a month after its first introduction, there were no indications discernible of serious or determined opposition. Mr. Fox, indeed, at the onset of the business, commenced the attack, by sarcastically observing, that by far the greater part of Mr. Pitt's speech was little else than a reply to that of Mr. Orde in the Irish House of Commons. In Ireland, the Propositions had been stated as in the highest degree advantageous to that country; as rendering it the emporium of Europe, and the source and supply of the British markets. Here the great recommendation

mendation of the system was, that the benefits accruing to Ireland were, if not wholly visionary, at best trivial and remote;—that Ireland could not rival England;—that she was poor and feeble, and would very long in all probability remain so. He must, however, do Mr. Orde the justice to acknowledge, that his arguments were far the most solid and convincing. As to the report of the Privy Council, to whom the consideration of this business had been previously referred, Mr. Fox remarked, “that a question which appeared to him of primary importance had been entirely overlooked by them; he meant the propriety and policy of permitting the produce of Africa and America to be brought into Great Britain through Ireland. By this measure, we threw down the whole fabric of our Navigation Laws. The period was not very distant when the Charter of the East India Company would expire; and, according to the tenor of the resolutions now proposed, there remained no power in this country to renew it with the same, or indeed any exclusive privileges. Mr. Fox censured the precipitancy with which this business was urged, and contended for the necessity of calling the merchants and manufacturers to the bar of the House, in order that the House might be fully informed in a case of this momentous nature, before they proceeded to vote a definitive resolution.”

On the 14th of March, Mr. Eden moved, that the Commissioners of Customs and Excise should be examined at the bar of the House; which was carried in the affirmative.

On the same day, a Petition was presented by Mr. Stanley, member for Lancashire, from the manufacturers of that county, praying to be heard by Counsel against the Bill. Petitions were likewise presented from Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester. The malign spirit of commercial jealousy appeared to be at length thoroughly awakened, and Petitions upon Petitions were sent up to Parliament, in incredible numbers, from every quarter of the kingdom. At the end of a long and tedious investigation of facts and examination of witnesses, Mr. Pitt was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge the necessity of making some material alterations and amendments in his original plan.

On the 12th of May 1785, Mr. Pitt brought forward, in consequence of the additional lights thus thrown upon the business, a series of Propositions, so altered, modified, and enlarged as to exhibit in its new form what might well be considered as a new system.

Mr. Fox, in the language of triumph, congratulated the House on the happy escape they had made from the system proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer but two months since; all op-

position to which was then treated as the effect of faction and disappointment. "If," said Mr. Fox, "the original resolutions had passed, we should have lost for ever the monopoly of the East India trade; we must have hazarded all the revenue arising from spirituous liquors; we should have sacrificed the whole of the Navigation Laws of this country. If these resolutions had passed into a law, we should have risked the loss of the Colonial market for the manufactures of Great Britain, and incurred the most extensive danger to the Colonies themselves; we should have left it in the power of Ireland to have drawn a revenue from our consumption. The just alarm of the Minister on the subject of the Navigation Laws," Mr. Fox said, "sufficiently appeared from the extraordinary nature of the remedy he had thought it expedient to adopt, which was no other than to assert that, notwithstanding the independence of Ireland, she must still in commercial laws and external legislation be governed by Britain." Mr. Fox affirmed, "that the wild scheme of extravagant speculation comprized in the resolutions, did not originate with the Irish nation. A stranger had been sent thither to offer a *nostrum* of his own invention for the relief of a disordered State. For the irritation and ill humour existing in that country, Ministers were responsible. The violences which they committed in Ireland merited

the most decisive and general reprobation. Their attacks on the liberty of the press;—their endeavors to prevent legal meetings, for the purpose of deliberating on the best means of reforming the national representation;—their proceedings against men by summary attachment, were measures which might well be supposed to inflame the minds of the people of Ireland. Now imprudent insult was to be compensated by imprudent concession. But let the House beware of a design so insidious and ruinous as that of a commutation of English commerce for Irish slavery. The Propositions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extensive to be voted by the majority of the members of that House, on any other ground than that of confidence in the Minister: and surely the Right Honorable Gentleman had sufficiently demonstrated, that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was absurd; that infallibility was no more his prerogative, than that of the rest of the world.” The House at length divided on the motion of adjournment, ayes, 155, noes 281; and at eight o’clock in the morning, the first resolution, broken into two distinct propositions in the new arrangement, passed the House. The remaining resolutions were subsequently carried after an obstinate contest; and on the 30th of May they were carried up to the House of Lords,

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Here they were again the subject of long and laborious investigation ; in the course of which the Lords Stormont and Loughborough chiefly distinguished themselves on the part of Opposition. Various amendments, though not of very material import, were offered and received by the House. In the progress of the business, the Earl of Shelburne, recently created Marquis of Lansdowne, made a remarkable speech, which, though not unfavorable to the measure before the House, clearly manifested how little cordiality subsisted between that Nobleman and the present Minister, notwithstanding their former intimate political connection ;—so frail are the friendships and so transient the attachments of Statesmen !—The Marquis entered into a very masterly survey of the construction and general effect of the proposed arrangement. He declared “ the result of his enquiry to be very opposite to that of the merchants and manufacturers, however respectable, who had been examined at their Lordships’ bar. Though much valuable information might doubtless be derived from their evidence, it must not be forgotten that they were men peculiarly subject to prejudice and error, in all cases where their personal interest was concerned. Were any one, for instance, to ask a manufacturer of Halifax, ‘ what was the greatest crime upon earth ? was it felony, was it murder, was it parricide ? ’ he

would answer, ‘No—none of these; it was the exporting of WOOL*.’ His Lordship declared himself of opinion, that the unlimited commerce of Ireland would not create a formidable competition to England. Ireland, destitute as she was of the grand materials for ship-building, timber and iron, was incapable of the carrying trade, and had little capital. These were disadvantages not to be easily or speedily surmounted. The Noble Lord said, he was himself recently arrived from the groves of Bowood, and had not entered into any accurate or minute investigation of this business. But Ministers must have been lost in the most criminal infatuation, if they had not prepared this great system with due and proper deliberation—if they had not made themselves masters of its bearings and tendencies. He placed the utmost reliance on the integrity and abilities of *the Nobleman now at the head of affairs in Ireland,*

* When the famous Colbert applied to the principal merchants in France, to know what regulations would be best calculated to improve the manufactures and extend the commerce of the kingdom, the answer he obtained from them was, “*Laissez nous faire,*”—Let us alone. Nevertheless, that great Minister, who saw things, not through the distorted medium of personal interest, but with the clear discernment and comprehensive beneficence of a Statesman and a Patriot, is now universally allowed, by his “wild and visionary speculations,” as they were then doubtless styled, to have laid the foundation of the commercial grandeur and prosperity of France.

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and on those of his Secretary. He was certain *they* would not disgrace themselves in a transaction to which they were in every respect equal. Delay he knew to be dangerous, something decisive must be done. If this were not the proper measure, what was to be substituted? Plausible objections might no doubt be adduced. It might be urged, that the present system would be acceptable in neither kingdom;—that the author of it was too young, and was ignorant of what should constitute a Minister;—that if others more competent to this task had remained longer in office, things would have been better and more satisfactorily settled. It might be said, ‘How, in the name of God, did this man contrive to elevate himself to the rank of a Minister?’ We must however take things as we found them. The most serious interests of both countries were at stake, and the most alarming consequences might attend the postponement of this business.”

The Irish resolutions were sent down from the Lords to the Commons the 19th of July 1785. After much fresh and eager debate, the amendments of their Lordships were agreed to by the Commons; and on the 28th of July, an Address was presented to the King by both Houses of Parliament, acquainting his Majesty with the steps which had been taken in this affair; adding, “that it remained for the Parliament of Ireland to judge of the conditions according

ording to their wisdom and discretion, as well as of every other part of the settlement proposed to be established by mutual consent." The two Houses now adjourned themselves to a distant day; and on the 30th of September 1785, the Parliament was prorogued by royal proclamation.

The amended Propositions having been transmitted to Ireland, Mr. Orde, on the 12th of August, moved for leave to bring in a Bill for establishing the system of commercial intercourse therein contained. This Minister defended the variations that now appeared, by alleging the natural progress of a measure of this nature. Ireland had, in the early part of the sessions, stated what she had thought herself entitled to claim, and Britain in return had declared what she was willing to concede. Mr. Orde averred, that the amendments made by the British Parliament to the original propositions did not in reality interfere with the prosperity of Ireland. Wishing, however, to follow the example of mature deliberation given by England, it was his intention, after bringing in the Bill and printing it, to pause, in order to learn the sentiments of the country respecting it. Let the House receive every Petition that could be brought;—let them listen to all the evidence that could be offered. On a comparison of the two sets of propositions, the magnitude and importance of the alterations strikingly appeared. By
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the third of the English resolutions, Ireland was virtually interdicted, even after the expiration of the charter of the East India Company, from exporting articles to England, the growth and produce of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan. By the same resolution, this interdiction was extended to arrack and foreign brandy; also to rum and other strong waters not imported from the British colonies in the West Indies. By the fourth resolution, it was declared to be highly essential that the laws for regulating trade and navigation should be the same in both countries; and, for that purpose, that all laws which have been made, OR SHALL BE MADE in Great Britain, securing exclusive privileges to the ships and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British colonies and plantations, and for regulating and restraining the trade of the British colonies and plantations, such laws imposing the same restraints, and conferring the same benefits on the subjects of both kingdoms, should be in force in Ireland, BY LAWS to be passed by the PARLIAMENT of that kingdom, for the SAME TIME and in the SAME MANNER as in GREAT BRITAIN. By the fifth resolution, this legislative power of regulation and control was in like manner extended to all goods and commodities imported into Ireland from the British or foreign colonies in Africa and America.

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By the sixth and seventh resolutions, the commercial intercourse between the two kingdoms was incumbered with many burdensome and rigorous regulations respecting bonds, cockets, certificates, &c. in order effectually to repress all illicit practices apprehended from the circuitous commerce granted to Ireland. By the eighth, the regulating power of Britain is extended to all goods exported from Ireland to the British colonies in the West Indies, America, or the coast of Africa. By the ninth, Ireland is excluded, so long as the charter of the East India Company shall exist, from trading to any port beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan; and during the continuance of the said charter, no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of India shall be allowed to be imported into Ireland but through Great Britain. By the fifteenth resolution, the bounties allowed by Great Britain on the exportation of beer to Ireland, and spirits distilled from corn, are expressly continued. By the sixteenth, it is provided, that all goods the produce of the North American States, which are subject to higher duties on importation into Great Britain, than the like goods the produce of the British colonies—such articles shall be subject to the same duties on importation into Ireland.

These were the grand and leading features of difference between the old propositions and the

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new : and so great was the dissimilarity, that the Irish Parliament seemed scarcely to recognize the traces of its own original creation. A general sentiment of amazement and indignation seemed to pervade the House ; and the FOURTH RESOLUTION in particular, by which England assumed a power of legislative regulation and commercial control with respect to Ireland, was rejected with a kind of horror.

Mr. Grattan, who had supported the Propositions in their primitive form, now exerted the whole force of his eloquence to expose them to the public scorn and detestation. “ What;” said this powerful orator, “ is this pretended equitable arrangement but a plan to perpetuate to England all her advantages, and to Ireland all her disadvantages ? Ireland is required to grant a monopoly of the trade of India to the present East India Company during its existence, and to Great Britain for ever after. This is not a surrender of the political rights of the country, but of the natural prerogatives of man—not of the privileges of Parliament, but of the rights of nations. They were not to sail beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan—an awful interdict ! Other interdicts extended to a determined period of time, but here was an eternity of restraint. Other interdicts extended to particular places, for local reasons—but here regions of immense extent were indiscriminately

criminally forbidden, and the bounties which Providence had given they were prohibited to enjoy. It resembled a Judgment of GOD, rather than an Act of Legislature, whether they measured it by extent of space, or infinity of duration—and had nothing human about it except its presumption. The principle of equal duties and equal restrictions,” Mr. Grattan said, “did not constitute an equality of participation, because the condition of the two countries was totally dissimilar. Supposing Great Britain, in order to answer the exigency of some future war, or to fund her present debt, should raise her colony duties still higher; Ireland must follow, not because she wanted the tax, but lest her exemption from taxes should give her manufactures any comparative advantage. Irish taxes were to be precautions against the prosperity of Irish manufactures. Nay, worse than this; the Propositions in question would make English jealousy the barometer of Irish taxes. The exclusion of foreign plantation produce would have seemed sufficient for every purpose of power and dominion; but, for the purpose of aggravation and insult, the independent States of America were most ungraciously brought into the arrangement, and expressly named as if North America continued a part of the British dominions. This was called a system of concession and compensation; but,” said Mr. Grattan, “the people of
Ireland,

Ireland, *without* compensation, obtained a colony trade, a free trade, the government of their army, the extinction of the unconstitutional powers of the Council, the restoration of the judicature of their Lords, and finally, the independence of their legislature. Let them see now what they obtain *by* compensation :—A covenant not to trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan ;—a covenant not to take foreign plantation produce,—not to take American produce but as Great Britain shall permit ;—a covenant not to take British plantation produce but as Great Britain should prescribe ;—a covenant never to protect their own manufactures, never to guard the *primum* of those manufactures. Surely some God presided over the welfare of Ireland, who made it wisdom to fulfil their duty, and who annexed the penalties of folly as well as infamy to the surrender of their privileges. From the consideration of commerce,” said this animated orator, “I proceed to a question much more high and inestimable—before which the ideas of protecting duties, of reciprocal duties, of countervailing duties, vanish into nothing ; and by the tendencies of which, the prudence of every head and the energies of every heart are called forth to shield the newly-acquired rights of a nation so long depressed, and so recently and wonderfully emancipated. If any body of men could think the Irish Constitution incompatible

patible with the unity of the British empire, a doctrine which he abjured as sedition against both, he would answer, 'Perish the Empire, live the Constitution!' No transfer of legislative authority could be made. They, the limited trustees of delegated power, born for a particular purpose, confined to a particular line, and bearing an inviolable relationship to the people who sent them to Parliament, could not break that relationship, counteract that purpose, and surrender, diminish, or derogate from those privileges they lived but to preserve. The Propositions granted a perpetual Money Bill—a Money Bill to continue as long as Great Britain shall please, with a covenant to increase it as often as she shall require. The trade and the purse of the nation were alike in covenant. Pass this Bill, and they had no constituents; their constituents had no representatives:—they were the mere register of the British Parliament, and the equalizer of British duties. But have you traced the map of the globe? Have you marked there the countries, the right of trading to which you are to surrender for ever? Have you surveyed the settlements of the several European nations in Asia, in Africa, in America? Have you considered the state of North America—its present situation, its future growth, and every incident in the endless succession of time that may attend that nurse of commerce and ASYLUM of MANKIND? Are you competent

competent to declare, that a free trade to those vast regions will never in the efflux of time tend to the advancement of the interests of Ireland? If you possess satisfactory information upon this subject, it must be by inspiration, not by knowledge.—Let us then guard our free trade and free constitution as our only real resources. They are the result of great virtue, of much perseverance, and the source to this House of immortal honor. Let us preserve uncontaminated to the latest generations the dignity of Parliament, the majesty of the people, and the imperial sovereignty of the Irish crown and nation.” The feelings of the Parliament and of the People of Ireland were on this subject in perfect unison. Scarcely could the great and acknowledged talents of Mr. Fitzgibbon obtain him any share of attention when he rose to speak in vindication of a measure so supremely obnoxious. “If England relaxed her Navigation Laws in favor of Ireland, she had a right, Mr. Fitzgibbon affirmed, to expect to be followed by her in a code of laws which had been the source of her commercial opulence, and the basis of her maritime strength. It had been insinuated, that they could trade to more advantage with the colonies of foreign States. But what foreign States would allow them to trade with their colonies? Who was to protect them if foreign States refused to do them justice? or who was to assert their rights,

supposing them to be violated? When an arrangement so advantageous was offered to Ireland, for what reason was it that she hesitated and demurred? Because she is told that the treaty struck at the independence of her legislature. But it is as an independent power that Ireland has negotiated. It is as to an independent power that the overtures of Britain are made. An arrangement of trade could not be agreed upon between two nations, unless they settled at the same time principles of mutual restriction; and if the Irish nation would never condescend to promise compliance with any condition of a treaty, she must determine never to make any commercial treaty, or any treaty whatever." Mr. Fitzgibbon concluded a most able speech, by remarking, "that whatever might have been intimated concerning the possibility of Ireland standing alone, he was convinced, that, situated as she was in the neighbourhood of powerful Popish countries, with a great majority of her people of the Popish religion, she could not exist one hour as a Protestant State if the protection of England were withdrawn." After a vehement debate, in which both parties exerted their utmost ability and eloquence, the House divided at nine in the morning upon the motion of Mr. Orde for leave to bring in the Bill, ayes 127, noes 108. Such a division in the first stage of the business was equivalent to a defeat:

feat: and on the Monday following, Mr. Orde moved the first reading of the Bill and the printing it; declaring, that he did not intend to make any further progress in the business during the present session. He had completed his duty respecting it. If it were revived, it must be by a motion from the public, who at the commencement of the ensuing session might take such further steps as they thought proper.

In order to preclude a motion of censure framed by Mr. Flood, the Secretary then moved an adjournment; and Mr. Flood consenting, not without difficulty, to wave his motion, the adjournment was carried without a division. Public illuminations testified the joy excited by the sudden termination of this extraordinary business; and from this period, no effort has been made in either kingdom to revive in any shape this important and interesting discussion.

Upon the whole, though it might perhaps justly be regarded as too daring an experiment, the probability is, that a commercial treaty founded on the basis of the original propositions would have proved very beneficial in practice. The prodigious inferiority of skill, of credit, and of capital, must have effectually prevented Ireland from becoming formidable as a competitor to England; and in proportion as Ireland advanced in opulence, her artificial wants would have increased, and consequently

her consumption of British manufactures and commodities.

Notwithstanding the great alarm excited when the first commercial concessions were made to Ireland, no detriment was in fact sustained by Great Britain: on the contrary, the trade to England continued rapidly to increase, even in regard to those very articles which Ireland was allowed to import from the place of their growth and produce. From the year 1781 to the year 1784 muscovado sugars imported from the West Indies rose from 7,384 cwt. to 27,492 cwt.; and in the same term sugars imported from Britain rose from 130,056 to 160,083 cwt. Another remarkable fact is, that the linen manufacture both in England and Scotland has flourished with constant and regular acceleration, notwithstanding the unlimited competition of the Irish nation. According to a seven years average, ending A. D. 1755, not more than 576,373 yards were exported from England; and in the year 1771 the export amounted to no less than 4,411,040 yards. Why then might not a similar competition be as safely and advantageously established in other branches of commerce? These arithmetical statements shew to a demonstration the extreme weakness and futility of those fears and apprehensions which are so apt to agitate the mercantile world at the slightest breath of innovation, and their total incompetency to deduce,

from a comprehensive and impartial survey of the whole system, just and accurate conclusions. Considering, nevertheless, the narrow limits of the highest human sagacity, it must be acknowledged that prudence would have dictated a temporary duration to this commercial arrangement, in order to bring the utility of it to the infallible touchstone of experience. As to the fourth proposition of the English series, which was the immediate cause of the positive and peremptory rejection of the whole, it might in all probability have been very safely dispensed with, as there is no reason to doubt but that Ireland would have spontaneously adopted with good-faith and good-will any regulations necessary to enforce a treaty which she found upon the whole conducive to her prosperity.

The Parliament of Great Britain, after a tranquil interval of a few months, met on the 24th of January, 1786. In the speech from the Throne the King declared to the House of Commons his earnest wish to enforce œconomy in every department; recommending to them the maintenance of our naval strength on the most respectable footing; and above all the establishment of a **FIXED PLAN** for the reduction of the **NATIONAL DEBT**. Nothing remarkable passed until about the middle of February, when the estimate of the ordnance was brought up in the Committee of Supply. Upon this occasion Mr. Pitt called the attention of the

House to the plan laid before them in the course of the last session, under the sanction of the Duke of Richmond, Master General of the Ordnance, for FORTIFYING the DOCKYARDS of the kingdom; the propriety of which it was then agreed to refer to a Board of Land and Sea Officers, whose report Mr. Pitt stated to be in the highest degree favorable to the plan of fortification submitted to their decision; but the report itself he declined as a matter of too serious and delicate a nature to lay before the House.

The discontent and surprise manifested when the question was last year under discussion, now rose into great warmth of indignation and resentment. "If the report or the essentials it contained were not to be in some mode subject to the inspection of the House, they were, it was affirmed, in exactly the same situation in which they had stood before the Board was appointed. They must decide, not upon their own judgments, but in deference to the authority of others. But the House of Commons were not justified in voting away the money of their constituents upon the grounds of passive complaisance and courtly submission. The expence attending this novel system would be enormous, and it was their duty before they adopted it to be fully convinced of its necessity."

General Burgoyne, who was one of the Board, controverted the assertion of Mr. Pitt as to the

entire approbation expressed by them of the system in question. “It was well known, he said, that cases hypothetically put admitted only of a direct answer given under the admission of the hypothesis. It remained to be ascertained, whether the case thus hypothetically put was sufficiently within the limits of probability to deserve attention. Several of the cases on which the Board were called upon to decide were mere *postulata*, and hypothetically as extravagant as if it were asked, Suppose by some convulsion of nature the Straits of Dover should vanish out of existence, and the coasts of England and France were to unite, would it not be expedient to fortify the isthmus between the two countries?”

Mr. Pitt, waving the farther discussion of the question for the present, declared his determination to bring the business in the most specific and solemn manner before the House. He accordingly after a short delay moved a resolution, “That it appeared to the House, that to provide effectually for securing the dock-yards of Portsmouth and Plymouth by a permanent system of fortification was an essential object for the safety of the State, &c. &c.” A violent debate arose, in the course of which no Member distinguished himself so eminently as Mr. Sheridan, a gentleman who had been for some time gradually rising to a very elevated height of parliamentary reputation; and previous

to his introduction into the House of Commons the public had long known and admired the brilliant talents of this second Congreve in dramatic literature. Mr. Sheridan stated forcibly the danger to which the Constitution would be exposed in consequence of this vast addition to the military power of the Crown. "These strong military holds, maintained by numerous and disciplined garrisons, would afford tenfold the means of curbing and subduing the country as would arise from doubling the present army establishment. Could any one, he exclaimed, possibly imagine that the system now recommended was to end with Portsmouth and Plymouth, and that the reasonings of the Minister would not apply to other parts of the kingdom? No—we were to figure to ourselves the same Board of Officers, acting under the same instructions, and deliberating with the same DATA, going a circuit round the coasts of the kingdom. He wished to see the estimate for the stationary defence of such places as Chatham, Sheerness, &c. in addition to the two-and-twenty thousand men demanded for Portsmouth and Plymouth. Mr. Sheridan professed, nevertheless, his readiness to abide by the decision of the Board of Officers, if it could be fairly shewn that, upon a full and unfettered investigation of the subject, they had reported it as their clear and unqualified opinion, that the plan proposed by the Duke of Richmond was

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was such as it became the wisdom of Parliament to adopt. But if the professional abilities of the Duke of Richmond were ill-employed in the fabrication of so wild a project, it must be acknowledged they conspicuously appeared in the planning and constructing the report in question. There were certain detached *data*, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate. Strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions. His very queries were in casemates. No impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations; and it was necessary to assail it by regular approaches. Much ingenuity likewise had been shewn in extracting such parts of the report as were deemed most favorable to the proposed system. The minutes which contained the opinion of the naval officers in condemnation of the plan were wholly omitted, because they were mixed with matter of such dangerous import that no chemical process known in the Ordnance laboratory could possibly separate them; while on the contrary every approving opinion, like a light oily fluid, floated at the top, and was capable of being presented to the House pure and untinged by a single particle of the argument and information upon which it was founded."

The Minister upon this occasion found himself very generally deserted by the Country Gentlemen

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or Independent Interest in the House ; and the division was rendered memorable by an exact equality of numbers, both the ayes and the noes amounting to 169. The Speaker being of course compelled to give his casting vote, acquired much credit and applause by adding his negative to those who had voted for the rejection of this chimerical, absurd, and extravagant system.

It is very remarkable that the Minister, notwithstanding this defeat, had the temerity after an interval of a few weeks to bring forward the question once more in a new form, by moving, "That an estimate of the expence of such part of the plan of fortification recommended in the late report, as might appear most necessary to be carried into immediate execution, be referred to a Committee of Supply"—the probable expence of which was estimated at *only* 400,000l. ! This was received with extreme disapprobation ; it was said to be impossible for Parliament to submit to so open an attack upon their declared sentiments, and they were called upon to resist it in the most peremptory manner. Mr. Pitt, perceiving the sense of the House so manifestly adverse to this attempt, thought proper to withdraw his motion ; on which Mr. Fox expressed his earnest hope "that the Minister would in future pay more respect to the opinion of the Legislature, and not attempt to force an obnoxious measure upon the country." The
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pertinacity of Mr. Pitt in this business occasioned much speculation; and those who recollected the tenor of his conduct respecting the Westminster return, were not backward to throw disgraceful imputations upon his integrity. It was thought by many to be impossible that a man of Mr. Pitt's discernment could be the sincere and cordial advocate of so preposterous a scheme; and it was strongly suspected that the Duke of Richmond, in the prosecution of this favorite project, relied upon far other and higher support than that which could be derived from the obscure and ambiguous decision of a Board of General Officers*.

* The fortification projects of the Duke of Richmond became, in consequence of this parliamentary investigation of their merits, the theme of the public derision and ridicule; and, according to the observation of that unerring judge of mankind, the Duc de la Rochefoucault, "ridicule is like a gangrene, which, when once it fastens upon one part of a character, is easily extended to the rest." In a humorous political publication of the times, styled *The ROLLIAD*, the Duke of Richmond is thus severely and sarcastically apostrophized:

With gorges, scaffolds, breaches, ditches, mines;
 With culverins whole and demi, and gabines;
 With trench, with counterscarp, with esplanade;
 With curtains, mote, and rhombo, and chamade;
 With polygon, epaulement, hedge and bank;
 With angle saliant, and with angle flank;
 Oh thou shalt prove, should all thy schemes prevail,
 An *UNCLE TOBY* on a larger scale!

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The grand business of the session, as alluded to in the speech, was not brought forward till the month of March, when Mr. Pitt moved for the appointment of a Select Committee, by ballot, to report to the House the state of the public revenue and expenditure. The result of their enquiry was in a very high degree pleasing and satisfactory. The amount of the revenue for the current year was estimated by the Committee at 15,397,000l.—the permanent expenditure, including the Civil List, and the interests payable on the different funds, amounted to 10,554,000l.—the peace establishment, allowing eighteen thousand men for the navy, and the usual complement of seventy regiments for the army, exclusive of life-guards and cavalry, was estimated at 3,924,000l.—in all, 14,478,000l.; of consequence there remained a surplus of more than 900,000l.

Mr. Pitt observed upon this report, “that though this was stated to be the annual expenditure, a considerable interval must elapse before this reduction could take place; this term he fixed at four years. The exceedings of the army, navy, and ordnance, together with the sums necessary for the indemnification of the American Loyalists, he calculated would not during this period fall short of three millions. The war from which we were just delivered had been most expensive and ruinous; these unavoidable exceedings were
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amongst the bitter fruits of it ; but if during the first years of peace extraordinary expences were incurred, they afforded also extraordinary savings. There were sums appropriated during the war to different services, which had not been expended ; four hundred and fifty thousand pounds had already been paid into the Exchequer upon this account. There were moreover immense sums in the hands of former Paymasters, which it was expected would soon be brought to account ; these he conjecturally stated at the sum of one million. There was a balance of 600,000*l.* due to Government from the East India Company. When to these were added the improvements that might yet be made by judicious regulations in the different branches of the revenue, he was not, Mr. Pitt said, he hoped, too sanguine in affirming that we possessed resources equal to all our ordinary and extraordinary demands. The proposition which he now submitted to the House was, the appropriation of the annual sum of one million to be invariably applied to the liquidation of the public debt. The surplus of the revenue amounting to the sum of 900,000*l.* only, Mr. Pitt moved for an additional duty on spirits, on certain kinds of timber imported, and on perfumery, which would together be more than sufficient to make up the deficiency. This annual million Mr. Pitt wisely proposed to vest in the hands of certain Commissioners, to be by them
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applied regularly to the purchase of stock ; so that no sum should ever lie within the grasp large enough to tempt him to violate this sacred deposit. The interests annually discharged were, conformably to this plan, to be added to and incorporated with the original fund, so that it would operate with a determinate and accelerated velocity ; being in this respect framed upon the model of the Sinking Fund formerly projected by Sir Robert Walpole. This fund was also to be assisted by the annuities granted for different terms, which would from time to time fall in within the limited period of twenty-eight years, at the expiration of which Mr. Pitt calculated that the fund would produce an income of four millions per annum. When a progress so considerable was made in the reduction of the debt, Parliament might with propriety pause, and adopt such new measures for the relief of the nation, and the extinction of the most oppressive and burdensome taxes, as to the legislative wisdom should seem meet. The Commissioners to be nominated under the act were the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Master of the Rolls, the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, and the Accomptant General of the High Court of Chancery. Such were the persons, Mr. Pitt said, whom he should propose to be appointed to this trust. This plan had long been the wish and the hope of all good men, and he felt

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inexpressible pleasure in being able to flatter himself that his name might be inscribed on that firm column, which was now about to be raised to national faith and national prosperity."

It was in the progress of the Bill suggested by Mr. Fox, "that whenever a new loan should hereafter be made, the Commissioners should be empowered to accept the loan, or such proportion of it, as should be equal to the cash then in their hands; the interest and *apuceur* annexed to which should be applied to the purposes of the Sinking Fund." This amendment, the only one of material consequence offered, was received with candor and facility by Mr. Pitt, who declared it to be "an auspicious omen of the ultimate success of the plan, that its propriety and necessity had been so obvious as to overcome the spirit and prejudice of party, and create an unanimity of sentiment in persons who more, he was sure, from accident than inclination were so frequently of different opinions."

The Bill finally passed with great and deserved approbation; all intelligent persons throughout the kingdom perfectly concurring in the sentiments expressed in the recent report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts upon this subject. "This debt," say these impartial and faithful reporters, "is swelled to a magnitude that requires the united efforts of the ablest heads and the
purest

purest hearts to suggest the proper and effectual means of reduction. A PLAN must be formed for the reduction of this debt, and that without delay: now is the favorable moment of peace. The evil does not admit of procrastination, palliatives, or expedients. It presses on, and must be met with force and firmness: what *can* be done, the support of public credit, the preservation of national honor, and the justice due to the public creditor, demand *should* be done. It MUST be DONE, OR SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES will ensue."

Notwithstanding the acknowledged necessity of œconomy in every department of Government, it is grievous to relate, that even before the Sinking Fund Bill passed into a law, a message from the KING to the House of Commons was delivered by the Minister, stating, "that it gave him great concern to inform them, that it had not been found POSSIBLE to confine the expences of the Civil List within the annual sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, now applicable to that purpose. A farther debt had been NECESSARILY incurred, and the King relied on the ZEAL and AFFECTION of his PARLIAMENT to make provision for its discharge."

In support of the motion grounded on this message, Mr. Pitt stated, "that under Mr. Burke's Reform Bill an annual reduction of fifty thousand pounds from the Civil List had been set apart
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by Parliament for the liquidation by instalments of the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, then issued in Exchequer bills for the supply of former deficiencies. Of this debt one hundred and eighty thousand pounds yet remained unpaid, and a fresh debt of thirty thousand pounds had accrued: and he rested the necessity of a grant equal to these united sums upon this *perplexing dilemma*: Either Parliament had, at the period referred to, directed that, when the proposed liquidation should be effected, the Civil List should be allowed fifty thousand pounds per ann. more than was necessary, or it was then put upon a footing of fifty thousand pounds per ann. less than was necessary. Experience had proved the latter to be the case; and therefore it was reasonable to expect that the sum of two hundred and ten thousand pounds, now wanting to clear off the old and new incumbrances, would be voted without hesitation."

In reply to Mr. Pitt's courtly logic, it was obvious to observe, that the Parliament which fixed the expenditure of the Civil List at eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, until the debt previously contracted should be liquidated, thought it at least POSSIBLE that the DIGNITY of the CROWN might be sufficiently sustained without passing the prescribed limits. It might even perhaps occur to some of the members, however indecorous the

mention of it in a parliamentary debate, that the Executive Government of the Republic of America was supported without any apparent forfeiture of DIGNITY, at less than one FORTIETH part of the expence.

This demand was the more extraordinary, as the King in his speech from the throne at the opening of the session, December 1782, had said, "I have carried into strict execution the several reductions in my Civil List expences, directed by an act of last session; I have introduced a farther reform in other departments, and suppressed several sinecure places in them. I have by this means so regulated my establishments, that MY EXPENCES SHALL NOT IN FUTURE EXCEED MY INCOME."

No attempt being made to repeal that clause in Mr. Burke's Reform Bill, which regulated the expenditure of the Civil List, it was urged to be very extraordinary, while that Bill remained in full force, to come down in the face of an Act of Parliament, and call upon the House to vote money for the debts of the Crown. It is almost superfluous to say, that all the arguments offered on this head proved a mere waste of words, and that the money was ultimately voted.

Many petitions were presented during the session, for the repeal of the odious tax upon retail shops; and a motion was formally made by Sir

Watkin

Watkin Lewes, member for the City of London, for that purpose, without effect, though it was somewhat mitigated by a reduction of the rates. In this business Mr. Pitt shewed a degree of perseverance bordering upon obstinacy, which it had been surely better to have reserved for a more important occasion.

Mr. Fox acutely remarked on the subject of the proposed alterations, "that the greater part of Mr. Pitt's arguments had been intended to prove that the tax was not personal; and that it must find its level, and fall upon the consumer. If this were true, what was there to recommend his modifications? He had stated, that he would take off or diminish the portion of the tax paid by the poorer class of shopkeepers, which would considerably exonerate that description of persons. Of what would it exonerate them? Of the burden borne by the consumer? Glaring indeed was the inconsistency of his actions, when compared with his arguments."

An attempt was also made by Mr. Pulteney, supported by many respectable Members of the House, to explain and amend the Act of the last session, relative to hawkers and pedlars; and particularly to repeal a most detestably oppressive clause, by which Justices of the Peace were empowered to imprison any person of this profession

at their discretion. This was rejected, at the second reading, by a majority of fifty voices.

About this period Mr. Pitt brought in a Bill for transferring part of the duties on foreign wines from the customs to the excise. The revenue on this article, the consumption of which had certainly not diminished, Mr. Pitt stated to be inferior by the sum of two hundred and eighty thousand pounds to what it had been in the middle of the century. The terrible alarm excited by Sir Robert Walpole's memorable attempt to extend the laws of excise fifty years before, had now completely subsided, and the Bill passed with general approbation.

In the House of Peers Lord Loughborough, who was now again metamorphosed into a Whig and a Patriot, opposed the Bill, as in the highest degree arbitrary and unconstitutional. He was answered by Lord Camden, whose zeal for the Constitution had been subject to no such remarkable variations. Lord Camden admitted "that the excise laws taken collectively might in a certain sense be considered as a departure from the Constitution; but the present state of the country rendered them necessary. The present Bill, in particular, was calculated to counteract the notorious impositions practised by the wine-merchants to delude the public, to cheat the revenue, and injure

jure the health of the consumer. In these iniquities it was that a justification of this useful and salutary measure was to be found. The Bill passed without a division.

Next to the establishment of the new sinking fund the affairs of India occupied, during this session, the chief attention of Parliament. A Bill was brought in by Mr. Dundas, which with some opposition passed into a law, to explain and amend the Act of 1784. This Bill, among other regulations of inferior importance, bestowed upon the Governor General of India the high prerogative of deciding in opposition to the sense of the majority of the Council. The offices of Commander in Chief and Governor General were in future united in the same person; and Earl Cornwallis, who had borne so conspicuous a part in the American war, and whose character stood deservedly high in the public estimation, was nominated to fill this important commission.

Soon after this Mr. Pitt, stating certain exigencies arising from the peculiar situation of the East India Company, moved that they be empowered to raise the sum of two millions for the necessary increase of their capital. This was in itself a very problematic proof of the vaunted prosperity of the Company; but Mr. Pitt asserted the necessity to be temporary, and that it arose chiefly from the beneficial operation of the Commutation Act,

in consequence of which the Company's sales of tea had increased from six to fourteen millions of pounds, exclusive of other articles ; and in proportion to an increase of trade, an increase of capital became indispensably requisite. And on this ground the Bill passed with little difficulty. These measures were regarded with cold indifference ; but the feelings of the nation were wrought up to an high pitch of solicitude and curiosity by the subsequent proceedings of Parliament relative to India.

Mr. HASTINGS, late Governor of Bengal, arrived in England in the month of June 1785 ; and the season being then far advanced, Mr. Burke gave notice of his intention to move early in the next session for a parliamentary investigation into his conduct.

On the very first day of the meeting of Parliament after the recess, Major Scott, who had upon all occasions distinguished himself as the friend and advocate of Mr. Hastings, reminded Mr. Burke of the pledge he had made, and challenged him in pressing and peremptory terms to come to an immediate decision. Mr. Burke calmly replied, " that he should imitate the conduct of the Duke of Parma, who came from the Low Countries to relieve the city of Paris, then besieged by King Henry IV. The King, impatient and full of ardor, urged the Duke to instant battle ; but
that

that experienced and celebrated commander replied, that he had not travelled so far to learn from his enemy the time when it was most proper to engage."

On the 17th of February 1786, however, Mr. Burke, in the spirit of ancient chivalry, threw down the gauntlet, and desiring that the resolutions of May 28, 1782, might be read (resolutions moved by Mr. Dundas, as Chairman of the Select Committee, declaratory of the culpability of Mr. Hastings, and the consequent necessity of his recall), declared his "deep regret, that the solemn and important business of that day had not been brought forward in the plenitude of weight and efficiency, by the original mover of the resolutions now recited. Most feelingly did he lament, as the unwelcome consequence of a devolution caused partly by the natural demise of some, the political decease of others, and in particular cases a death to virtue and to principle, that he should now remain alone engaged in the attempt to preserve unsullied the honor and the consistency of that House, which had fixed upon Mr. Hastings as an object of their particular and formal accusation. Acting under their sanction, he asserted a claim to their protection. There were various modes of proceeding which might be adopted in this business—the first of these was a direction to the Attorney General

to prosecute. But not to insist upon the apparent disinclination of the present Attorney General (Mr. Arden) to exert his powers in this great and momentous cause, he did not conceive that a trial by jury was well calculated for the purpose of obtaining justice against so elevated an offender. In the Court of King's Bench the dignity of such a trial would ill assort with causes of *meum* and *tuum*, actions of battery and assault, of trespass and trover, together with the innumerable tribe of subordinate misdemeanors. The second mode of prosecution was that by bill of pains and penalties. To this he had insuperable objections, as radically unjust, and as tarnishing in no slight degree the character of that House, the Members of which would thus preposterously appear in the two-fold capacity of accusers and judges. The only alternative which remained, was the ancient and constitutional mode of proceeding by IMPEACHMENT : as a necessary preparatory to which, he concluded with moving for the papers necessary to substantiate the charge which he had now in immediate contemplation to bring forward against the late Governor General Hastings."

Mr. Dundas with his usual versatility affirmed, " that though he had thought it expedient in the year 1782 to recall Mr. Hastings from India, he now rejoiced that the resolutions moved by him had not taken effect. Since that period Mr.

Hastings

Hastings had rendered most essential services to the Company, and he should have extremely regretted to have been the means of depriving the Company of a servant so distinguished by his zeal and capacity. He had certainly moved a vote of censure on Mr. Hastings; but Mr. Hastings had since received the thanks of the Court of Directors, in which, had he been a director, he would most willingly have concurred, from a thorough conviction that the thanks were merited."

Some difficulties having been suggested by Mr. Pitt, respecting the production of the papers called for, Mr. Burke declared in lofty terms this demur to be "an invasion of the prerogative of a public accuser. He had an unquestionable claim to all such documents, proofs and papers, as he saw or esteemed to be necessary to support the charge which he undertook to advance. The downfall of the greatest empire in the world had originated in the mal-administration of its provinces. When Rome felt within herself the seeds of decline, and the inroads of corruption, a man of the first rank and of the highest connections in the state was brought to punishment. VERRES, the Governor of Sicily, was united in affinity with all that was most splendid and most opulent in the seat of empire, with the Hortensii and the Metelli. But when CICERO undertook his accusation, the Government itself adopted his
prose-

prosecution. No less than one hundred and fifty days were allowed for the collection of materials, and the justice of the Roman Senate opened to the accuser all the cabinets whence documents were to be obtained." In the result, the papers, with some few exceptions, were granted.

On the 4th of April, 1786, Mr. Burke solemnly rose to charge Warren Hastings, Esq. late Governor General of Bengal, with high crimes and misdemeanors in the execution of his office, exhibiting at the same time nine distinct articles of accusation, which in a few weeks were increased to the number of twenty-two.

On the 1st of May Mr. Hastings, at his own express desire, and by the indulgence of the House, was heard at the bar of the House, in this early period of the business, in his own defence; and at the farther request of the accused, the minutes of his defence were ordered to lie on the table. But the general opinion, faintly controverted even by the friends of Mr. Hastings, was, that the DEFENCE, thus precipitately and prematurely delivered, was of no service to his cause, and contributed in a very slight and inadequate degree to the vindication of his character. Though his assertions were bold, his arguments were weak, and the language of this defence was beyond all example boastful and arrogant. He had even the weakness and presumption to call in question the

AUTHORITY of the House to institute a judicial inquiry into his conduct.

The House, unmoved by what they had heard, proceeded in the examination of evidence : and the first article of impeachment respecting the Rohilla war was brought formally before the House on the 1st of June. After a very long debate, the question was decided in favor of Mr. Hastings, ayes for the impeachment being 67, noes 119.

Mr. Pitt on this occasion gave a silent vote against the motion ; but the ground on which he voted was tolerably well ascertained by a declaration he had previously made, when the subject of the Rohilla war was in a more general way discussed, “ that he considered that transaction in a horribly alarming point of view ; and as being so repugnant to every sentiment of human nature, that nothing could justify it but the strongest motives of political expediency, and the invincible principles of retributive justice—*adding*, nevertheless, that it would be highly inconsistent and absurd to consider Mr. Hastings now in the light of a culprit, for any measures taken by him previously to the period in which he had been nominated by Act of Parliament Governor General of India, which was the highest certificate of legislative approbation.” But surely, in the contemplation of common justice and common sense,

ſenſe, this re-appointment could not be regarded as equivalent to an acquittal, unleſs the Houſe were at that period in poſſeſſion of the evidence on which the merits or demerits of the tranſaction reſted, which it was notorious they were not.

On the 13th of June, the ſecond charge relative to the Rajah of Benares being brought forward, it was reſolved by the Houſe, on a diviſion of 119 to 79 voices, “ that this CHARGE CONTAINED MATTER OF IMPEACHMENT againſt the late GOVERNOR GENERAL OF BENGAL.” On this occaſion Mr. Pitt ſpoke in ſupport of the motion; but admitting the legality of the diſcretionary power aſſumed by Mr. Haſtings, he confined the criminality of the charge to the enormity of the fine levied upon the Rajah, and its concomitant circumſtances of oppreſſion and cruelty.

On the 11th of July, 1786, an end was put to theſe proceedings for the preſent by a prorogation of the Parliament, which was diſmiſſed with aſſurances of “ the particular ſatisfaction with which the King had obſerved their diligent attention to the public buſineſs, and the meaſures they had adopted for improving the reſources of the country.”

Soon after the riſing of Parliament, a ſingular incident occurred which ingroſſed for a moment
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the attention of the public. As the King was alighting from his post-chariot at the garden entrance of St. James's Palace, August the 2d, a woman decently dressed presented a paper to his Majesty; and while he was in the act of receiving it, she struck with a concealed knife at his breast. The King happily avoided the blow by drawing back; and as she was preparing to make a second thrust, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and the weapon was wrenched out of her hand.

On examination before the Privy Council, it immediately appeared that the woman was insane. Being asked where she had lately resided, she answered frantically, "that she had been all abroad since that matter of the Crown broke out." Being further questioned what matter? she said, "that the Crown was hers; and that if she had not her right, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand generations." On being interrogated as to the nature of her right, she refused to answer, saying in the genuine style of royalty, "that her rights were a MYSTERY."

It appeared that this poor maniac, whose name was Margaret Nicholson, had presented a petition ten days before, full of wild and incoherent nonsense. Like most other petitions, it had probably never been read, or the person of the petitioner would have been secured. The idea of a judicial process was of course abandoned, and she was

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configned to a fit apartment provided for her in Bethlehem Hospital. In a few days the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Common Council of the City of London went in proceſſion to St. James's to preſent an Addreſs to his Maſteſty on his happy eſcape from *affaſſination*. This example was followed by nearly all the corporate bodies throughout the kingdom; and the popularity of the King was ſenſibly increaſed by this trivial and almoſt ludicrous incident. The number and quality of *Knighthoods* conferred on occaſion of theſe addreſſes, were ſuch as completed the ridicule, ſo ſucceſsfully levelled ſince the days of Cervantes, againſt that once honorable and envied diſtinction*.

In the month of September 1786, the King was pleaſed to appoint a new Committee of Council, for the conſideration of all matters relating to trade and foreign plantations. Of this Board the famous Charles Jenkinſon, now for his long and faithful ſervices created Lord Hawkeſbury, and conſtituted Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaſter, was declared Preſident. Under the auſpices of

* According to an anecdote ſomewhere related of Charles II. the witty and profligate, that monarch obſerving a perſon on whom he was about to confer the *honor* of Knighthood to hang down his head and bluſh, as if conſcious of the deficiency of his pretenſions, exclaimed with his uſual good humour and pleaſantry, "Don't be aſhamed—'Tis I who have moſt reaſon."

this new Commission a TREATY of COMMERCE was signed between the two Courts of England and France (September 26, 1786) on the liberal principles of equality and reciprocity. Its general principle was to admit the mutual importation and exportation of the commodities of each country at a very low *ad valorem* duty. The negotiator of this treaty was Mr. Eden, who under the Coalition Administration had filled the lucrative office of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland.

This was the first memorable defection from that ill-starred and heterogeneous alliance: and it was the more remarkable, as Mr. Eden had himself been generally considered as the original projector of the Coalition, or at least as the man who might contest that honor with Mr. Burke. He soon attained to the dignity of the peerage under the title of Baron Auckland.

About the same time a Convention was signed with Spain of some importance, as it finally terminated the long subsisting disputes respecting the settlements of the English Nation on the Mosquito shore, and the coast of Honduras. By the present treaty the Mosquito settlements were formally and explicitly relinquished, as they had already virtually been by the 6th article of the general treaty of 1783. In return the boundaries of the English settlements on the Coast and Bay

Bay of Honduras were somewhat extended, but in such manner, and on such conditions, as to leave the King of Spain in full possession of his territorial rights and exclusive dominion.

In a political view this Convention answered a valuable purpose, as it removed a probable source of national disagreement. But the claims of humanity and justice were not sufficiently attended to. For the Mosquito settlers, who had from time immemorial occupied their lands and habitations under the protection of the English Government, and who amounted to many hundred families in number, were peremptorily commanded to evacuate the country of the Mosquitoes, without exception, in the space of eighteen months, nothing farther being stipulated in their favor, than that his Catholic Majesty "shall order his Governors to grant to the said English so dispersed, all possible facilities for their removal to the settlements agreed upon by the present Convention."

The greatest confusion, consternation, and distress among this unhappy people, was the inevitable result of this barbarous edict of expulsion, which, with the cold-blooded politicians of Europe, at the distance of 3000 miles, passed only for a regulation of commerce. An affecting representation of their distresses, and an humble petition for some sort of indemnification from the
Govern-

Government which had thus carelessly abandoned them to their fate, was subsequently presented to the Board of Treasury ; but it does not appear to have excited any attention. By “ the insolence of office,” the sighs of the oppressed are regarded as a species of insult.

On the re-assembling of Parliament, January 23, 1787, the first object of debate which presented itself, was the Commercial Treaty with France. On the 12th of February the House resolved itself into a Committee on this subject, when Mr. Pitt entered into a most able and eloquent vindication of the measure, though, in the opinion of impartial persons, the treaty sufficiently spoke its own merits. Mr. Pitt declared in energetic terms his abhorrence of the maxim, that any nation was destined to be the natural and unalterable foe of another. It had no foundation in the experience of nations, or in the history of men. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of infernal malignity in our original frame. “ France (Mr. Pitt said) in most of our wars had been the aggressor ; but her assurances and frankness in the present negotiation were such as to entitle her to a return of confidence. It was indeed ridiculous to imagine that the French would consent to yield advantages without the idea of compensation. The treaty would doubtless be a benefit

to them ; but he did not hesitate to say it would be a much greater benefit to us. She gained for her wines and other productions a great and opulent market. We did the same for our manufactures to a far greater degree. She procured a market of eight millions of people, we a market of twenty-four millions. Both nations were disposed and prepared for such a connection. France, by the peculiar dispensation of Providence, was gifted, perhaps more than any other country upon earth, with what made life desirable, in point of soil, climate, and natural productions, in the most fertile vineyards, and the richest harvests. Britain, on the other hand, possessing these advantages in an inferior degree, had, from the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws, risen to a state of commercial grandeur, and acquired the ability of supplying France with the requisite conveniences of life, in exchange for her natural luxuries.”

Very plausible objections were nevertheless suggested by the Leaders of Opposition against this treaty, and predictions hazarded of the injury which would be sustained by Great Britain in consequence of this measure, which were far from being eventually verified ; and which it is therefore superfluous to particularize. Such, nevertheless, was the impresson made upon the House by the arguments advanced, that no less than 162

members divided against the Minister on a motion for an Address to his Majesty, declaratory of the approbation of the House; which was ultimately carried by a majority of 76 voices.

The opposition in the House was not however supported, as in the case of the Irish Propositions, by any commercial clamors beyond its walls. And Mr. Pitt accurately and satisfactorily accounted for this difference, by observing "that in the former instance the clamors of the manufacturers, though he thought them founded in error, had been general and violent, because they perceived no great and positive advantage in the intercourse to balance the apprehended evil of a rivalry and competition, England being already in possession of the Irish market. But *now* that they saw so manifest and valuable a benefit to be reaped, they were willing to hazard the possibility of the injury."

The topic on which the Opposition insisted with the most advantage, and indeed the only real difficulty respecting the execution of this treaty, arose from its inconsistency on the *first blush* with the famous Methuen Treaty, concluded with Portugal early in the present century, in conformity to which the duties on Portugal wines were to bear in future the proportion of only two-thirds of those imported from France and other countries. But this point being candidly conceded by

France in the progress of the business, the measure received, as it well deserved, the necessary concurrence and sanction of Parliament, and the whole transaction terminated greatly to the honor of the Minister, and the advantage of the Nation; the sole cause of regret, in fact, being the limitation of the treaty to the short period of twelve years.

Another very useful commercial measure, though of very inferior importance, a measure founded on the reports of the Commissioners of Public Accounts, was early in the present session brought forward by Mr. Pitt for the consolidation of the Customs, by the total abolition of all the existing confused and complex duties, and substituting in their stead a single duty on each article, amounting as nearly as possible to the aggregate of the various subsidies now paid; taking universally, instead of a fraction, the nearest integral number above it. By this means the revenue would be considerably benefited, and the merchant relieved from a serious inconvenience. It is a curious circumstance, that the series of resolutions presented to the House, but of which they chose to wave the formality of reading, amounted to more than three thousand in number.

A regulation of finance, much less generally approved, was also proposed by Mr. Pitt, relative to the tax on post-horses, which he affirmed to
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have been most grossly and scandalously evaded. By way of remedy, he recommended that it should be farmed by auction to the highest bidder, on the usual plan of the turnpike duty. This was represented as repugnant to the genius of the English Constitution. It might prove, as the farming of the revenue had notoriously done in France, the source of infinite abuse and oppression. It established a dangerous and alarming precedent, and required to be resolutely resisted in the outset. Upon the question for going into a Committee on this Bill, the numbers were only 147 ayes to 100 noes. It must however be acknowledged, that this obnoxious regulation has not been found productive of any practical inconvenience.

In the course of the session Mr. Fox moved for the repeal of the odious Shop Tax, which, in consequence of the pertinacious adherence of Mr. Pitt to a measure in itself very trivial and uninteresting, had become a matter of permanent and serious concern. It appeared from the statement of Mr. Fox, that the City of London and its environs paid forty-three shares in fifty-nine of this duty, the whole produce being estimated at only fifty-nine thousand pounds. This was affirmed with reason to be an unjust and monstrous disproportion. But in truth the Commutation Tax fell as heavily in proportion upon the country, as the

Shop Tax upon the metropolis ; however comparatively destitute of the means of enforcing their complaints, or procuring redress. On the division the numbers were, ayes 147, noes 183 ; the Ministerial majority in a full House being, on this second attempt at repeal, reduced to 36 voices only.

On the 28th of March 1787, a motion of great importance was made by Mr. Beaufoy, a Member of the House, distinguished by his knowledge, talents, and general respectability of character, for amending, and in part repealing, the laws known by the appellation of the Corporation and Test Acts, so far as related to the Protestant Dissenters, who weakly flattered themselves, that their recent services were not as yet wholly lost to the recollection of the Court. In his introductory speech, Mr. Beaufoy gave a clear and judicious historical narrative of the origin of these Acts. “ The Corporation Act declared that no person should be elected into any municipal office, who should not one year before his election have taken the sacrament according to the usage of the Church of England. The Test Act required of every person accepting a civil or military office under the Crown, to take the sacrament in like manner within a limited time ; in default of which he was liable to a fine of 500*l.* and incurred other penalties in the highest degree severe and rigorous. The first of these Acts was passed in the year 1661 ;
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and the despotic and arbitrary spirit in which it was framed, sufficiently appeared from a single clause in the Act, empowering the King for a limited time to remove at his pleasure all municipal officers by Commissioners of his appointment. This Act was levelled indiscriminately against Protestant and Catholic Dissenters: but in the year 1673, the æra of the Test Act, the state of things was materially changed. The jealousy of Parliament in regard to the Protestant Dissenters had now subsided, and the alarm of all the different denominations of Protestants was equally excited by the dangers to which Protestantism itself was exposed by the flagrant attempts of the Court to effect the restoration of the Popish religion. The King himself was believed, on good ground, to be nothing better than a concealed Papist. The Duke of York, his brother, and immediate successor to the Crown, was not only an avowed convert to that religion, but a flaming and furious zealot. Lord Clifford, the first minister, and other persons in high authority, were also bigoted Papists; and a Declaration of Indulgence had been published by the King, in order to make way for the introduction of Popery. In these circumstances, the Test Act was a measure of national policy and safety. It bore the title of ‘An Act for preventing the Danger which may happen from Popish Reculants’—and the Dissenters, far from concurring in the

opposition made by the Court to this Bill, publicly declared, through the medium of Mr. Alderman Love, one of the Members for the City of London, and himself a Dissenter, ‘ that in a time of public danger they would in no wise impede the progress of a measure deemed essential to the safety of the kingdom ;—and *though they were accidentally included in the operation of it*, they would waive their claim to an exemption, trusting to the good faith, justice, and humanity of Parliament, that a future provision should be made for their relief.’ This reasonable declaration extremely facilitated the passing of the Bill, and was received with just and general applause. A Bill for their relief was accordingly at a subsequent period of the session passed by the Commons, but defeated by the sudden prorogation of Parliament. A second Bill was in a succeeding Parliament brought in, and passed both Houses ; but while it lay ready for the royal assent, the King degraded his dignity so far, as secretly to order the Clerk of the Crown to withdraw the Bill; and the Parliament being soon afterwards dissolved, it never passed into a law.

“ But the relief which the unprincipled profligacy of Charles refused to grant, the magnanimity of William was impatient to bestow. In one of his earliest speeches from the throne, he expressed his ‘ earnest hope, that such alteration would be made in the laws as would
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leave room for the admission of all his Protestant subjects who were willing to serve him.' But at this period the High Church and Tory interest predominated in opposition to the wise and salutary policy of the Court. From the memorable protest of the Lords upon this subject in the year 1689, it appeared nevertheless that the sentiments of several of the greatest men in that extraordinary æra coincided with those of their Sovereign. And upon another occasion of a still later date—a conference between the two Houses upon the Bill of occasional Conformity—the Peers (not a few individuals only of that Assembly, but the whole House) expressed in language still more emphatical their abhorrence of the injustice of the Test Act."

In discussing the general policy of this law, Mr. Beaufoy observed, "that to the higher trust of legislative authority the Dissenters were admitted without reserve. From the Members of that House, from the Members of the House of Peers, no religious test was required. Hence he strongly inferred the absurdity of the imposition in question. He had heard indeed of an idle opinion that there was something of a republican tendency, of an anti-monarchical bias, in the very doctrines of the Presbyterian Church. From so vague an assertion he appealed to experience. Were the Scots suspected of an indifference to
Monarchy?

Monarchy? He had heard them taxed with a predilection for those maxims of policy which were the most favorable to power; but of levelling principles, of republican attachments, he had never heard them accused. The English Dissenters, since the Revolution, which had first given this country a Constitution, had uniformly acted on principles the most beneficial, and had constantly proved themselves the ardent supporters and the faithful adherents of that system of Monarchy which was established by law. Would then the repeal of the Test Act prove injurious to the Established Church? GOD FORBID! The suggested repeal was no attack upon the rights of others; it was merely the completion of that wise system of toleration adopted at the æra of the Revolution. The Church of England flourished long before the Test Act existed. In Scotland, no such law ever had a being. Had Scotland therefore no Established Church? In Ireland, the relief now solicited had been granted seven years ago. But was the Church of Ireland therefore destroyed? In Holland, in Russia, in Prussia, in HANOVER, no traces of such a test were to be found. In the dominions of the Emperor, all disqualifications of this nature had been recently abolished. In France, a similar relief was granted by the Edict of Nantz, from the revocation of which France had so severely suffered, and which was now, as it was supposed,

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about to be restored. In fact," Mr. Beaufoy justly added, "the repeal of the Test, so far from being pernicious to the Established Church, would be salutary. The different classes of Dissenters had no general interest, no bond of union, but that reproachful exclusion from public employments which was common to them all. If he were farther asked, If justice be the principle on which you decide, shall not the Catholics enjoy the common privileges of citizenship? he would answer without hesitation, If the Catholics could give a sufficient pledge of loyalty to their Sovereign, and attachment to the laws—questions not now before the House—he should think they ought to be admitted to the civil and military service of the State." Such were the liberal and elevated sentiments of this speaker, who concluded this excellent address with an enumeration of other considerations, more of a religious than political kind, in favor of the repeal, deduced from the gross profanation to which the nature of the present Test subjected a sacred and solemn Christian rite. Mr. Beaufoy declared, "that he should have thought it not unbecoming the sanctity of the Bishops to have solicited the removal of this scandal from the Church. But let the requisition come from whatever quarter it might, sure he was that a compliance with it would reflect honor on that House: for whatever tended to the debasement of religion, diminished
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political authority, and weakened all the functions of civil and social order.”

Lord North, true to his original principles of Toryism and High Churchism, rose with much zeal to oppose this dangerous attempt at innovation. Declaring himself a friend to toleration in its full extent, he conjured the House at the same time to consider, that the present motion went not merely to toleration, but to the repeal of an Act which was the great bulwark of the Constitution, and to which we owed the inestimable blessings of freedom. The exclusion of the Dissenters from civil offices, Lord North said, was no injury or disgrace. The Test Act was merely a civil and political regulation; and the arguments against it were equally applicable to all those restrictions which the wisdom of government in all countries had found it necessary to establish. His Lordship mentioned the alarm of the Clergy at this attempt; and he added, that they all knew the pernicious nature of a cry, that **THE CHURCH** is in **DANGER**. There was no complaint of ecclesiastical tyranny;—universal toleration was established. Let them therefore be upon their guard against **INNOVATION** in the **CHURCH**, nor confound the toleration of religious opinions with the mode of admission to civil and military appointments.”

Mr. Pitt enforced the arguments of Lord North, but with far more ability and address. He declared,

clared, in very flattering and explicit terms, the esteem and regard which he entertained for the collective body of Protestant Dissenters, who had ever approved themselves the genuine and zealous friends of constitutional liberty ; of which their conduct during the late political conflicts had exhibited a memorable proof, and he acknowledged with gratitude and pleasure the honorable and unanimous support which he had experienced from them at that momentous and interesting crisis. He must nevertheless, however reluctantly, discharge what he conceived to be his indispensable duty in opposing the present application for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. It had been said, If you grant this, the same persons will soon come to you again to ask something more. This had no weight with him. He would not object to concede what he ought to concede, because he might be asked to concede what he ought not to concede. But a distinction was, in his opinion, here necessary to be made between political and civil liberty. The latter he contended that the Dissenters already enjoyed in its fullest extent. The former was in fact nothing else than a distribution of power, which must be regulated by the discretion of the State. The employments and offices of the State were not the property of individuals ; they were public trusts to be confided to those who were politically competent to occupy them. The
Dissenters

Dissenters desired, as a matter of right and justice, a participation of offices. If this were granted, they might acquire a dangerous ascendancy in Corporations; and an exclusive corporation interest in the hands of the Dissenters was a very different thing from the liberty of sitting in that House on the free choice of the general mass of electors. It was now indeed asserted, that they had no such object in contemplation. But it was necessary to take into the account the real springs by which human affairs were regulated, and not to depend upon the security of words in contradistinction to the tenor and tendency of actions. There were persons amongst the Dissenters who would not admit any ecclesiastical establishment to be necessary. Against such persons it became the Legislature to be upon their guard. He had indeed an high opinion of the merits of Dissenters; but they already enjoyed every mental privilege, every freedom to serve God according to their consciences in the most ample degree."

The motion of Mr. Beaufoy was powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, who magnanimously declared, "that whatever personal reason he might have to complain of the recent conduct of the Dissenters, he would never lose sight of the great principles of civil and religious liberty, on which the present application to the House was founded. He had considered himself as honored in acting with them on many former occasions, and he acknowledged

ledged the general tenor of their political conduct to be in the highest degree meritorious. In his opinion, it was very unwise in any case to take religion as religion for a test in politics; and he averred, that the maxims advanced by Mr. Pitt were such, that though he declined persecution in words, he admitted the whole extent of it in principle." Upon a division, after a long debate, the numbers appeared, for the motion 100, against it 178.

This was by no means, considering the opposition of the Minister to the motion, a discouraging division on the first effort. But the Dissenters were in the last degree astonished and chagrined at the part taken by Mr. Pitt in this debate, it being almost universally understood by them, that the application would at least not be discountenanced by him. And the expressions used by him in the previous conferences held with the leading Dissenters, though far from amounting to a promise of support, were considered as certain indications of a favorable disposition. Doubtless Mr. Pitt found, in the progress of the business, obstacles in the way of the repeal which he had not at first apprehended; and he flattered himself, that his public professions of regard and esteem for the Dissenters would so far soothe and conciliate their minds as to reconcile them to the disappointment they sustained. But the

the most refined address, and the greatest ability in the *management of business*, may easily be over-rated. It was not possible for Mr. Pitt, on this grand question, to stand well at once with the Court and with the Dissenters. The Dissenters clearly perceived the difference between the situation of Mr. Pitt and that of his predecessor Sir Robert Walpole, when the last application for a repeal of the Test was made on their part above fifty years before. That wise Minister, though his judgment was decidedly in favor of the repeal *abstractedly considered*, was justly apprehensive of the clamors which would have been unquestionably raised at that turbulent period against a measure, as the consequence of which the weak, the bigoted, and the factious would have joined in vociferating, that the CHURCH WAS IN DANGER. It was an experiment at that time not worth the risk; and the Minister chose the least of the two evils, condescending himself to talk absurdly, in order to prevent others from acting mischievously. But that senseless and terrific clamor had long since become a mere *brutum fulmen*. The application of the Dissenters in the present instance was in unison with the general sense of the Public and of the Parliament, or at least not inconsistent with it; and a slight degree of countenance only from the Court would have sufficed to ensure the success of the motion: nor, on the other hand, was the opposition of the Court

Court so openly and decidedly hostile as to preclude the idea of future attempts.

The attention of the House and of the Nation was soon transferred to a subject of a very different nature. When the Prince of Wales attained the age of majority, A. D. 1783, the sum of fifty thousand pounds per annum only was allotted to him out of the Civil List revenue to defray the entire expence of his establishment. Considering the numerous salaries payable to the officers of his household, this sum was manifestly inadequate to the just support of his rank and situation in life; and the then Ministers, Mr. Fox and Lord North, strongly insisted upon the necessity of fixing the revenue of the Prince at one hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the late King had enjoyed as Prince of Wales at a period when the Civil List produced two hundred thousand pounds per annum less than at present. To this the Sovereign positively objected; and the Prince, in order to prevent disagreeable consequences, generously declared, that he chose to depend upon the spontaneous bounty of the King. The obvious result of this miserable œconomy was, that the Prince, in the four years which were now elapsed, had contracted debts to a large amount; his negligence as to pecuniary concerns being perhaps increased by the consciousness of the extreme difficulty and apparent impossibility of con-

tracting his expences within the narrow limits of his income. The public, not sufficiently adverting to these circumstances, censured the Prince with a too rigid severity for the heedlessness and prodigality of his conduct. The general prejudice was much heightened by the habitual and confidential intercourse maintained by the Prince with the great leaders of the late unpopular Administration. It was also too notorious to admit of disguise or palliation, that the Prince was exempt from none of those youthful indiscretions and excesses by which men of high rank in early life are for the most part so unhappily characterized.

A report of a very serious nature had moreover for some time past gained very general credit; namely, that the Prince had contracted a secret marriage with a lady of the Roman Catholic religion;—a fatal step, for which the acknowledged personal charms and mental accomplishments of Mrs. Fitzherbert (such was the name of the lady in question) would make in the public opinion a very inadequate compensation. It is true that the marriage, in whatever mode it were solemnized, could not by the Royal Marriage Act be regarded as legal; and by a clause in the Act of Settlement, if the legality of the marriage were affirmed, the Prince, by marrying a Papist, would *ipso facto* forfeit his right of succession to the Crown. His situation therefore was in the highest degree singular and
critical,

critical, especially as the Marriage Act itself was by many persons considered as founded in such manifest absurdity and injustice, as to be in its own nature null and void. To balance these unfavorable circumstances, the Prince was said to possess good temper and good sense: his person was agreeable, his deportment affable and engaging, and, by mixing familiarly in the society of men of enlightened minds, he had, as there was good reason to believe, acquired far juster and more liberal ideas of the nature of government and the spirit of legislation than those which constituted the policy of the present reign: Happily also, as it was contrary to law for the Heir Apparent to leave the kingdom, he had the advantage of an English education, and his manners and modes of thinking were entirely English; while the German education of the Bishop of Osnaburgh, now Duke of York, and of the other younger branches of the Royal House, and their familiarity with the German Courts, could have no other tendency than to inspire them with sentiments totally opposite to the genius of the English Constitution. There is nothing indeed more surprising in the history of the present reign, than the tame acquiescence of the Legislature in so apparent an affront, as is implied in the supposition that an English Prince cannot receive an education in England proper for his station. England has, it must be confessed,

been indeed grossly and culpably inattentive to the education of her princes; and in this respect, as well as many others, the present reign will furnish to posterity a striking and instructive lesson.

Finding his embarrassments continually increasing, and a large debt accumulated, the Prince of Wales, in the summer of 1786, applied to the King his father for assistance: but meeting with a harsh and peremptory refusal, he adopted a resolution which seemed to indicate a firmness and vigor of mind, capable under a right direction of great and noble things. Suppressing the establishment of his household, he formally vested forty thousand pounds per annum of his revenue in the hands of trustees for the liquidation of his debts. His stud of running horses, his hunters, and even his coach-horses, were sold by public auction. The elegant improvements and additions making to the palace of Carlton House, where he resided, were suddenly stopped, and the most splendid apartments shut up from use; in this manner choosing to retire from the world, rather than forfeit the honor of a gentleman by practising on the credulity of his creditors.

Things had remained in this posture for near a twelvemonth, when the Prince was persuaded to give his assent to a proposal for laying the state of his affairs before Parliament; and on the 20th
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of April Mr. Alderman Newnham, Member for the City of London, gave notice that he would bring forward a motion for an Address to the King, praying him to take the situation of the Prince into consideration, and to grant him such relief as he in his wisdom should think fit, and pledging the House to make good the same. This gave rise to an interesting conversation; and Mr. Newnham was, by the Minister and many other Members of the House, earnestly entreated to withdraw his motion, as fertile of inconvenience and mischief.

Mr. Pitt said, "that by the perseverance of Mr. Newnham he should be driven to the disclosure of circumstances which he should otherwise have thought it his duty to conceal." And Mr. Rolle, Member for Devonshire, declared, "that the investigation of this question involved in it circumstances which tended immediately to affect the Constitution in Church and State."

Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and other Gentlemen in the confidence of the Prince, declared that "there was nothing which the Prince of Wales less feared, than a full and impartial investigation of his conduct; and nothing that his Royal Highness would more deprecate, than a studied ambiguity or affected tenderness, on the pretence of respect or indulgence." Mr. Rolle was particularly

called upon, though in vain, to explain the extraordinary language he had used.

The subject being in a few days resumed, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the House to the declaration of Mr. Rolle. "To what that declaration alluded (Mr. Fox said) it was impossible to ascertain, till the person who made it thought proper to explain his meaning: but he supposed it must refer to that base and malicious calumny which had been propagated without doors by the enemies of the Prince, with a view to depreciate his character, and injure him in the esteem of his country." Mr. Fox further declared "that the Prince had authorised him to assert, that, as a Peer of Parliament, he was ready in the other House to submit to any the most pointed questions that could be put to him upon the subject, or to afford the King or his Ministers the fullest assurances of the utter falsehood of the fact in question."

Mr. Rolle now thought proper to acknowledge, that the subject upon which Mr. Fox had spoken, was the matter to which he had alluded as affecting both Church and State. He said "that the reports relative to this transaction had made a deep impression upon the minds of all men who loved and venerated the Constitution. He knew that this thing could not have been accomplished under
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the formal sanction of law; but if it existed as a fact, it might be productive of the most alarming consequences, and ought to be satisfactorily cleared up."

Mr. Fox replied, "that he did not deny the calumny in question merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but he denied it *in toto*, in fact as well as in law. The fact not only could never have happened legally, but never did happen in any way, and had from the beginning been a vile and malignant falsehood."

Mr. Rolle rose again, and asked, "whether in what he now asserted Mr. Fox spoke from direct authority?" Mr. Fox said he had spoken from direct authority.

In consequence of these explicit and authoritative affirmations, Mr. Rolle was loudly called upon to express his satisfaction. But this he obstinately declined, saying only "that the House would judge for themselves of what had passed." On this Mr. Sheridan was provoked to declare, "that if Mr. Rolle persisted in his refusal, or otherwise to put the matter into such a state of enquiry as *should* satisfy him, the House ought to come to a resolution, 'that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports injurious to the character of the Prince.'"

Mr. Pitt now properly interposed, and protested against so flagrant an attack on the free-

dom of speech and deliberation in that House. And it must be confessed that Mr. Rolle was so far justified as the voice of the public could justify him, in retaining his doubts; for a general and firm persuasion still prevailed of a secret marriage between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert: though no one presumed to call in question the honor of Mr. Fox in the declarations made by him in the Prince's name, for which he undoubtedly had, or thought he had, sufficient authority, and which operated to the perfect apparent conviction of the House of Commons; though, to complete the mystery and perplexity of the business, it was subsequently reported and believed that a temporary coolness at least had taken place between the Prince and Mr. Fox from the æra of this debate, and as the consequence of that warmth of indignation which carried Mr. Fox inadvertently beyond the strict limits of his commission.

In this stage of the business an interview, at the desire of the King, took place between the Prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt, at Carlton House; and the Prince was informed, "that if the intended motion were withdrawn, every thing might be settled to his Royal Highness's satisfaction." This being acceded to, a message was delivered by the Minister from the King to the House, stating his Majesty's great concern, "that from the accounts of
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the Prince of Wales it had appeared that he had incurred a debt to a large amount, which, painful as it was to him to propose any addition to the burdens of his people, he was induced by his paternal affection to the Prince, to desire the assistance of Parliament to discharge—on the well-grounded expectation, nevertheless, of the Prince's avoiding to contract any similar debt in future; with a view to which, the King had directed a sum of ten thousand pounds to be paid out of the Civil List, in addition to his former allowance."

On the very next day after the accounts referred to in the Royal Message were laid before the House, and of which the dignified generosity of the House suffered not the inspection, an Address was voted to the King, to request him to direct the sum of one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds to be paid out of the Civil List for the full discharge of the debts of the Prince of Wales, and the farther sum of twenty thousand pounds to complete the repairs of Carlton House.

It may be remarked, in dismissing this subject, that the sum of fifty thousand pounds had been already actually expended on Carlton House; so that, if the Prince had enjoyed a revenue equal to that of the late King when Prince of Wales, there would have accrued in the four years elapsed since his majority a very considerable saving, notwithstanding

standing that extraordinary expence; and thus the complaints of extravagance do not appear to rest upon a very solid foundation.

The subject of Mr. Hastings's impeachment had been resumed early in the present session, and had occupied a large proportion of it. The primary charge respecting the Rohilla war, brought forward by Mr. Burke towards the conclusion of the session of 1786, had made a deep impression upon the House: and although Mr. Hastings had been acquitted of the charge, it was upon grounds on which it was impossible to rest his future defence.

The conduct of Mr. Pitt had been hitherto indecisive and mysterious; but the part taken by Mr. Jenkinson, and the party of which he was considered as the head, left no room for doubt as to the secret inclination of the Court: and although Mr. Pitt, on the Benares charge, stated by Mr. Fox, had voted against Mr. Hastings, he expressly declared that he did not, *upon that account*, consider himself as committed to a final vote of impeachment. The grand question therefore still remained doubtful, when on the 7th of February 1787 Mr. Sheridan opened the third charge respecting the Begum Princesses of Oude, with an eloquence and energy which were perhaps never surpassed, and which, in their consequences, proved entirely decisive.

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The substance of this, as of the other principal charges, has already been recorded in the regular narration of India transactions. A slight extract or two from Mr. Sheridan's speech may serve to excite a faint idea of the transcendent ability with which this charge was enforced:—

Mr. Sheridan said, “ that the conduct of Mr. Hastings respecting the Nabob and Begums of Oude comprehended in it every species of human offence. He had been guilty of rapacity at once violent and insatiable, of treachery cool and premeditated, of oppression unprovoked, of barbarity wanton and unmanly. So long since as the year 1775 the Begum Princess, widow of Sujah ul Dowla, had written to Mr. Hastings in the following moving terms:—‘ If it is your pleasure that the mother of the late Nabob, that myself, his other women, and his infant children should be reduced to a state of dishonor and distress, we must submit. But if, on the contrary, you call to mind the friendship of the late blessed Nabob, you will exert yourself effectually in favor of us who are helpless.’ Inflamed by disappointment at Benares, he hastened to the fortress of Chunar, to put in execution the atrocious design of instigating the Nabob, son of this Princess, to parricide and plunder. No sooner had Mr. Hastings determined to invade the substance of Justice, than he resolved to avail himself of her judicial forms, and
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dispatched a messenger for the Chief Justice of India to assist him in perpetrating the violence he had meditated. Without a moment's pause, or the shadow of process instituted, sentence was pronounced. And thus, at the same time that the sword of Government was converted to an assassin's dagger, the pure ermine of Justice was stained and soiled with the basest contamination. It was clear to demonstration, that the Begums were not concerned in the insurrection of Benares. No, their treasures were their treason. If (said this eloquent speaker) the mind of Mr. Hastings were susceptible of superstition, he might image the proud spirit of Sujah ul Dowla looking down upon the ruin and devastation of his family; beholding the palace which he had adorned with the spoils of the devoted Rohillas, plundered by his base and perfidious ally; and viewing the man whom on his death-bed he had constituted the guardian of his wife, his mother, and his family, forcibly exposing those dear relations, the objects of his solemn trust, to the rigor of the merciless seasons, or the violence of the more merciless soldiery.—Such were the awful dispensations of retributive justice!—It was not given to that House to witness the tremulous joys of the millions whom the vote of that night would save from the cruelty of corrupted power. But the blessings of the people thus delivered, would not be dissipated in
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empty air. No; they would lift up their prayers to Heaven in gratitude to the power, which, by stretching its mighty arm across the deep, had saved them from ruin and destruction."

On this occasion Mr. Pitt acted a part which did him great honor. Though the eloquence of Mr. Sheridan had excited a spirit of enthusiasm in the House, which perhaps no degree of ministerial influence could have counteracted, it would be highly invidious and unjust to attribute the decided conduct of Mr. Pitt on this memorable night to the apprehension of being left in a minority by an attempt to negative the motion. On the contrary, he appeared penetrated with a perfect conviction of the atrocity of the facts, and of the strength of the evidence by which they were supported. And the Minister, who in the comparatively insignificant business of an election return could so far degrade himself as to countenance, and even publicly to vindicate, an act of deliberate injustice, now felt all the sympathies of humanity, all the energies of virtue, awakened in his breast, and impelling him to testify, in terms the most explicit and expressive, his detestation of perfidy so vile, of cruelty so remorseless. On a division the numbers were, in favor of the motion 175, against it 68.

On the 2d of March Mr. Pelham opened the charge

charge relative to the Nabob of Ferruckabad; which was affirmed by 112 against 50 voices.

On the 15th of March the charge upon the subject of contracts was brought forward by Sir James Erskine: "All of them," Sir James Erskine observed, "were made in direct violation of the regulations of the Court of Directors, 'that the contracts should be given from year to year, that they should be publicly advertised, and be disposed of to the best bidder.' The contract for rice was avowedly given to Mr. Auriol, as 'a reward for his long and faithful services.' Of his expenditure no vouchers were required, but the accounts were to be given in upon honor. This mode of passing accounts was (the Honorable mover observed) peculiar to India, as indeed honor there was of a peculiar nature. It dreaded the production of proofs, had an intuitive abhorrence of being confronted with truth, and shrunk like the sensitive plant from the touch of enquiry. The opium contract Mr. Sullivan, son to the Chairman of the India Company, had immediately SOLD for a clear profit of fifty-two thousand pounds. Another contract had been given to Mr. Archibald Frazer, the near relation of Sir Elijah Impey, who had thought it necessary to dispatch affidavits to England, for the purpose of clearing himself from the suspicion of participat-
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ing in the profits accruing from it. These affidavits (Sir James said) were the pastoral essays of the Learned Judge, his songs *in ripas et flumina*, the forerunners only of those epic attestations, the *prælia et reges*, by which he had commemorated the wars of Benares and the rebellion of Oude." On this article the division was, ayes 60, noes 26.

Upon the 23d of March the charge relative to Fyzoola Khan was brought forward by Mr. Windham. This was carried on a division of 96 against 37 voices.

On the 2d of April Mr. Sheridan opened to the House the charge upon the subject of presents: upon which occasion he observed, "that the late Governor General had, in every part of his conduct, exhibited proofs of a wild, eccentric, and irregular mind. He had been every thing by starts, and nothing long—now high and lofty, now mean and insidious—now artful and temporising, now rigid and inflexible—in pride, in passion, in all things changeable except in corruption. His revenge was a tempest, a *tornado* blackening the horizon, and involving all within the sphere of its influence in one common destruction. But his corruption was regular and systematic, a *monsoon* blowing uniformly from one point of the compass, and waſting the wealth of India to the ſame port in one certain direction."

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Upon a division, the numbers appeared, ayes 165; noes 54.

On the 19th of April the charge respecting the revenues was opened by Mr. Francis, who had formerly occupied with so much honor to himself, but so unavailingly as to the public, the office of Member of the Supreme Council in India, and who had recently taken his seat as a Member of the House of Commons. This charge was of a very important and interesting nature; and Mr. Francis entered into a most able and elaborate discussion of it. He shewed, from the very nature of their tenure, "that the Zemindars were not mere collectors of the revenue, as they had been artfully represented by Mr. Hastings, but real land-holders possessing a permanent, divisible, and hereditary property, descending even to women. He enumerated the different modes of managing the revenues of Bengal, adopted by Mr. Hastings in the course of thirteen years. "The object of Mr. Hastings, he said, was to avoid coming to a fixed settlement, for then there must be an end of speculation. At the time of his accession to the government the provinces had not perfectly recovered the effects of the dreadful famine which had taken place in Bengal at a very recent period; yet then did the Committee of Circuit, under the sanction of Mr. Hastings, raise the
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rents of the zemindaries to an unheard-of standard ; and by the ensuing project of 1781, the whole landed property of the country was put up to a pretended auction ; the proprietors were universally deprived of their estates, and banyans, cheats, and adventurers of all sorts, put into possession of their lands. Under this settlement Cantoo Baboo, Mr. Hastings's banyan, held farms to the amount of 135,000*l.* per annum. The Directors had ordered the persons composing the Committee of Circuit to be prosecuted, but Mr. Hastings had ordered the prosecution to be withdrawn. A Committee of Revenue was subsequently introduced under the influence of Gunga Govind Sing, a notorious and adroit villain, which completed the ruin of the country. When Mr. Hastings came into possession of the Bengal Government, he found it a fertile, populous, and prosperous country ; it contained a regular gradation of ranks like a pyramid, from a well-ordered yeomanry to sovereign princes : but these distinctions have been broken down—the whole nation has been pounded as it were by the oppression of the Government into one mass—and the prince was no otherwise discoverable from the peasant than by the superiority of his sufferings, and the more pungent bitterness of his humiliations. Mr. Francis concluded in these remarkable words :—“ My particular labor is now at an end. An unremitting perseverance of thirteen years has

at last conducted me to that issue which has been the object of all my efforts. Mr. Hastings must now be impeached—let him have a fair trial—I desire no more. In arriving at that object I have secured every personal purpose that I ever had in view; the reputation of Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson, and myself, is secure; your votes are my authority: the House of Commons are my compurgators. The only victory I ever aimed at was to clear my character from foul aspersion, and to establish, as I trust I have done, the integrity of my conduct in the estimation of my country.” This charge was confirmed, notwithstanding the unexpected dissent of the Minister, by 71 to 55 voices.

On the 9th of May the report made by Mr. Burke from the Committee, to whom it had been referred to prepare the articles of impeachment, was confirmed by the House, ayes 175, noes 89. On the following day it was voted that Mr. Hastings be IMPEACHED: and Mr. Burke accordingly, in the name of the House of Commons, and of all the Commons of Great Britain, repaired to the Bar of the House of Lords, and impeached Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors—at the same time acquainting their Lordships, that the Commons would with all convenient speed exhibit articles against him, and make good the same.

On the 14th another charge respecting misde-
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meanors in Oude was added to the former by Mr. Burke, and voted without a division. On the same day the articles actually prepared were sent to the Lords; and on the 21st Mr. Hastings, being conducted to the Bar of that House by the Serjeant at Arms, was taken into the custody of the Black Rod, but on the motion of the Lord Chancellor was admitted to bail—himself in 20,000*l.* and two sureties, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Sumner, in 10,000*l.* each; and he was ordered to deliver in an answer to the articles of impeachment in one month from that time, or upon the second day of the next session of Parliament.

On the 30th of May (1787) the King put an end to the present session by a speech, applauding “the measures taken by Parliament respecting the reduction of the national debt, and the treaty of navigation and commerce with the Most Christian King. He spoke of the general tranquillity of Europe, and lamented the DISSENSIONS which unhappily prevailed amongst the STATES of the UNITED PROVINCES.” This then is the proper period to pause, and take a retrospective view of the politics of the Continent, and of the origin and progress of these dissensions.

If the embarrassments of Great Britain at the return of peace, in consequence of the alarming addition of debt contracted during the war, were very great, those of France it must be confessed were of still greater magnitude. The finances of

France during the war had been committed to the management of M. Necker, a Genevan protestant, a man of strict probity, of genuine philanthropy, of extensive knowledge in the detail of affairs, but who, nevertheless, appears to have been destitute of those clear and comprehensive views which distinguish the great and enlightened statesman; and his vanity, ostentation, and egotism formed a great deduction from the aggregate of his virtues. This celebrated financier conceived the romantic and impracticable plan of raising the loans necessary for the service of the war upon the credit of funds to be created by economical savings in the public expenditure. The revenue of France was indeed immense, not perhaps falling short in the gross receipt of twenty-five millions sterling; but the civil, military, and naval establishments of that vast kingdom were also upon a proportionable scale: and if it had been possible, which it certainly was not, by any efforts within the compass of M. Necker's ability, effectually to have counteracted that spirit of extravagance and corruption which had so long pervaded all the departments of government in France, and to have substituted in their stead the order and frugality of his native republic, still an enormous deficiency must ultimately have resulted from a scheme so visionary and chimerical as that of carrying on a war without taxes. At the æra of the peace this was found to be actually the case; and M. Necker, who had en-
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raged one party by his attempts, and disappointed the other by his failures, was compelled to resign to M. de Calonne, a man of great talents, but who, immersed in dissipation and intrigue, and neither able nor solicitous to reform the abuses of the government, proposed to supply the present grand deficiency in the revenue in the usual way by new and heavy imposts.

The excessive and notorious derangement of the French finances, and the consequent indisposition of the Court of Versailles to involve itself in hostilities with any of the leading powers of Europe, probably emboldened the restless and ambitious spirit of the Emperor, who also doubtless relied on the influence of the Queen his sister in the Cabinet of France, to venture upon measures which the most powerful of his predecessors would have regarded as rash and presumptuous. Taking advantage of the animosity subsisting between the maritime powers, he had during the late war formally cancelled the barrier treaty originally concluded under the guarantee of England, and had dismissed the Dutch garrisons from the frontier towns of the Low Countries. In the vain expectation of permanent amity with France, he had even dismantled the greater part of those important fortresses, leaving by this means the country wholly exposed, in case of a future rupture, to the inroads of that formidable power.

Elated with the facility with which he had ac-

complished this object, he, in the autumn of the year 1783, suddenly demanded of the States General the appointment of a Commission to meet at Bruffels, for the accurate ascertainment of the boundaries of the Dutch and Austrian Netherlands. While this extraordinary demand was under discussion, a detachment of the Austrian troops entered the Dutch territory, and seized upon two small forts in the neighbourhood of Sluys; and a new demand was made of a free navigation of the Scheldt beyond Fort Lillo, as far as the land of Saftingen. Conferences being at length agreed upon to be held at Bruffels, in order to the final settlement of these claims, the Plenipotentiaries of the Emperor delivered in to those of the States General, May 1784, the entire demands of his Imperial Majesty, purporting the enlargement of his boundaries on the side of Breda and Bois-le-duc; the demolition of the forts Kruickshank and Frederic-Henry; the inland navigation of the Scheldt as far as Saftingen; the requisition of various sums of money pretended to have been due to the Emperor since the beginning of the present century; and the CESSION of the CITY of MAESTRICHT, and the contiguous district of Outre Meuse, disjoined from the general mass of the Dutch possessions.

The States, astonished and alarmed at these novel claims, were urgent to obtain the mediation of the Court of Versailles. The situation of Holland was
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indeed at this period such as to make all opposition apparently fruitless. The weight which she had been accustomed to derive from her intimate connection and alliance with England was no more; and in consequence of a strange fatality, she was now reduced to the humiliating necessity of resorting for protection to that very power by whom her liberties had been so frequently menaced, and at one time so nearly subverted. Since the termination of the war with England she had been distracted with internal commotions. A great majority of the Dutch nation accused with vehemence the Prince of Orange of gross and flagrant partiality to England during the war. It was affirmed that he had *betrayed his country*, in leaving her intentionally destitute of the means of defence; and that he had constantly and systematically counteracted the exertions of those who were earnestly desirous to have carried on the war with vigor and effect. The person by whose counsels the Prince of Orange was supposed to be chiefly influenced—Prince Louis of Brunswick, guardian to the Stadtholder during his minority, and Generalissimo of the Dutch forces—was even said to be a pensioner of England; and so high did the public clamor arise against him, that he found it necessary to resign his offices civil and military, and retire from the country. This was far however from satisfying the disaffected party, which seemed continually to increase as well in numbers as inveteracy. The authority

of the Prince, as established by the Constitution of 1747, was assailed in almost every province, and particularly the great and leading province of Holland, by all the possible modes of attack; and the very existence of the Stadtholderate seemed to have become a question of precarious and problematic import.

In these circumstances it was not wonderful that the Emperor, whose rapacity was unrestrained by even the shadow of principle, depending upon the acquiescence of France, again rose in his demands. In what he styled his ultimatum, delivered in August 23, 1784, his Imperial Majesty observing "that divers difficulties had occurred in the discussion of his claims, and that a speedy termination of those differences was ardently desired by him, offered to depart from his just demand upon the city of Maastricht, and to moderate his other requisitions, in consideration of the free and unlimited navigation of the Scheldt in both branches to the sea. His Imperial Majesty, not doubting but the States would accept with eagerness so unquestionably a mark of his good will, had thought proper to regard the Scheldt as open, and to declare its navigation free from the date of this paper; and he concluded, that on the supposition of any insult being offered to the Imperial flag in the execution of these ideas, he should be obliged to consider it as a formal declaration of war on the part of the Republic."

This memorial was as a stroke of thunder to the
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Dutch nation. The commercial grandeur of Holland had risen upon the ruins of Antwerp; and though it is probable that, if the free navigation of the Scheldt had been now restored to that once famous mart, the course of trade could not have been easily or speedily diverted from its accustomed channels, the fears of the Dutch were wrought up to the highest pitch of apprehension. The States in their answer protested against this new claim, as the flagrant invasion of a right which they considered as the most valuable of their possessions. In order to establish this demand they observed, "that the Emperor must contravene the treaty by which they had been acknowledged as Independent States, and also that by which the House of Austria had been put into possession of the Austrian Netherlands. They considered their prosperity, their dignity, and their existence, as linked to the perpetual conservation of this sovereignty, and declared it to be a pretension from which they would never depart."

Early in the month of October (1784) a small vessel sailed from Antwerp, amid the shouts and acclamations of the inhabitants, with the intention of ascertaining this important point. On the arrival of the Imperial brigantine before the fort of Lillo, an account of its destination was demanded; on the refusal of the officer to answer, a single ball was fired; and no regard being paid to this intimation, a whole broadside was discharged, and the vessel

vessel immediately struck her colors. This resolute proceeding on the part of the Dutch excited the utmost astonishment of the Emperor, who had treated the sage remonstrances of his Prime Minister, Prince Kaunitz, on this subject with contempt — repeatedly and peremptorily affirming, “*that the Dutch would never dare to fire.*” The Emperor being in Hungary when this intelligence arrived, the Prince wrote to his Imperial Majesty the following laconic letter of information, “*But they have fired.*” Immediately the conferences at Bruffels were broken up, the Imperial Ambassador at the Hague was recalled, and hostile preparations were made on both sides.

It was at this critical moment that the Court of Versailles interposed in a manner the most efficacious to preserve the Dutch nation from the ruin which threatened them. Notwithstanding the alliance which had now for thirty years subsisted between the Courts of Vienna and Versailles; notwithstanding the ties of blood which connected the two Sovereigns; notwithstanding the pacific disposition of the French Monarch, and the financial embarrassments of the Government; on this great occasion, all the ancient jealousy of the great rival Houses of Bourbon and Austria seemed to revive. A letter written with his Most Christian Majesty’s own hand to the Emperor, dated November 20, (1784) pointed out the essential distinction between
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the primary and ultimate demands of the Emperor. As to the former, the King of France declared himself neutral; but he protested in the strongest terms against any violation of the rights of the States General respecting the navigation of the Scheldt—a right exercised by them for near one hundred and fifty years under the sanction of a sacred treaty. His Most Christian Majesty exhorted the Emperor therefore to listen to the voice of moderation and humanity, and to assent to a renewal of the conferences under his mediation. To enforce this amicable overture a great army was assembled in the vicinity of Luxemburg; the Marquis de Verac, who possessed the entire confidence of M. de Vergennes the French Minister, was dispatched as Ambassador extraordinary to the Hague; and the Marschal de Maillebois, an officer of high reputation in the French service, was *permitted* to take the command in chief of the Dutch forces*.

The Emperor now thought proper to declare his acceptance of the proffered mediation, provided the freedom of the Scheldt, *or the cession of Maestricht*,

* On the convening of a Cabinet Council about this period at Versailles preparatory to the final resolution, the Queen of France is reported to have said to the Count de Vergennes, as the Minister was passing to the Council Chamber, "Remember, Sir, in your deliberations, that the Emperor is my brother." The Count, casting his eyes on the Dauphin, whom the Queen then held in her arms, with great happiness replied, "Yes, madam, and I shall also recollect that the Dauphin of France is your son."

to which he once again condescended to advert, were made the preliminaries of the negotiation. But the Dutch, animated by the avowed protection, and incited no doubt also by the secret suggestions of France, now peremptorily refused to accede to either of these very unequal alternatives. After an interval of decent delay, the Emperor with his characteristic inconstancy relinquished both these favorite objects, the latter of which at least, had he never extended his views beyond it, he had once a fair prospect of accomplishing. But, as if eager to recover by his pride the reputation he had lost by his folly, he insisted that the Dutch States should make a public submission, and apologise by a formal embassy for the insult offered to his flag at Lillo.

The Barons Wassenaer and Leyden being deputed to the Court of Vienna for this purpose, conferences were again opened, and in a short time a treaty of pacification was signed (November 8, 1784), importing that the States should pay the sum of ten millions of florins as an indemnification for the claim of the Emperor upon Maestricht and its territory, and as a compensation for the damage done by the late inundations; the inland navigation of the Scheldt was extended to the town of Saftingen, and the forts of Liefkinshoek and Lillo ceded to the Emperor.

The inflated and almost ludicrous style of the
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complimentary address of the Dutch Ambassadors at their audience of leave, sufficiently shews the idea entertained by them of the character of the Emperor. “ May the glorious reign of your Imperial Majesty (say their Excellencies), destined to complete the felicity of your subjects, daily administer to fame the best means to extend and perpetuate your great and awful name ! May the æra of Joseph II. like that of TITUS, TRAJANUS, and MARCUS AURELIUS, your predecessors in the ROMAN EMPIRE, be ever recorded as that of humanity, peace, and the happiness of mankind !”

It is remarkable that England during these transactions looked on with the most perfect indifference, or even with apparent pleasure—never dreaming that her interest were essentially affected by the question relative to the navigation of the Scheldt ; and much less was either Court or Country at this period infected with the *mania* of supposing it necessary or expedient to enter into a WAR, in order to prevent the people of Flanders from freely enjoying what GOD and Nature had freely bestowed. Nor indeed would the utmost efforts of England probably have availed in opposition to the projects of the Emperor, in case of the acquiescence of France.

When a great nation interferes in the concerns of her neighbours, true policy and dignity require not only that the object which she aims to effect

be just and important in itself, that it be clearly and distinctly marked, but also, without any excessive or disproportionate exertion, attainable. This was a case in which, from local and other unalterable circumstances, France could interpose, not only with far more propriety, as a guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia, but with infinitely greater effect, than England. And GEORGE III. prompted merely *perhaps* by motives of unappeased resentment, acted precisely the part which the penetration and discretion of an ELIZABETH would have suggested.

The treaty of peace between Holland and the Emperor was immediately followed by a treaty of alliance and friendship between Holland and France. This was no doubt an event neither pleasant nor honorable to England; but it was the natural and unavoidable result of the absurd and mischievous politics long ago adopted by the English Court, and of the novel situation in which Holland had been consequently placed. But as to any serious inconvenience to be apprehended from this or any other defection of the same nature, England under a wise system of government, such as had in the main been acted upon since the dismissal of the old execrable Administration, might stand alone the envy and admiration of the world.

The business of the Scheldt might be supposed to have engrossed the attention of the Emperor;

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on the contrary, while the issue of it was yet unknown, a negotiation of still greater importance, and of a nature strangely incompatible with the former, was carried on with the Elector of Bavaria, for the exchange of that extensive and commodious territory for the whole of the Austrian Netherlands, which were for this purpose to be converted into a kingdom under the ancient and long-since obsolete appellation of Aufrasia. This design could not escape the sagacity of the King of Prussia, nor the essential advantage which the House of Austria would derive from the cession of a large and fertile country contiguous to the general mass of its possessions, in lieu of a detached territory expensive and difficult to defend. In order to counteract this new attempt of the Court of Vienna, so hostile to the liberty and independency of the Germanic body, a treaty was signed at Berlin by his Prussian Majesty, the King of Great Britain as Elector of Hanover, and the Elector of Saxony, to which the Duke of Deux-ponts, the Margrave of Anspach, and other princes afterwards acceded. This formidable confederation was expressly affirmed to be intended for maintaining the indivisibility of the Empire, the rights of the Germanic body in general, and of the respective States in particular.

In a declaration subsequently issued by the King of Prussia, that Monarch insists on the danger to be apprehended from the rising power of Austria,
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and asserts, "that the addition of so extensive and flourishing a country as Bavaria to the dominions of that ambitious House, must effectually destroy the balance of Germany, if not of Europe—and must end in the annihilation of all the subordinate States which enter into the composition of the Germanic body." The Duke of Deux-ponts also, heir to the Elector, protested against the alienation of his patrimony; and the Court of St. Petersburg shewed itself as formerly decidedly hostile to the annexation of Bavaria to the Austrian dominions. So impracticable did it appear in the face of these impediments to proceed in the execution of their project, that the Courts of Vienna and Munich were compelled, in the spring of 1785, publicly to contradict the report, and to assert that the convention between them had no farther object than the adjustment of the limits of their respective countries.

Notwithstanding the dangerous contest in which Holland found herself involved with the Court of Vienna, the domestic contentions of the Republic suffered no abatement. The party anciently in opposition to the House of Orange, known by the appellation of the Louvestein party, and who consisted chiefly of the provincial aristocracies, or rather oligarchies of the Union, had been recently reinforced by a heterogeneous coalition with the zealous partisans of democracy, who equally wished
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for the total annihilation of the Stadtholderian influence and authority. On the representation of the Deputies of Haerlem, respecting the riotous disposition of the populace of the Hague distinguished by their attachment to the Stadtholder, the care of the military patrol of that place, vested in the Prince of Orange, was transferred to those Deputies by a formal resolution of the States of Holland. The Prince, after warmly remonstrating against this insult, and vainly insisting upon his claim to the undivided command of the garrison of the Hague, withdrew himself from the seat of Government (Sept. 14, 1785), and retired to his palace of Loo.

The States of Holland, far from feeling disposed to recede from their resolution, solemnly voted the States and Senates of the different Provinces to be the undoubted Sovereigns, and the Stadtholder to be their servant: hence inferring, that the powers so exercised were only delegated, and that the State might resume them whenever it saw sufficient reason;—concluding, that the entire command of the garrison should hereafter vest in the Council Committee of the States of Holland.

At this period a Memorial was presented to the States General by the Ambassador of Prussia, in the name of the King his master, strongly urging the interposition of their High Mightinesses, in order that the Prince Stadtholder might peaceably

enjoy the rights and incontestable prerogatives appertaining to his dignity of hereditary Stadtholder.

This application produced not the least effect. The States of Holland, who, as became their superior importance, assumed the lead in the opposition to the Stadtholder, ordered, as if in contempt of this interference, the arms of the House of Orange to be taken out of the colors of the troops belonging to that province, and that the Swiss guards attendant on the person of the Prince should be disbanded.

The towns of Hattem and Elbourg in the province of Guelderland, having manifested a peculiarly refractory and rebellious disposition, the States of Gueldres, in which Assembly the Orange interest yet predominated, commissioned the Stadtholder to employ military force for the reduction of the Burghers. But the States of Holland, Zealand, Overyssel and Groningen joined in prohibiting the troops of their respective provinces from acting in this service. The towns in question were however attacked and captured by the Prince; and Utrecht, which had deeply imbibed the same sentiments, was, in consequence of their resistance to the States of that Province now assembled at Amersfort, expected to be immediately invested. On this intelligence, the States of Holland dispatched a letter to the Prince, demanding of him in twenty-four hours an explicit declaration
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of his intentions. The troops of the province were at the same time ordered to march to the frontier for the protection of Utrecht, and a *cordon* was formed from Naerden to Schoonhoven. And notwithstanding an explanation and apology from the Prince, within the time prescribed, the States of Holland proceeded (Sept. 16, 1786) to the violent resolution of suspending him from his office of Captain General of the province, by a majority of sixteen out of nineteen voices of which that Assembly is composed.

The Prince of Orange on this occasion addressed a long and elaborate letter to the States of Holland. He had expressly said in his former remonstrance, relative to the garrison of the Hague, "We have not the most distant intention to question the superiority of your Noble and Great Mightinesses over the military, as well of the whole province as the garrison of the Hague. Never, says he, could we suppose ourselves invested with a power equal, much less superior, to that of the States over the military, and that we might act according to our own pleasure, and independently of the SOVEREIGN." But he now ventured to assume an higher tone; and declaring "his office of hereditary Captain General of Holland and West Friesland to have been secured to him by the unanimous vote of all the members of the State, he affirmed, that as the resolution by which the office

had been conferred, passed *nemine contradicente*, it could not, *supposing it to be revocable*, be cancelled or even suspended without the like unanimity."

This sudden haughtiness of language may, without hesitation, be attributed to an event of great moment, which had recently taken place in the death of Frederic III. King of Prussia (August 17, 1786), who was succeeded by his nephew Frederic William, to whom the Prince of Orange was nearly allied by marriage to his sister, the Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia.

The new Monarch, feeling for the situation of his relatives, and eager to make a display of his power, entered with far more zeal into the interests of the Prince than his illustrious predecessor, who during a reign of forty-six years had excited the admiration of Europe by the greatness of his talents and the splendor of his successes. He had raised Prussia from obscurity and insignificance to the rank of a first-rate power in Europe; and had left his successor in possession of a flourishing kingdom, an immense treasure, and an army of 200,000 men in the highest reputation for courage and discipline.

In a Memorial presented by the Count de Goertz, his Prussian Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary to the States General (Sept. 18, 1786), he expresses without reserve "the warm part which he takes in the unhappy dissensions subsisting between
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some of the provinces and the Stadtholder, and the very extraordinary oppressions which that Prince is innocently obliged to suffer—and urging that a durable termination may be put to these differences, in order that his Serene Highness the Prince Stadtholder may return with honour and propriety to the Hague, and resume his high employments—infirming also upon the great interest he had, as the nearest neighbour of the United Provinces, that the government of the Republic conformable to the antient constitution should not be changed in any essential point.”

A short time previous to the delivery of this paper; a Memorial had been presented to the States on the part of the King of England, containing in language somewhat more guarded the same sentiments; protesting indeed against the interference of any foreign power in the internal affairs of the Republic, the management and direction of which it is declared to be the wish of his Britannic Majesty to preserve uncontrolled in the hands of those to whom it has been committed by the CONSTITUTION.”

Notwithstanding this powerful interference in behalf of the Prince of Orange, the States of Holland shewed themselves in the highest degree averse from every idea of accommodation. And the States General having at length come to a resolution, notwithstanding the opposition of that

great and leading province, to invite the mediation of Great Britain and Prussia—the States of Holland, inflamed with so unauthorised a proceeding, declared themselves determined rather to strike out their names from the Union of Utrecht, than to suffer such a measure to receive the sanction of the Republic.

The Prince of Orange having now removed his Court to Nimeguen, an ineffectual negotiation was nevertheless carried on during the winter of 1786-7, through the medium of the Count de Goertz and M. de Rayneval the French Envoy. Every thing on the breaking up of these conferences wore the face of war. The Prince encamped near the city of Utrecht opposite to the *cordon* formed by the troops of Holland. The States General, whose constitutional powers were unhappily too limited and feeble to interpose with efficacy, could do nothing more to avert the calamities which menaced the nation, than enforce by a resolution that article of the Union which forbade the troops of the Republic from marching into any province without the leave of the States of that province first obtained.

From the commencement of the contest, the incapacity and intractability of the Prince of Orange had been very apparent. Head of the House of Nassau, he displayed neither the talents nor virtues which had for ages been supposed attached to that illustrious

illustrious name. The Princess, his consort, was said to possess a much larger share of spirit as well as understanding. In the month of June (1787), for reasons which have never perfectly transpired, her Royal Highness, then resident at Nimeguen, adopted the bold and hazardous resolution of proceeding in person to the Hague, where the States General were at that time assembled, accompanied only by the Baroness de Waffanaer and a few domestics. As might previously be expected, she was arrested in her progress at about a league beyond Schoonhoven, and forced back to Nimeguen. This incident brought matters to a crisis. On the 10th of July a Memorial was addressed by the Prussian Monarch to the States of Holland, in which he affected to consider the indignity offered to his sister as a personal insult to himself. To avenge this pretended affront, the Duke of Brunswick, who commanded the Prussian forces in the contiguous Duchy of Cleves, entered Holland at the head of an army consisting of about twenty thousand men on the 13th of September (1787). Notwithstanding the previous probability of this invasion, the consternation of the Dutch nation was extreme, and the country seemed every-where unprepared for resistance. Utrecht, beyond all other cities of the Union distinguished for the violence of her democratic zeal, surrendered almost as soon as summoned. The march of the Prussian Ge-

neral bore the appearance of a triumphal procession. While a futile resolve to suspend the office of Stadtholder passed the Senate of Amsterdam, Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven and other towns in his route submitted tamely to the conqueror. On the seventh day from the commencement of the invasion, the Prince of Orange made his public entry into the Hague. Amsterdam only made a shew of resistance: but on the 10th of October that proud capital, now closely invested, opened its gates to the victor. To the astonishment of the world, that Republic which maintained a contest of eighty years against the power of Spain, which contended for the empire of the ocean with Great Britain, and which repelled the attacks of Louis XIV. in the zenith of his glory, was over-run by the arms of Prussia in a single month. Such and so dire are the effects which flow from civil discord and disunion! In the whole of this transaction, Prussia acted in intimate and avowed concert with England; and while France was slowly assembling troops in the vicinity of Liege, and the Emperor was presenting feeble remonstrances at Berlin, the revolution projected by the Stadtholderian faction was carried into complete execution, and the Stadtholder triumphantly reinstated in all his real and pretended prerogatives.

It is not to be imagined that the Court of Versailles saw the termination of this great contest with
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frigid indifference; but the distracted state of her own affairs, and the increasing discontents and disorders of the kingdom, in a manner compelled her reluctant acquiescence. The projects of the new Minister of Finance, M. de Calonne, proved unsuccessful and abortive. In the latter end of the year 1785, a loan of 3,330,000*l.* being the acknowledged *deficit* of the current year, was negotiated; which the Parliament of Paris, after repeated remonstrances, at last registered only in pursuance of the King's positive commands; at the same time accompanying it with a resolution importing "that public œconomy was the only genuine source of revenue, and the only means of providing for the necessities of the State, and of restoring that credit which borrowing had reduced to the brink of ruin." The King, incensed at their presumption, ordered this resolution to be erased from their records—declaring "that he would never consent that the Parliament should so far abuse his confidence and clemency as to make themselves the censors of his administration. He declared himself satisfied with his Comptroller-General, and determined on no account to suffer groundless apprehensions to interfere with the execution of plans calculated for the good of the State and the welfare of the Nation."

The hostile disposition of the Parliament, and the evident impossibility of obtaining their cordial concurrence

currence to the measures in contemplation, determined the Minister to adopt a plan more suited to the boldness and extent of his views.

In the month of August 1786, M. de Calonne presented a Memorial to the King, representing “the melioration of the finances to be essentially connected with public order; and averring that what the national benefit required could not be effected by partial operations, and that the reparation of the whole was necessary to prevent the ruin of the whole. Of consequence, the project he had formed embraced all the parts of the monarchy, and was intended to bring them to a closer union. It would be an inexhaustible source of happiness for the people of France; it would set the Monarch forever at rest respecting the situation of his finances; *it would raise his POWER higher than that of the most prosperous of his ancestors*, and enrol his name with those of the most virtuous and enlightened legislators. In fine, what induced him to conjure his Majesty to adopt it was, that out of the circle of this reformation he could foresee nothing but calamity and ruin.”

This magnificent and wonder-working plan was no other than to convene by royal authority and appointment, after the example of antient times, an assembly of the most considerable and enlightened persons in the kingdom, under the denomination of NOTABLES, by whose influence and

under whose sanction "a reformation might," to use the words of M. de Calonne, "be effected of whatever was vicious in the Constitution of the State." The Minister accompanied this proposal with a specification of various details, indicating a vigorous and comprehensive mind penetrated with a clear conviction of the necessity of a radical reform in the State, so far at least as related to that detestable aggregate mass of extortion and oppression which assumed the lofty appellation of the National System of Finance. Amongst the new regulations recommended by M. de Calonne, were the equalization of the *vingtièmes* or territorial revenue—the abolition of the *corvée*—the establishment of an uniform *tariff* throughout all the provinces of the kingdom—the alleviation of the odious *gabelle*—the extinction of the feudal rights as vested in the Crown—the suppression or melioration of the forest laws—and the application of the royal demesne lands to the service of the public.

This Memorial was received by the King with approbation; and before the termination of the year summonses were issued accordingly for the meeting of the Assembly of NOTABLES at Versailles, on the 22d of February 1787. It consisted of one hundred and forty-four persons, amongst whom were seven Princes of the Blood, nine Dukes and Peers of France, eight Field Marshals, eight Counsellors of State, and eleven Bishops and Archbishops.

bishops: The remaining Members were chiefly selected from the different Parliaments and Magistracies of the kingdom.

The Convention of NOTABLES was opened in great state by the King in person, with a speech from the Throne, in which he declared “ that they had been chosen by him from the different orders of the State, to impart to them his designs, and to receive from them the observations of which they might think them susceptible. This, said the Monarch, has been the custom of many of my predecessors, and particularly of the CHIEF of my FAMILY, whose name remains still dear to every Frenchman, and whose example I shall always be proud to make the rule of my conduct. His Majesty then in general terms stated the views by which he was actuated—*the* IMPROVEMENT of *the* REVENUE—the equalization of taxes—the liberation of commerce—and expressed the fullest confidence in the zeal with which they were animated for his service.” This was followed by a long and elaborate harangue from M. de Calonne; in which he accused his predecessor M. Necker of leaving at his dismissal from office an arrear of six hundred and eighty-four millions of livres totally unprovided for. The difference subsisting between the annual revenue and the annual expenditure he estimated at eighty millions. “ It is impossible,” said this Minister, “ to suffer the
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State to remain in the constant and imminent danger, to which a deficiency such as the present exposes it—impossible to go on year after year, applying palliatives and expedients, which though they may retard the crisis for a time are sure to render it more fatal at last.” The Minister proceeds to develop his plan for restoring energy and stability to the State, by a grand reform of its abuses, of which he exhibits an interesting and curious detail. In summing up the aggregate of this account, and in solving the grand question, why these intolerable abuses and oppressions have been transmitted from reign to reign, and from age to age, he thus with flowing eloquence expresses himself: “It was not in the bosom of ignorance and confusion, whose veil over-shadowed the times of our first Kings—it was not when Kings, insecure upon their thrones, were entirely occupied in repelling the continual usurpations of over-grown subjects—it was not in the midst of the disorder and anarchy of the feudal system, when a band of petty tyrants issuing from their castles committed the most atrocious depredations—it was not when the rage for crusades, inflamed by the double enthusiasm of religion and glory, carried into the other hemisphere the strength, the gallantry, and the misfortunes of France—it was not when a prince surnamed AUGUSTE recovered the principal dismemberments of the kingdom, and augmented its power and splendor;

splendor; nor when the gloomy politics of one of his successors, by giving extension to a municipal government, prepared the means of uniting in the hand of the Sovereign all the power of the public strength; nor when the Monarch the most eager after glory and the bravest of knights contended with a rival Sovereign for the renown they both acquired at the expence of their people—It was not in those turbulent and inauspicious times, when fanaticism, rending the bosom of the State, filled it with horror and calamity; nor when that good King so dear to Frenchmen conquered his kingdom at the point of his sword, and was taken up in adjusting the long disorders and the disastrous effects of the civil wars—It was not when all the energy of an able and formidable Minister was concentrated in the double design of restraining the ambition of a power become formidable to Europe, and of securing the tranquillity of France by establishing the monarchical authority; neither was it under that brilliant reign, when the beneficent intentions of a great Monarch were too often thwarted by ruinous wars, when the State was impoverished by victories, while the kingdom was depopulated by persecution; where so much care was bestowed upon giving every thing an air of grandeur, that the solid prosperity of the State was always neglected—In short, it was not before the monarchy had extended its limits to the points
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nature had ordained to bound them, before she had arrived at her maturity, and the calm both within and without was securely established by the wisdom and moderation of her Sovereign, that it was possible to indulge a thought of reforming the defects of the Constitution, and of endeavoring to render the general administration more uniform."

That the patriotic professions of the King and of the Minister, in regard to the general reform of abuses, were at this period not wholly insincere, may be reasonably inferred from their anxious desire to be relieved from those pecuniary embarrassments, which were by no milder or easier means to be surmounted.

The interests of the Crown and of the People, at this crisis, alike required that limits should be placed to the oppression of the PRIVILEGED ORDERS, who constituted in France as it were a nation within a nation. But every idea of fixing legal bounds to the prerogative of the Monarch was rejected with indignation. It was not to derive information from their wisdom, and much less to be controlled by their authority, that this Assembly had been convened. The obvious and sole intent of the Court was to carry its own preconcerted plans into effect, under the sanction of this phantom of a National Representation.

In order to preclude even the shadow of opposition, M. de Calonne had with such admirable adroitness

adroitness of artifice organized this Assembly, that forty-four suffrages should to all efficient purposes constitute the majority of one hundred and forty-four. The Assembly was with this view divided into seven sections or chambers, over each of which a Prince of the Blood presided. Voting by sections, the majority of four would of course be accounted as the majority of the whole, although, had the votes been individually taken, the majority might very possibly be converted into an insignificant minority. Notwithstanding these precautions, so difficult of restraint are the spirit of ambition and the love of power, that the NOTABLES soon displayed a very refractory disposition. Numerous objections were started to the plan laid before them. To the new territorial impost they positively refused their concurrence, unless the accounts and estimates of the Government were submitted to their inspection. This was refused with disdain; and the King caused it to be signified to them, "that he was determined to introduce the *impôt territorial*, and that it therefore became them to debate, not the principle of the measure, but the most equitable form it could assume." This only rendered the discontent of the Assembly violent and general. It was said, that the Minister had convoked them merely to serve as a battery, from which to play off his artillery against the Parliaments, and oblige them to register the plans
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he adopted. The enemies of M. de Calonne seized with eagerness this favorable opportunity to effect his ruin. The Count de Vergennes, who had powerfully supported in the Cabinet the authority and credit of M. Necker, had expired a few days only before the meeting of the NOTABLES. The Marechal de Castries, Minister of the Marine, the Baron de Breteuil, Master of the Household, and M. de Miromesnil, Keeper of the Seals, all of the Queen's party, were active in the design, in which they were zealously assisted by the numerous friends of M. Necker. In the midst of their investigations, and while M. de Calonne was apparently unsuspecting of danger, the Assembly was adjourned from the 5th to the 12th of April for the Easter recess: and on the 8th that Minister was dismissed from his employments. Nevertheless, that the triumph of his enemies might not be complete, M. de Miromesnil was at the same time, conformably to the weak and wavering policy of the Monarch, commanded to resign the Seals. The public clamor and odium rising high against M. de Calonne, whom it was now the fashion to represent as the most extravagant and profligate of Ministers, he was exiled by the King to his estate in Lorraine; and he soon afterwards thought it expedient to take refuge in foreign parts from the inveterate rage of his enemies.

M. de Calonne was succeeded, after a short in-

terval, by M. Lomenie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse—a leading Member of the Assembly of Notables, and of great popularity in the kingdom at large, as an undaunted advocate and assertor of the principles of universal liberty. The sacrifice of M de Calonne produced no concessions in favor of the Court. The Assembly of Notables, in their subsequent sitting, declared themselves utterly incompetent either to suggest different taxes, or to adopt and sanction those which had been proposed. The views of the Court being thus finally frustrated, the Assembly was dissolved (May 25, 1787), with a cold acknowledgment from the Sovereign of the services which they had rendered to the public; and the Archbishop of Toulouse entered upon his office with the prospect of encountering difficulties still more insuperable than those which had proved too mighty to be overcome by the far superior ability of his celebrated predecessor.

It is not wonderful that, things being thus circumstanced, no vigorous measures were adopted by France to counteract the united interference of England and Prussia in the affairs of Holland. In the month of July (1787), the States of Holland presented to the States General a proposition for soliciting the mediation of the Court of Versailles; soon after which, the French Ambassador presented also a Memorial to the States General, declaring

declaring the King his master to be highly sensible of this mark of the confidence of the Republic, and ready to co-operate by every means in his power for the restoration of harmony and peace. So late as the month of September, France tardily professed her intention of assisting the Dutch, in case they were attacked by any foreign power. This only animated the Court of London to act with the greater spirit and decision, and vigorous naval preparations were made to support the King of Prussia, in opposition to the menacing declarations of France. But the object of the Prussian expedition being accomplished in a much shorter space of time than could have been previously imagined, the Court of Versailles found itself, probably not without a secret satisfaction, disengaged from all obligations: The Duke of Dorset, Ambassador at Paris, in consequence of the events which had taken place, presented (October 27th) a Memorial to the King of France, signifying, that “no subject of discussion, much less of contest; now remaining between the two Courts, he was authorised to ask; whether it was the intention of his Most Christian Majesty to carry into effect the notification made by his Most Christian Majesty’s Plenipotentiary, which, by announcing that succors would be given to Holland, had occasioned the naval armaments on the part of his Britannic Majesty, which armaments have been reciprocal.

If the Court of Versailles is disposed to explain herself satisfactorily on this subject, the Ambassador proposes, that all warlike preparations should be discontinued, and that the navies of the two nations should be again placed on the footing of the peace establishment, as it stood on the 1st of January of the present year." To this Memorial the Count de Montmorin, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, replied on the very same day, in a style of exemplary forbearance and moderation, "that the intention of his Majesty not being, *and never having been*, to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland, the communication made to the Court of London, on the 16th of last month, having had no other object than to announce to that Court an intention, the motives of which no longer exist, especially since the King of Prussia has imparted his resolution; his Majesty makes no scruple to declare, that he will not give any effect to the declaration above mentioned; and agrees with pleasure to the proposal of mutually disarming, made on the part of his Britannic Majesty."

Thus happily and honorably for England did this important business terminate. Foreign powers were astonished to see that country, which had a few years since been apparently reduced to the verge of ruin under an Administration pre-eminently odious and contemptible, re-assuming her
rank

rank among the nations of Europe, and attaining to a visible superiority over that haughty and ambitious rival, whose recent success was now seen to be dearly purchased by her consequent alarming and inextricable embarrassments.

The Parliament of Great Britain assembled on the 27th of Nov. 1787. The King remarked, “ that at the close of the last session he had informed them of the concern with which he observed the disputes unhappily subsisting in the republic of the United Provinces. Their situation soon afterwards became more critical and alarming. The King of Prussia having demanded satisfaction for the insult offered to the Princess of Orange his sister, the party which had USURPED the Government applied to the Most Christian King for assistance; and that Prince having notified to his Majesty his intention of granting their request, the King did not hesitate to declare that he could not remain a quiet spectator, and gave immediate orders for augmenting his forces both by sea and land; and in the course of this transaction he had concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. In the mean time the rapid success of the Duke of Brunswick enabled the Provinces to deliver themselves from the OPPRESSION under which they labored; and all subjects of contest being thus removed, an amicable explanation had taken place between the Courts of London and Versailles.”

This was the language rather of a zealous partisan of the House of Orange, than of a great Monarch, who, by a dignified and seasonable interposition, had rescued a country from ruin. It is inconceivable how the existing government of Holland could with any color of justice be stigmatized as an *usurpation*; for by the constitution of that country the Prince of Orange as Stadtholder was not a Sovereign, but a subject possessing no share of the legislative power; and though by the *formula* of 1747 the office was declared hereditary, it was not therefore irrevocable any more than the hereditary offices of Earl Marshal or Great Chamberlain under the English Constitution. And the oppressions alluded to in the speech were plainly nothing else than the usual severities inflicted upon those who presumed to resist the mandates of the supreme government. But in the recent measures adopted by the English Court there were, notwithstanding this flagrant impropriety of language, so much energy, and at the same time so much practical wisdom, that lesser objections were absorbed and lost in the general merit of the transaction. To the grand proposition—"that it is contrary to the rights of nations, and a violation of the fundamental principles of political justice, for one nation to interfere in the internal concerns of another"—it must suffice to reply that however incontrovertible this maxim may be deemed as a general

neral truth, an interference attended with consequences thus eminently beneficial must be allowed, like other necessary exceptions from general rules, to deserve not pardon merely, but praise.

The addressees in answer to the speech were voted with great unanimity in both Houses ; and the Minister received from the Leaders of Opposition, no less than his own partisans, the most liberal commendations for his spirited and judicious conduct. The subsidy to Hesse, by which twelve thousand men were at a vast expence retained for a term of years in the service of Britain, passed without a dissentient vote ; and in a short time treaties of amity and alliance were concluded between the Courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague, by which the two former guaranteed the Stadtholderate in perpetuity to the Serene House of Orange, as an essential part of the Constitution of the United Provinces.

By the treaty between the Kings of Great Britain and Prussia, each of the high contracting powers engages, in case of attack, to furnish the other with a succor of sixteen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, or an equivalent in money, within the term of two months from the date of the requisition. Thus was Britain once again fatally entangled in the intricate and inextricable toils of continental engagements.

The army establishment, which had been re-

duced from seventy to sixty-four regiments at the termination of the war, was now at the motion of the Minister raised to the customary complement, notwithstanding the vigorous opposition of Mr. Fox, under whose administration the reduction had taken place, and who justly boasted that he was the first Minister since the Revolution who had been accused of establishing too small a standing army in time of peace. A very great naval promotion had also taken place, in the contemplation of a war with France; in which it was remarkable that sixteen captains had been selected for flags, while a much greater number of officers, several of whom were men of the most distinguished gallantry and merit, had been unaccountably passed over in silence and neglect.

In consequence of this injurious partiality a motion was made in the House of Commons, "that the House should resolve itself into a Committee to enquire into the conduct of the Admiralty on the business of the late promotion." This motion was destined to encounter the vehement opposition of Mr. Pitt, who declared, "that if this resolution passed, the next thing he presumed would be to resolve that the Members of that House were better judges of naval concerns than professional men at the head of the marine department." To this Mr. Fox justly replied, that this argument, if admitted in its full extent, would effect the total

annihilation of the constitutional powers of parliamentary control. If a complaint were lodged against the conduct of a judge, it might be said, "What do you know of the law? Leave it to the Courts below—and thus of every other department in Army, Church, and State." Upon a division the motion was negatived in a House of near three hundred Members by a majority of seventeen voices only. And the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Howe, became upon this occasion the subject of very severe and general censure and reproach. His Lordship soon afterwards resigned his office, and was succeeded by the Earl of Chatham.

Nearly at the same time the Earl of Mansfield resigned the Chief Justiceship of England, which he had held with high and undiminished reputation for the long period of thirty-two years, to the Attorney General, Sir Lloyd Kenyon, created Lord Kenyon.

Perpetual disputes having arisen, as had been foreseen and foretold, between the two Boards of Direction and Control, established by Mr. Pitt's India Regulation Bill, the Minister thought proper in the course of the session to bring in his famous DECLARATORY ACT, by which various new and important powers were conferred on the Board of Control, under pretext of explaining and determining the sense of the former Bill. This measure met with a most animated and formidable opposition.

opposition. Colonel Barré protested that he had from the first discerned the traces of a system of Indian patronage, of which he believed the Bill under discussion to be a great advance to the final completion ; and if it should be suffered to pass, a fatal stab would be given to the Constitution.

Mr. Sheridan called upon the House to compare the power of Mr. Fox's Commissioners with those which were now asserted to belong to the Board of Control. Lord Fitzwilliam could not send out a dispatch ; he could neither declare war, nor make peace, in India ; he could neither collect the revenues of the Company, nor apply them to the purposes he should think proper, without having first the pleasure of the King signified to him through the medium of the Secretary of State. The Board of Control could do all this. The Minister had now violated that compact with the Company on which he originally and professedly stood—how then could he escape the ignominy of deliberately breaking his most solemn engagements ?

Mr. Burke desired to be informed by Administration, “ whether, when they brought in the Act of 1784, and complained that Mr. Fox's Bill took too much, they had honestly stated that all they meant to take was the military power, the political direction, the management of the revenue, and as much as they could get of the commerce ? The question

question then to have put to the House would have been, in whose hands they were willing this power should be entrusted? In the hands of seven of the most respectable men in the kingdom, of parliamentary appointment, or with the shreds and remnants of office? The public had been at that time infatuated, hurried on to madness. The mob of 1784 had destroyed the House of Commons, and in so doing they had destroyed the palladium of their privileges; but he now indulged the hope of seeing the House rise like a phoenix regenerated from its ashes." The question of commitment was carried by a majority of fifty-seven voices only, and on being carried into the House of Lords it experienced a second opposition scarcely less violent than the first. It passed at length, accompanied with a protest signed by sixteen Peers, in which the Declaratory Bill was reprobated as friendly to corrupt intrigue and cabal—hostile to all good government—and abhorrent to the principles of our Constitution. The patronage of the Company was said to be enjoyed by the Commissioners in the worst of all possible forms, and without that responsibility which was the natural security against malversation and abuse. In some degree to palliate this odious measure, by which the Company were for ever deprived of all efficient authority in India, they were empowered by a subsequent Bill to borrow for the relief of their financial embarrassments the sum of

1,200,000l.

1,200,000l. for which, notwithstanding the *flourishing condition* of their affairs, they stood in immediate and urgent necessity.

In the early part of the session the great India delinquent Mr. Hastings had delivered in his answer to the impeachment of the Commons, who immediately proceeded to the appointment of a Committee of Managers to make good the same. When Mr. Francis had been in the last session proposed as one of the Committee to prepare the articles, he had been objected to on the ground of the personal animosity known to subsist between him and Mr. Hastings, and which had been unfortunately productive of an encounter, wherein the life of Mr. Francis had been imminently endangered.

Mr. Fox on the present occasion again moved the House that the name of Mr. Francis be added to the list of Managers. He urged, "that the House were not sitting as judges of Mr. Hastings—not even in the capacity of grand jurors; the Bill had been found, and they were now become his accusers and prosecutors. Did it disqualify a man from acting as an accuser, that he was animated with an honest indignation against the crimes and the criminal whom he attempted to bring to justice? The enmity which Mr. Francis cherished against Mr. Hastings was not a private but a public enmity, founded on a just sense of the abuses

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he had committed, and the trust he had perverted. Mr. Francis had with infinite application and ability developed, by means of his local and personal knowledge, the whole mystery of Indian corruption; he had enforced it on the reluctant conviction of that House. Would the House, now they had adopted the accusation, and made it their own, prevent its author from supporting it at the bar of the House of Lords, where only he could support it with effect?"

Mr. Francis himself with great dignity and animation entered into a general vindication of his character and conduct. "Upon his return from India he had been called upon, he said, to give evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons. Could he without treachery to the public refuse every information in his power? To act in the capacity of a whispering adviser, or an obscure and covert witness, he disdained. In his own opinion, and in that of men of the highest reputation whom he had consulted, he acted far more honorably in declaring himself the responsible accuser of Mr. Hastings—in avowing his principles, and abiding by their consequences. He was happy to find that the objection against him implied no imputation upon his character, no suspicion upon his actions. He trusted that no one would think it possible that he meant to solicit the House to alter their resolution. He owed, indeed, every assistance
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in his power to carry into effect the task now undertaken. Exclusively of that consideration, what could he desire better than to be excused from any farther concern in this toilsome, invidious, and most unthankful office?"

Mr. Pitt contented himself with saying, "that the question was in his opinion a question of feeling, and not of argument; and he could not reconcile to his ideas of propriety or delicacy the appointment of a Member as the Representative of the House in this business, who was distinguished from all others by the personal contest in which he had been engaged with the accused." This drew down the indignation of Mr. Burke. "Was it fit or becoming, he asked, for a legislator, in a great and important question, to say that his feelings compelled him to abandon his arguments?—that his delicacy was offended by rational investigation? What was delicacy, but at best a super-added flower to virtue—an ornament, the presence or absence of which was alike indifferent to the substance? Delicacy and feeling might be proper terms to express the sensations excited by the exertions of an opera singer, but they were an insult to the solemnity and magnitude of parliamentary deliberation." At length the House divided on the motion of Mr. Fox, ayes 62, noes 122.

This decision gave extreme offence to the Committee of Managers, who expressed, in a letter to
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Mr. Francis, the high sense they entertained of his merits and services. "They had perused," they said, "with great attention, the Records of the Company, and they had found there, on the part of Mr. Francis, wise and steady principles of government, an exact obedience to the authority placed over him, an inflexible integrity in himself, and a firm resistance to all corrupt practices in others; crowned by that uniform benevolent attention to the rights, properties, and welfare of the natives, which had been the leading object in his appointment. Such a conduct, so tried, acknowledged, and recorded, demanded their fullest confidence; and such were the qualities that had excited their wish for his assistance." Thus nobly and unequivocally was the character of this distinguished politician, patriot, and friend to mankind, vindicated in the view of present and of future times.

Next in dignity, and next in the general estimation in delinquency, to Mr. Hastings, was Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court established by the Regulating Act of 1773; against whom it was now determined to institute a similar process. Six articles of impeachment were accordingly in the early part of the session exhibited to the House by Sir Gilbert Elliot; of which the conduct of the Chief Justice in the memorable business of Nund-comar constituted the first. His decisions in the Patna and Cossijura causes, his ac-

ceptance of an employment, contrary to his OATH, in the native court styled the Sudder Dewannee Adalet, to be held during the pleasure of the Governor and Council, and his proceedings in concert with the Governor respecting the affairs of Benares and Oude, furnished ample materials for the remaining charges. On the 4th of February, 1788, Sir Elijah was permitted to make his defence at the Bar of the House; which he performed at great length, and with great ability—confining himself however entirely to the charge relating to Nund-comar. For he remarked, with the artfulness of practised and technical subtilty, “that his mind had been so much deranged by the magnitude of that charge, that he found it impossible to exert himself in reply to the other accusations till the question of Nund-comar was decided. He could not bear to live under the imputation of MURDER; but if he were acquitted of *that*; he should consider all the other charges as frivolous and unimportant.” Being requested to leave the minutes of his defence, as Mr. Hastings had before done, upon the table, the Chief Justice declared it to be impossible—having *unfortunately* spoken extempore.

On the 28th of April (1788), Sir Gilbert Elliot entered upon his summary of the charge. He enlarged upon the “absurdity of enforcing a law founded upon the local customs of one country

try against the natives of another. To extend by a constructive interpretation the English law against forgery, unknown on the other side the Tweed, to India, was no less preposterous than to try the Great Mogul and the Viziers of his Court upon the English statute of Bigamy. He stated in the strongest terms the expediency and equity of at least granting a respite of the sentence, since conviction had been obtained by evidence the most suspicious, at a time when Nund-comar was in the act of bringing forward an accusation against the Governor General, and when it was evident that the execution of the sentence could not take place without exciting horror and dismay throughout Hindostan. He affirmed, that the blood of the MURDERED RAJAH was upon their heads, and still crying for vengeance on the man who had thus stained and crimsoned the spotless ermine of justice." The defence of Sir Elijah Impey had, however, engaged and pre-occupied the minds of the House. And it must be confessed, that the Chief Justice had so skilfully entrenched himself behind the impregnable ramparts of the law—the letter of which, admitting the extension of the system of English jurisprudence to India, he in the whole of this transaction carefully avoided overstepping—that it was difficult to pronounce him in a legal sense guilty, however flagitious his conduct might appear when brought to the test of

free and rational investigation. The lawyers in the House seemed to consider it as a common cause, and exerted themselves with peculiar ardor in his behalf; and Mr. Pitt declaring himself convinced of the innocence of the accused, the motion of Sir Gilbert Elliot was on the division negatived by a majority of 73 to 65 voices. Such was the effect of this discouraging circumstance, that the farther consideration of the Impeachment was adjourned over the session, and it has never yet been resumed. It seems extraordinary, that the acceptance of an appointment contrary to his oath of office, under the Governor and Council, by the Chief Justice, which was the immediate ground of his recall, was not made the leading article of the Impeachment, as upon this head, all the ingenuity of the profession, excellent and admirable as it is, could have afforded no colorable defence.

The trial of Mr. Hastings commenced on the 15th of February (1788); Westminster Hall being fitted up for the purpose with great magnificence. Mr. Burke was no less than four successive days in making his preliminary speech, which was filled with vehement invective, with much rhetorical exaggeration, and with matter wholly extraneous to the subject of the Impeachment. Men of plain sense, whose object was TRUTH, and who desired only a clear and simple
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summary of facts, sighed over these eccentricities and follies; and augured ill of the final success of the Impeachment from so injudicious an outset. If approbation, however, was wanting, the place was amply supplied by admiration; and the speech was extolled by the parasitical flatterers of Mr. Burke, as a more than Ciceronian effort of eloquence.

On the 22d of February, the Benares charge was opened by Mr. Fox; and it was concluded on the 25th by Mr. Grey, Member for the county of Northumberland, whose talents had attracted at a very early period of life, in an eminent degree, the attention of the House, of which he was soon perceived destined to be one of the chief and most distinguished ornaments.

On the 15th of April, the charge relative to the Begums of Oude was brought forward in a very able manner by Mr. Adam; and the evidence on this charge was summed up by Mr. Sheridan, in a speech which lasted five days, and of which the more vigorous compression only was wanting to the perfection of eloquence.

The last business of importance which engaged the attention of Parliament, was a Bill brought into the House by Sir William Dolben, Member for the University of Oxford, a man of the highest integrity and respectability, to regulate the transportation of Slaves from the Coast of Africa to the

West Indies. At the beginning of the year, a multitude of Petitions had been presented from the different towns, cities, and counties of the kingdom, imploring in earnest and affecting terms the abolition of that superlatively nefarious and detestable traffic. A motion on the subject of these Petitions was expected to be made by Mr. Wilberforce, Member for Yorkshire; but in consequence of the long-protracted and unfortunate indisposition of that gentleman, Mr. Pitt on the 9th of May moved a resolution, importing that the House would early in the next session proceed to take into consideration the state of the Slave Trade. The Bill of Sir William Dolben, which was intended merely to establish a certain reasonable proportion between the number of slaves and the tonnage of the ships, was violently and obstinately opposed by Petitions from the Merchants of London and Liverpool concerned in the African trade. Counsel being therefore engaged, and witnesses examined, it appeared in evidence at the Bar of the House, that five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth, was the average space allotted to each slave. The lower deck of the vessel was entirely covered with bodies. The space between the floor of that deck and the roof above, in height about five feet eight inches, was divided by a platform, also covered with human bodies. The slaves were chained two and two by their hands and feet, and
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by means of ring-bolts fastened to the deck. In that sultry climate, their allowance was a pint of water each, *per diem*; and they were usually fed twice a day with yams and horse-beans. After meals they were compelled by the whip to jump in their irons, which by the slave-dealers was called dancing. They had not, as was emphatically stated, when stowed together, so much room as a man in his *coffin*, either in length or breadth. They drew their breath with laborious and anxious efforts, and many died of mere suffocation. The customary mortality of the voyage exceeded seventeen times the usual estimate of human life. A slave ship, when full fraught with this cargo of wretchedness and abomination, exhibited at once the extremes of human depravity and human misery.

Mr. Pitt, who on various occasions has dropped the statesman to assume the nobler character of the philanthropist, declared with indignant eloquence, "that if, as had been asserted by the Members for Liverpool, the trade could not be carried on in any other manner, he would retract what he had said on a former day, and, waving every farther discussion, give his instant vote for the annihilation of a traffic thus shocking to humanity. He trusted that the House, being now in possession of such evidence as was never before exhibited, would endeavor to extricate themselves from the guilt and

remorse which every man ought to feel for having so long over-looked such cruelty and oppression." The Bill was carried up June 18th to the House of Lords, where it was fated to encounter the determined opposition of Lord Thurlow. His Lordship said, that the Bill was full of inconsistency and nonsense. The French had lately offered premiums to encourage the African trade, and the natural presumption was, that we ought to do the same. This measure appeared to him very like a breach of parliamentary faith. As to himself, he scrupled not to say, "that if the fit of philanthropy which had slept so many years had been suffered to sleep one summer longer, it would have appeared to him more wise than to take up the subject in this disjointed manner." The Duke of Chandos ventured to predict a general insurrection of the Negroes in the West Indies in consequence of the agitation of the present question. And Lord Sydney, who had once ranked amongst the Friends of Liberty, expressed in warm terms his admiration of the system of the Slave Laws established in Jamaica, and saw no room for any improvement. The Bill was defended by the Duke of Richmond and Marquis Townshend in a manner which did honor to their understanding and feelings: and it finally passed by a considerable majority.

The King put an end to the session July 11,

1788,

1788, by a speech from the throne, in which he complimented the two Houses on their attention and liberality. " His faithful subjects had every reason, as he affirmed, to expect the continuance of the blessings of peace; and the engagements which he had recently formed with the King of Prussia and the States General of the United Provinces, would, he trusted, promote the security and welfare of his own dominions, and contribute to the general tranquillity of Europe."

Soon after the recess of Parliament, the King, who had been for some time rather indisposed, was advised by his physicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham, which he was believed to drink in too profuse a quantity. His health appeared nevertheless, during his residence there, greatly established; and he amused himself and gratified his people by various excursions in the vicinity of that place, displaying on these occasions much condescension and affability, and being every where received with loud acclamations.

On his return to Windsor, late in the summer, his illness returned with new and alarming symptoms. By the end of October, it could no longer be concealed that the malady of the King was of a nature peculiarly afflictive and dreadful. A mental derangement had taken place, which rendered him totally incapable of public business.

The Parliament had been prorogued to the 20th

of November; a few days previous to which, a circular letter was issued by the Ministers, in which the impracticability of a farther prorogation was signified, and the attendance of the Members earnestly requested. Parliament being accordingly assembled, the state of the King's health was formally notified to the House of Peers by the Lord Chancellor, and to the Commons by Mr. Pitt: and as the Session of Parliament could not be opened in the regular mode, an adjournment of fourteen days was recommended; at the end of which term, if the King's illness should unhappily continue, it would be incumbent upon them to enter into the immediate consideration of the state of public affairs. Upon the re-assembling of Parliament, December the 4th, a Report of the Board of Privy Council was presented to the two Houses, containing an examination of the Royal Physicians; and it was properly suggested, that considering the extreme delicacy of the subject, and the dignity of the person concerned, Parliament would do well to rest satisfied without any more direct and express information, especially as the examinations of Council had been taken upon oath, which the House of Commons had no power to administer.

The situation of affairs was at this period singularly critical. The Prince of Wales, into whose hands the government of the country was soon likely

likely to fall, retained a deep resentment against the present Ministers for their recent conduct respecting him, and took no pains to conceal his decided predilection for the person and politics of Mr. Fox. This distinguished leader, on the earliest intelligence of the King's indisposition, had returned from a summer excursion to the Continent with incredible expedition; and in contemplation of an approaching change, a new arrangement of Administration was already believed to be formed, consisting of the principal Members of the former Coalition Ministry, Lord North only excepted, and of which the Duke of Portland was to be once more the ostensible head. The policy of Opposition seemed evidently repugnant to every idea of unnecessary delay. Yet doubts were unaccountably started by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and others of the same party, whether Parliament could in this momentous case dispense with that sort of evidence on which they had been accustomed to proceed. The validity of the objection was very faintly contested, and a Committee of twenty-one persons in each House, after no long debate, appointed to examine and report the sentiments of the Royal Physicians. The Report of the Committee was laid upon the table of the House of Commons on the 10th of December; when a motion was made by Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of another Committee to inspect the Journals for precedents

of such proceedings as had been adopted in former instances, when the sovereign authority was suspended by sickness, infirmity, or any other cause.

Mr. Fox, sensible perhaps of his former error, now opposed with energy the present motion, as calculated only for delay. With respect to precedents, there were, he said, notoriously none which applied to the present instance; and he affirmed, that all which was requisite to their ultimate decision, had been obtained by the Report now lying upon their table. By that Report they had ascertained the incapacity of the Sovereign. And he advanced as a proposition deducible from the principles of the Constitution, and the analogy of the law of hereditary succession, that whenever the Sovereign was incapable of exercising the functions of his high office, the Heir Apparent, if of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive authority, in the name and on the behalf of the Sovereign, during his incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise."

Mr. Pitt, eager to seize any occasion of postponing, by the intervention of extraneous questions, the ultimate decision, immediately rose with much apparent warmth, and declared, "that the assertion which had been made by Mr. Fox was little short of TREASON against the CONSTITUTION. And he pledged himself to prove, that the Heir Apparent,

rent, in the instances in question, had no more right to the exercise of the executive power than ANY OTHER PERSON; and that it belonged entirely to the two remaining branches of the Legislature, to make such a provision for supplying the temporary deficiency as they might think proper." Thus was this famous question at issue between these two great political rivals; in which it was remarkable, that Mr. Fox, the great advocate of the rights of the people, became the defender of prerogative; and Mr. Pitt, who had been loudly accused of deserting the principles of liberty, appeared in the advantageous light of their intrepid and zealous assertor. All those popular arguments and primary axioms of Government, on which the friends of freedom so justly delight to dwell, were upon this occasion urged by Mr. Pitt with the greatest success. "When the regular exercise of the powers of government was from any cause suspended, to whom could the right of providing a remedy for the existing defect devolve, but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To assert an inherent right in the Prince of Wales to assume the government, was virtually to revive those exploded ideas of the divine and indefeasible authority of Princes, which had so justly sunk into contempt and almost into oblivion. Kings and Princes derive their power from the people, and to the people alone, through
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the organ of their representatives, did it appertain to decide in cases for which the Constitution had made no specific or positive provision." In vain was every effort attempted to stem the tide of popular opinion, which ran with no less violence at this crisis in favor of Mr. Pitt, than at the commencement of his ministerial career. In vain was it urged, that the primary principles of government were not the subjects of the present controversy. The question was simply, to determine what the analogy of the Constitution required in a case wherein no recourse could be had to authoritative precedents or to legal decisions. The constitutional authority of Parliament to provide for the safety of the nation, in an exigency like the present, must be universally acknowledged. But the doubt was, whether, in the appointment of a Regent, they were to exercise a judicial or an elective authority. If the former, the business was at an end; for they must necessarily *adjudge* the Regency to the Prince. But if they were to exercise an arbitrary elective power, Mr. Pitt might make himself the competitor of the Prince of Wales. Upon the Regent of their ELECTION they would undoubtedly, as was the practice in all elective governments, impose such limitations as they thought proper. Thus the balance of the Constitution would be destroyed, the Executive Power would become wholly dependent upon the Legislative,

lative, and the genius of the Government would be radically and essentially changed. The sovereign authority is not a property, but an office. To execute that office, certain powers are necessary; and whoever exercises it, and under whatever name he acts, ought to be possessed of those necessary powers; and no man under any title or denomination ought to be invested with more than are necessary. If hereditary monarchy be established as a salutary provision to frustrate the machinations of faction, the same rule applies to a Regent, who ought to be invested with all the authority requisite to preserve the tranquillity and promote the welfare of the State." Mr. Fox not choosing to take the sense of the House, Mr. Pitt's motion for precedents was carried without a division.

A similar motion was the next day made by Lord Camden in the House of Peers, and the doctrine of Mr. Fox reprobated by his Lordship with great severity. It was on the other hand defended with eloquence and ability by Lord Loughborough, and Lord Stormont, who concluded his speech with recommending an immediate Address to the Prince of Wales, entreating him to assume the exercise of the Royal Authority. The discussion of the abstract question of right being perceived to afford a great and unexpected advantage to the Ministry, the Duke of York, soon after this debate,

debate, in the name of the Prince, expressed his wishes, "that the question might be waved. No claim of right, his Highness said, had been advanced by the Prince of Wales; and he was confident that his brother too well understood the sacred principles which seated the House of Brunswick upon the throne, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, that was not derived from the will of the people expressed by their Representatives."

Lord Thurlow, who had at first consented to take a part in the new Administration, in the arrangement of which the post of Lord President had been assigned to him, now varying the course of his policy, spoke with great energy of his "sentiments of affection towards the King. Nothing could be more disgraceful than to desert the Sovereign in his distressed and helpless situation. His own debt of gratitude was ample, and when he forgot his King might God forget him." These expressions were rumored to be the result of certain intimations, which his Lordship had recently received of the happy and not very distant prospect of the King's recovery. This was however as yet a matter of anxious and precarious *speculation*.

In the Committee on the State of the Nation, December 16, Mr. Pitt moved two Declaratory Resolutions, importing, 1. The interruption of the
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the Royal Authority; and 2. That it was the duty of the two Houses of Parliament to *provide the means* of supplying that defect. A vehement debate ensued; in the course of which Mr. Fox declared the principles of the Minister to be, that the Monarchy was indeed hereditary, but that the Executive Power ought to be elective. The legal metaphysics that thus distinguished between the Crown and its functions were to him unintelligible. The investigators should be schoolmen, and not statesmen, if a question that so deeply involved the existence of the Constitution were to be thus discussed. Where, said he, is that famous *dictum* to be found, by which the Crown is guarded with such inviolable sanctity, while its *powers* are left to the mercy of every assailant? The Resolution was at length carried, on a division, by 268 against 204 voices. This great point being gained, the Ministry proceeded without hesitation or delay to convert it to their own pre-concerted purposes.

On the 23d of December, a third Resolution passed, empowering the Chancellor of Great Britain to affix the Great Seal to such Bill of Limitations as might be necessary to restrict the power of the future Regent. This mode of procedure was opposed with great animation by Lord North. "A person," said his Lordship, "is to be set up without power or discretion; and this pageant, this fictitious being, is to give the force of a law

to the decisions of the two Houses. Was it ever before heard of, that there could be a power of giving assent without the power of refusing that assent? Would any man seriously maintain that the Third Estate thus conjured up is really distinct from the other two?" It was styled, in the heat and passion of debate, "an insulting fraud," a "mockery of legislation," a "legal forgery." And an amendment was finally moved by Mr. Dempster, "That the Prince of Wales be requested to take upon himself the administration of the Government during the Royal incapacity." On the division the amendment was negatived by 251 to 178 voices.

The Resolutions which had passed the Commons being communicated for the concurrence of the Lords, a similar amendment to that of Mr. Dempster was moved by Lord Rawdon; when, after a violent debate, the Resolutions were confirmed, on a division of 66 to 99 Peers.

On the 2d of January 1789, to complete the singularity and perplexity of the business, died Mr. Cornwall, Speaker of the House of Commons; and on the 5th, the vacant Chair was filled by Mr. Grenville, brother to Lord Temple,—the irregularity of his entering upon the duties of his office without the sanction of the Royal approbation being scarcely noticed, amid the pressure of affairs so much more important. The Bill of Limitations,
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when ready to be introduced into the House, was obstructed by an unseasonable motion of Mr. Love-den, that the Physicians be re-examined on the subject of the King's illness, and the probability of recovery. This motion was the result of various reports respecting the disagreement of opinion amongst the Physicians themselves,—reports sufficiently corroborated by the subsequent examination, which left the House as much in the dark as ever as to the event; answering no other purpose than to create an additional delay, of which the Minister well knew the value and the advantage. A letter was at length written to the Prince of Wales by Mr. Pitt, informing his Royal Highness of the plan meant to be pursued:—that the care of the King's person, and the disposition of the Royal household, should be committed to the Queen, who would by this means be vested with the patronage of four hundred places, amongst which were the great offices of Lord Steward, Lord Chamberlain, and Master of the Horse. That the power of the Prince should not extend to the granting any office, reversion, or pension, for any other term than during the King's pleasure, nor to the conferring any peerage. The answer of the Prince was firm, dignified, and temperate. He said, “ it was with deep regret that he perceived in the propositions of Administration a project for introducing weakness, disorder, and insecurity

riety into every branch of political business;—for separating the Court from the State, and depriving Government of its natural and accustomed support; a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of the kingly station, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favor, or benignity. He observed, that the plea of public utility must be strong, manifest, and urgent, that could thus require the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the Supreme Power or its Representative, or which could justify the Prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment should be made to ascertain with how small a portion of kingly power the executive government of his country could be conducted. In fine, the Prince declared, that his conviction of the evils which might otherwise arise, outweighed in his mind every other consideration, and would determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by that melancholy necessity, which of all the King's subjects he deplored the most."

The Bill intended to carry into effect this wild and dangerous project, the offspring of party interest and personal ambition, calculated only, as was justly and forcibly remarked, "to establish a weak Government and a strong Opposition," was brought

brought into the House on the 16th of January, 1789. Long and violent debates ensued, in the course of which a protest was entered on the Journals of the House of Lords, signed by the Duke of York, at the head of the Princes of the blood, and fifty-five other Peers, expressive of their highest indignation at the restrictions on the Executive Authority thus arbitrarily imposed. These extraordinary proceedings were at length, happily for the public, arrested in their progress, by an intimation from the Lord Chancellor, that the King was declared by his physicians to be in a state of convalescence. This was followed by a declaration on the 10th of March, that his Majesty, being perfectly recovered from his indisposition, had ordered a Commission to be issued for holding the Parliament in the usual manner. The tidings of the King's recovery diffused the most general and heartfelt satisfaction. A national thanksgiving was appointed, and the King himself went in solemn procession to the cathedral of St. Paul's, to offer up his grateful devotions on this event ; which was celebrated throughout the kingdom by splendid illuminations, and all the other accustomed demonstrations of joy.

The conduct of the Irish Parliament in this business formed a striking contrast to that of the English ; and was dictated by a policy the most simple, obvious, and rational. On the ascertain-

ment of the fact respecting the incapacity of the Sovereign, Mr. Conolly moved, February 11, 1789, "That an Address be presented to the Prince of Wales, requesting him immediately to take upon himself the government of that kingdom as Regent, during the continuance of the King's incapacity." This was carried WITHOUT A DIVISION. To this resolution the House of Lords acceded. But the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Buckingham (late Earl Temple), refusing, by a rash and hazardous exercise of discretion, to transmit this Address to England, Commissioners were appointed by both Houses to present the Address in person to his Royal Highness. The rapid and unexpected recovery of the King, happily superseded the object of their commission. But the Prince in his reply declared, "that nothing could obliterate from his memory the sentiments of gratitude which he felt for their generous kindness."

Among the innumerable evils attending the mode of procedure adopted by the British Parliament, one of the most formidable was the possible, and even probable, dissimilarity of the decisions of the two Legislatures. Had the Prince of Wales refused, under the degrading circumstances with which the offer of the Regency was accompanied in England, to accept the government of the kingdom, there is good reason to believe that

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it would have been conferred upon the Queen, while the Prince would have been constituted Regent of Ireland, with the usual powers of Royalty. This would doubtless have given rise to a question of the most important, and at the same time of the most difficult nature, viz. Whether Ireland, agreeably to the political compact subsisting between the two countries, could constitutionally emancipate herself from the Executive Government established in England, under whatever name, or by whatever persons it might be exercised? Of this perplexing and dangerous question, the prudence of the Prince, in accepting of the Regency under all the concomitant humiliating restrictions of Parliament, fortunately precluded not only the investigation, but even the mention.

In the speech delivered by the Chancellor in the name of the King to the two Houses, his Majesty conveyed to them his warmest acknowledgments for the additional proofs they had given of their attachment to his person, and their concern for the honor and interest of his Crown. It soon appeared that the late proceedings of the Ministry were in the highest degree acceptable to the Sovereign: and those persons holding posts under the Government, who had concurred in the measures of the Opposition, were unceremoniously dismissed from their offices; amongst whom

were the Marquis of Lothian, the Duke of Queensberry, Lord Carteret, and Lord Malmesbury.

Before the first auspicious moments of gratulation had subsided, Mr. Fox renewed his popular motion for the repeal of the Shop Tax, to which Mr. Pitt did not, in the present circumstances, choose any longer to refuse his assent; though he declared he had heard nothing in the way of argument, which induced him to change his original opinion. He accordingly moved an omission of that part of the preamble to the Bill of Repeal, by which the tax was pronounced a partial and oppressive imposition, militating against the just principles of taxation.

Mr. Dempster at the same time moved for a repeal of the Hawkers and Pedlars Tax, which was originally imposed on the extraordinary ground of its operating as an indemnity to the shopkeeper; thus sacrificing one class of men to the convenience and accommodation of another. A total repeal of this law nevertheless could not be obtained; but a Bill passed to explain and amend the Act, by which the more onerous clauses were mitigated, and these friendless and injured people restored in some measure to their civil and commercial rights.

A motion of much greater importance was introduced soon after this (May 8), by Mr. Beaufoy, being a renewal of the application two years
ago

ago submitted to the House, for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts; “prompted, as he said, thereto by the unalterable confidence which the Dissenters reposed in the disposition of the House to do justice to the injured, and afford relief to the oppressed. And they could not forget how frequently the Legislature had granted the requests, which causeless alarms had at first induced them to refuse.”

This motion was supported by Mr. Fox with a force of argument which could not but make some degree of impresson on the most callous and prejudiced mind. This great Statesman laid it down as a primary axiom of policy, “that no human Government had jurisdiction over opinions as such, and more particularly over religious opinions. It had no right to presume that it knew them, and much less to act upon that presumption. When opinions were productive of acts injurious to society, the Law knew how and where to apply the remedy. If the reverse of this doctrine were adopted, if the actions of men were to be prejudged from their opinions, it would sow the seeds of everlasting jealousy and distrust; it would give the most unlimited scope to the malignant passions; it would incite each man to divine the opinions of his neighbor, to deduce mischievous consequences from them, and then to prove that he ought to incur disabilities, to be fet-

tered with restrictions, to be harassed with penalties.

“ From this intolerant principle had flowed every species of party zeal, every system of political persecution, every extravagance of religious hate. It was an irreverent and impious opinion to maintain, that the Church must depend for support as an engine or ally of the State, and not on the evidence of its doctrines, and the excellency of their moral effects. Moderation and indulgence to other sects were equally conducive to the happiness of mankind and the safety of the Church.

“ Since the æra of the Revolution the Church had flourished, because her imaginary fears had been dissipated. She had improved in knowledge and candor, because, instead of being enabled to impose silence on the Dissenters by the strong hand of power, she had been obliged to hear their arguments; and the Community at large had found the happy effects, which a collision of opinions in open and liberal discussion, among men living under the same Government, never fails to produce. There were many men not of the Establishment, to whose services their country had a claim. Surely a citizen of this description might be permitted without danger or absurdity to say, ‘ Though I dissent from the Church, I am a friend to the Constitution; and on religious subjects I am entitled to think and act as I please.’

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Ought the Country to be deprived of the benefit she might derive from the talents of such men, and his Majesty be prevented from dispensing the favors of the Crown except to one description of his subjects? Mr. Fox declared himself a friend to an Establishment of Religion in every country, framed agreeably to the sentiments of the majority of its inhabitants. But to invest that Establishment with a monopoly of civil and religious privileges, was palpably unjust, and remote from the purpose of an Establishment, which was no otherwise connected with the State, than as it tended to promote morality and good order among the people. The Test and Corporation Acts had subsisted, it was contended, for more than a century. True; but how had they subsisted? By repeated suspensions. For the Indemnity Bills were, literally speaking, annual acts. Where then would be the impropriety of suspending them for ever by an act of perpetual operation?—Let not Great Britain be the last to avail herself of the general improvement of the human understanding. Indulgence to other sects, a candid respect for their opinions, a desire to promote charity and good-will, were the best proofs that any religion could give of its divine origin. To the Church of England in particular he would say,

‘ Tuque prior, tu parce genus qui ducis Olympo.’

Such

Such are the noble and exalted sentiments which have long elevated Mr. Fox to the rank of the first statesman of his age and nation. The motion of Mr. Beaufoy was zealously opposed by Lord North, in a speech consisting, as it was justly described by a Member of the House in debate, of "a series of pompous nothings."

Mr. Pitt also again appeared as its opponent, in an artificial harangue decorated with a great external shew of candor and speciousness of language. On a division the numbers were, Ayes 104, Noes 124; so that this important question—important indeed even beyond what the Minister himself probably had at this period any conception of—was lost by 20 voices only. This therefore might be regarded as a decided victory on the part of the Dissenters, had they known how to improve their advantage. But their resentment against the Court and the Minister was not at all abated by the soft and soothing expressions by which Mr. Pitt attempted to disguise and palliate his refusal: and the ground they had gained in despite of the courtly machinations against them, excited a degree of elation, which led to gross and fatal indiscretions.

About this period, a Bill of a nature very meritorious was introduced into the House of Peers by Lord Stanhope, for the repeal of a number of obsolete and vexatious laws, inflicting penalties upon persons absenting themselves from the ser-

vice of the Church, speaking in derogation of the Book of Common Prayer, &c.

On the second reading, Dr. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, a Prelate of a disposition naturally mild and generous, roused by this alarming attack upon the CHURCH, rose to give his decided opposition to the measure. "The Bill under their Lordships' discussion, if permitted to pass, would serve as a cover, his Grace affirmed, to every species of irreligion. If unrestrained speaking, writing, and publishing on the subject of Religion were tolerated, there was scarcely any mischief to the Church or to Civil Society that imagination could frame, which might not be effected. The very foundation of Religion, *as by Law established*, might be undermined and overthrown."

Dr. Warren, Bishop of Bangor, observed, "that it remained for these days of licentiousness to call in question the propriety and wisdom of those regulations which their Lordships were now solicited to repeal. To compel men by penalties not to absent themselves from the public places of worship, did not militate against any sort of religious liberty, since the Dissenters were allowed to resort to their own congregations: and he who could not communicate with either, might well be supposed to hold doctrines injurious to the State, and which ought not to be tolerated."

Dr. Halifax, of St. Asaph, enforced this assertion,

tion, and reminded the House of the institution among the Locrians, which obliged every man that proposed a repeal of an existing law, to come into the Assembly with a rope about his neck."

Dr. Horsley, of St. David's, expressed himself in terms still more indignant, and with still greater ardor of holy zeal. He said "the Bill in question was calculated to tear away the foundations of the Church of England, and through her means to destroy the very being of the English Constitution. The Act of Elizabeth imposing a fine upon the non-attendance on divine worship, was a salutary law. It was a mistake to suppose the right of private judgment in religion unlimited. The Magistrate had a right to punish Atheism, as a crime against the welfare of Society; and by the same rule, to punish a contempt for the Revelation of God in the Christian Religion. There was moreover always danger in disturbing ancient laws, for the existence of which, at a distant period, no good reason could be given. Their wisdom, though not obvious at the period of the repeal, was generally proved by the mischief that ensued upon their annihilation."

Lord Stormont, enlightened and enraptured with these arguments, paid high compliments to the Bench of Bishops, declaring that they had that day done themselves infinite credit, and rendered their characters sacred in the public estimation,

mation. It is needless to say that the Bill was rejected.

On the approach of the summer recess, Mr. Dundas, agreeably to the tenor of the India Regulation Bill, made his annual statement of the finances of the Company, which he represented as in a most prosperous and flourishing condition; concluding however, as usual, with a motion to empower the Company to raise the sum of one million, by way of increase of capital, to be subscribed by the present proprietors of East India Stock; and the Bill founded on this motion passed both Houses with trivial opposition.

The Session was far advanced, when Mr. Wilberforce brought forward his long expected motion, relating to the abolition of the African Slave Trade, which was now become the theme of public execration. Mr. Wilberforce divided his subject into three parts—the nature of the Trade as it affected Africa itself; the appearance it assumed in the transportation of the slaves; and the considerations suggested by their actual state in the West Indies. What must be the natural consequence of a Slave Trade with Africa, with a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Was it not plain that she must suffer from it? that her savage manners must be rendered still more ferocious, and that a Slave Trade carried on round her coasts, must extend violence

lence and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the Privy Council. As to the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies, he affirmed that so much misery condensed into so small a compass, was more than human imagination had ever before conceived. It was the constant practice to set sail in the night, that the slaves, wrung with distress at quitting for ever their native country, might not be sensible of the moment of departure. This dreadful event was marked with songs and tears of lamentation. It appeared in evidence, that a Captain more susceptible than the rest had threatened a woman with the terrors of the lash, because her song was too painful for his feelings. The mortality on board the ships was prodigious; and including the subsequent *seasoning*, it did not amount to less than 50 per cent.

On their arrival in the West Indies, astringents and washes were employed to hide their wounds, and *make them up for sale*—artifices at once fraudulent and fatal. This infamous traffic was also known to be the grave of sailors employed in it. Of 3170 seamen who had sailed from Liverpool in 1787, only 1428 had returned.

Mr. Wilberforce said he felt the wickedness of the Slave Trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, and irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short
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of its abolition. He acknowledged that his mind had indeed been harassed with the objections of the West India Planters, who had asserted that the ruin of their property must be the consequence of this regulation. He could not, however, help distrusting their arguments. He could not believe that the Almighty Being, who forbade the practice of rapine and blood, had made rapine and bloodshed necessary to any part of his creation. Light soon broke in upon his mind. His suspicions were confirmed by daily information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was decisive and complete. The principle upon which he founded the necessity of the act, was not indeed policy but justice ; but though justice were the principle of the measure, he would pledge himself to prove it reconcileable with our truest political interest.

Mr. Wilberforce concluded a long and excellent speech, equally addressed to the understanding and feelings of the House, and which produced a most sensible and powerful effect, by moving, not, as was generally expected, a general vote of censure and reprobation, which would have imposed an obligation on the House to have proceeded to strong and decisive measures ; but an elaborate and tedious series of complex and somewhat dubious propositions, twelve in number, specifying the number of slaves imported from Africa into the British West Indies ; the different descriptions of persons in-
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cluded in this aggregate number ; the injury sustained by the seamen employed in the African Trade ; the causes of the mortality of the Negroes ; and the different *items* of calculation respecting the increase of population in Jamaica and Barbadoes ; and they concluded with declaring coldly, that no considerable or permanent inconvenience would result from discontinuing the farther importation.

Upon these propositions, Mr. Wilberforce said he did not mean to urge the House to come to any immediate vote. This afforded ample scope on the part of the anti-abolitionists, Lord Penryn, Lord Maitland, &c. &c. and they eagerly embraced the opportunity to create new difficulty and delay. Mr. Wilberforce declaring that he relied on the evidence contained in the Report of the Privy Council, they insisted that the Merchants and Planters interested in this business were entitled to be heard by Counsel.

Mr. Pitt observed with some degree of indignation, and as a very extraordinary circumstance, that the Report had lain many weeks on the table, and no argument against its sufficiency had been heard of, till the moment was arrived that the House was expected to come to an ultimate vote on the subject. At length, however, he conceded, with the too easy consent of Mr. Wilberforce, to the examination of witnesses on the part of the Slave

Merchants and Planters—vainly and credulously “trusting that unnecessary delays would not be introduced, as he could by no means submit to the ultimate procrastination of so important a business.” Lord Penryn in the course of the debate asserting, that, to his knowledge, the Planters were willing to assent to any *regulation* of the trade, short of its abolition, Mr. Fox, with glowing eloquence, declared, “that he knew of no such thing as a regulation of robbery and restriction of murder. There was no medium: the Legislature must either abolish the trade, or plead guilty to all the iniquity with which it was attended. This was a traffic which no Government could authorize, without participation in the infamy.” Evidence being heard at the bar of the House for several successive weeks, it was at length, on the 23d of June, moved by Mr. Alderman Newnham, “that the farther consideration of the subject be deferred to the next session.”

One of the most able and zealous associates of Mr. Wilberforce in this business, from the commencement of it, was Mr. William Smith, Member for Sudbury, whose character in respect of honor, probity, and understanding, had perhaps no superior within or without the walls of that House. Upon this occasion Mr. Smith expressed his anxiety, “that the question should be brought to a speedy issue. He had not heard any good reason why

the examination of witnesses might not be carried on for some weeks longer. It was known that the hearing of evidence was at all times thinly attended. If therefore the few Members that did attend were willing to give up their time a little longer, why should other Members complain of an inconvenience, in the suffering of which they took no share?" The question, however, was carried without a division, and the temporary Regulation Act of Sir William Dolben was renewed for another year.

It is worthy of transient remark, that Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Smith, and Sir William Dolben, all of whom had conspicuously distinguished themselves in the progress of this business, were of religious persuasions very dissimilar—Mr. Wilberforce being a favorer of the doctrines of Methodism, Mr. Smith an avowed Dissenter, and Sir William Dolben an High Churchman. But on this great question, which involved in it the general interests of mankind, all subordinate differences vanished, and it sufficed to every valuable purpose, that they were all of the exalted and universal religion of HUMANITY*.

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* In the beautiful Poetic Epistle, addressed to Mr. Wilberforce by the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld, on the subject of the Slave Trade, are to be found the following picturesque and animated lines, descriptive of the miseries entailed on the natives of Africa by this horrid traffic:

Nor

The trial of Mr. Hastings was resumed early in the session, and the third article, respecting presents illegally and corruptly received by Mr. Hastings, brought forward by Mr. Burke. In his opening speech in support of this charge, in which the fatal business of Nund-comar stood most conspicuous, Mr. Burke made use of the following indiscreet expression: "that man Mr. Hastings **MURDERED** by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey." This afforded a ground of petition from Mr. Hastings, that this allegation should be prosecuted in

Nor in their palmy walks and spicy groves
 The form benign of rural pleasure roves ;
 No milk-maid's song, or hum of village talk,
 Soothes the lone Poet in his evening walk ;
 No willing arm the flail unwearied plies,
 Where the mix'd sounds of cheerful labor rise ;
 No blooming maids and frolic swains are seen
 To pay gay homage to their harvest queen.
 No heart-expanding scenes their eyes must prove,
 Of thriving industry and faithful love :
 But shrieks and yells disturb the balmy air,
 Dumb sullen looks of woe announce despair,
 And angry eyes thro' dusky features glare. }
 Friends of the friendless—Hail, ye generous band !
 Whose efforts yet arrest Heaven's lifted hand ;
 Around whose steady brows, in union bright,
 The Civic wreath and Christian's palm unite ;
 Your merit stands—no greater and no less
 Without or with the varnish of success.

specific articles, or that the House should grant him such redress as to them should seem meet."

After a long debate, the House of Commons resolved, "that no authority had been given by the House for the purpose of making any criminal charge respecting the death of Nund-comar, and that the words complained of ought not to have been spoken." With this sort of reparation, though not absolutely amounting to an affirmation of innocence, Mr. Hastings was compelled to rest satisfied.

Mr. Grenville, Speaker of the House of Commons, being advanced, upon the resignation of Lord Sydney, to the office of Secretary of State, and in the sequel to a peerage, was succeeded, after sitting in the chair of the House scarcely six months, by Henry Addington, Esq. The new Speaker soon acquired great reputation for dignity, integrity and impartiality in the discharge of his office; and he is, by the united voice of contending factions, allowed to rank amongst the ablest of those who have occupied that high and difficult station.

In providing the supplies of the year, Mr. Pitt was obliged to acknowledge the necessity of borrowing the sum of one million, contrary to his own prediction, that no loan would be wanted. This necessity, however, did not arise from the unproductiveness of the taxes, which rose even higher than the previous estimate of the Minister; but
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from extraordinary and unforeseen causes, the principal of which were the sums voted for the liquidation of the arrear of the Civil List, and of the debt of the Prince of Wales, and the expence of the late Armament: so that the general prospect of future and permanent prosperity remained wholly unimpaired; and the Minister acquired from the present state of commerce and of the public funds and revenues, great and just increase of reputation.

An important operation of finance took place in the course of the session, in the exchange of the heavy duties on tobacco from the customs to the excise. This was effected with general approbation, and great advantage to the public. It is a circumstance well worthy of observation, as characteristic of the caprice and inconstancy of the public opinion, that this measure, which had nearly cost Sir Robert Walpole his place, and even endangered his life—and against which 200 Members of the House of Commons divided on the original motion of the Minister, and which he was finally compelled to relinquish—was now opposed on the third reading of the Bill by 20 voices only, in a thin and deserted House of 90 Members.

The Session was terminated August 11, 1789, by a speech from the Lord Chancellor in the name of the Sovereign; in which it was observed, “ that

although the good offices of the King and his Allies had not been effectual for the restoration of the general tranquillity, the situation of affairs promised to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of the blessings of peace." This was an assurance highly and peculiarly grateful, in consequence of the recent events which had taken place in the different kingdoms of Europe. A war had been kindled, which gradually diffused itself from the Euxine to the Baltic—from the snow-clad mountains of Norway to the arid wastes of Tartary : and the foundations of a great and stupendous revolution had been laid, which, almost instantly expanding itself into gigantic growth, became the subject of terror, no less than of astonishment, to the surrounding nations.

Never was Europe more deceived than in the idea she had originally formed of the character of the Emperor Joseph II, upon whom, on his first entrance into the grand scenes of public life, all eyes were fixed, and under whose specious exterior the credulous enthusiasm of hope had discovered all the qualities of a Legislator and a Hero. And he was confidently announced as the Monarch destined to throw the splendid reputation of Frederic the Great into shade. Time however soon dispelled these false and flattering prepossessions ; and he was perceived to be equally destitute of the talents and the virtues necessary to the formation of a great and illustrious

trious character. Burning with an insatiable thirst for GLORY, that Moloch of Princes, at whose bloody shrine millions of human victims have been offered, his mind seemed eternally harassed and haunted with the enquiry, "What shall I do to be for ever known?"

While that justly celebrated Statesman the Prince de Kaunitz retained his influence over the Councils of the Court of Vienna, a veil was cast over the vices and defects of the Sovereign. But as he advanced in life, and began to act upon his own ideas, and in reliance upon his own judgment, his vanity, his versatility, his rapacity, his rashness, and his folly became apparent to all. Disappointed in his recent and favorite schemes of ambition, his evil genius now suggested another project still more absurd and impracticable than the former.

Since the famous Treaty of Westphalia, by which the independency of Holland had been recognized by Spain, that haughty Power, sensible of the erroneous policy which had lost so valuable a possession, adopted, with relation to the provinces which yet remained, a mild and lenient system of government. On the transfer of the Low Countries to the House of Austria by the Treaty of Utrecht, the same equitable treatment was observed; and that no less under the weak and oppressive reign of Charles VI,

than the auspicious and benign government of his daughter the celebrated Maria Theresa.

During all the vicissitudes of politics and of power, the Austrian Netherlands continued to flourish under the protection of their own just laws, and the limitations of their free and happy Constitution. Of the provinces subject to Austria, by far the most considerable and extensive is Brabant; and although the forms of Government established in the different States bear a close analogy to each other, the Constitution of Brabant is regarded as the best defined and most perfect. Like the Constitution of England, it is compounded of three Estates, and the executive authority is vested in the Sovereign, who bears the title of Duke of Brabant. The legislative power, including the important prerogative of levying taxes, resides in the States of Brabant, which is in part an elective and representative assembly, though not constructed on a very popular plan. The jurisdiction of civil and criminal causes is in the cities consigned to the Magistrates, under various equitable restrictions. In the villages it nominally appertains to the Lords of the Manors or Baronies; but it is in fact exercised by respectable persons, chosen for the most part by the inhabitants themselves, from whose decision an appeal lies to the Baronial Courts. The Supreme Tribunal of Justice is established at Brussels, and
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It is distinguished by the appellation of the Council of Brabant. Its functions are not however merely judicial. It is also a Council of State, and participates largely in the executive power—for no act of the Sovereign is valid till confirmed by the Council under the Great Seal of Brabant. These and many other privileges were after long and fierce contentions guaranteed for ever to the people of Brabant, by a charter granted by one of the antient Dukes, and which, from the triumphal procession of the Prince into his capital, on the original execution of it, is denominated the JOYEUSE ENTREE.

The acuteness of philosophical and political theorists would no doubt detect with ease the gross defects of this rude and artless sketch of a free Constitution. But its general and essential excellence is sufficiently demonstrated by the prosperous state of the country, and the passionate attachment of the people to their established form of government. This free form of government Joseph the Second had from deliberate malice, or, more candidly speaking, from excess of presumption and folly, determined to subvert and destroy. On the 1st of January 1787, two Imperial edicts were issued, formally suppressing the antient institutions, and even the Great Council of Brabant; establishing in their stead a new Council of General Government, assisted by Tribunals erected on the severe and arbitrary model of those actually existing
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under the proper Austrian government. As if this were not enough to rouse the spirit of resistance in the nation, the Emperor, careful to heighten the enthusiasm of civil liberty with the rage of religious bigotry, annihilated at the same time the charter of the University of Louvain, and established a new general seminary for the study of Theology—the Professors to be nominated by the sole authority of the Emperor. A violent and universal commotion instantly took place; and the States of Brabant, Flanders, and Hainault, assembling, forbade the people in express terms to pay any regard to the late edicts. All ranks of men enrolled themselves in military associations for their common defence. Deputies were dispatched to Vienna to represent their grievances, and to remonstrate with the Emperor in person against these atrocious and unprecedented violations of their rights.

Agreeably to the irresolute and inconsistent policy of the Emperor, the Deputies, notwithstanding his previous menaces of vengeance, were most graciously received at the Imperial Court. The Sovereign professed himself well-disposed to restore their antient privileges as contained in the *Joyeuse Entrée*, and intimated an intention of visiting the Netherlands, to take measures with the States for the welfare of the people.

In a short time Count Murray, the Austrian Governor, published a proclamation, completely re-
voking

voking the late proceedings, and re-establishing the antient government. Happily for the people of Flanders, the capricious politics of the Emperor had by this time directed their views to a distant and opposite quarter. The advantages acquired by Russia in consequence of the Treaty of 1784, excited the chagrin and envy of that Monarch; and the Turkish Empire at this period presenting an easy and inviting prospect of conquest, a negotiation was set on foot with this view between the two Imperial Courts; and in the spring of 1787, a conference took place between the Czarina and the Emperor at the new capital of Cherson, whither the Empress of the Russias had with great pomp and splendor repaired, in order to her inauguration as Sovereign of the Taurica. Scarcely did she deign to affect concealment of her hostile intentions; and over one of the gates of the city she caused to be inscribed, "This is the Gate which leads to BYZANTIUM."

The Ottoman Porte, fully apprized of the machinations of the Imperial Courts, took a hasty resolution, notwithstanding her own extreme unpreparedness for commencing offensive operations, to publish an immediate declaration of war against Russia—in the hope probably of being able to conciliate the Emperor before his plan of hostility was fully matured. This however was a vain expectation; the Emperor ordering, after a very short interval,

terval, a Memorial to be delivered by his Ambassador at Constantinople, stating, "that he was compelled by Treaty to assist his Ally the Czarina with 80,000 men; and if this should be considered by the Porte as an act of hostility, he was prepared for every event. Not waiting the answer, he made, on the 2d of December 1787, a most perfidious attempt to surprize the fortrefs of Belgrade. Being disappointed in this enterprize, he thought proper to offer an apology for his conduct, which only served by its futility to demonstrate the weakness of the government which condescended to accept it.

The Imperial Manifesto, containing a formal declaration of war, at length appeared, February 1788. Contrary to the antient barbarous practice, the Ambassadors of both the Imperial Courts were suffered to depart from Constantinople without molestation. The answer to the Austrian declaration, in a calm and dignified manner, reproaches the Emperor with "wantonly violating a peace of fifty years continuance, without being able to allege a single injury or pretext. Numerous instances are adduced, in which, for the preservation of peace, the Sublime Porte had complied with unreasonable requisitions: and they justly observe, that they had never upon any occasion taken advantage of the embarrassments of the House of Austria, but had always acted with a liberality and good faith ill requited in the present instance.

The operations of the Germans were in the commencement of the war far from successful. Little impression could be made upon the Turkish frontier; and no sooner had the Grand Vizier taken the command of the army, than the Turks became the assailants; and the Emperor, who commanded in person, after suffering repeated losses, was compelled to a precipitate and disgraceful retreat, leaving the Bannat and the Lower Hungary to the mercy of the enemy. On the western side, however, where the famous Marshal Laudohn commanded, the towns of Dubitza and Novi were reduced after a vigorous defence. On the eastern quarter, the city of Choczim surrendered, September 29th, to the united arms of Russia and Austria. And before the end of the year, the important fortress of Oczakow, after sustaining a siege of several months, was carried by storm; the Russians marching to the assault over the frozen snow, with which the trenches were filled.

A decisive superiority in the Black Sea was also obtained by the repeated victories gained on the part of the Russians by the Prince of Nassau over the famous Turkish Admiral Hassan Pacha.

In the mean time the King of Sweden, actuated by that spirit of unprincipled ambition, so usually the characteristic of Princes as to be deemed scarcely the object of censure, and prompted likewise by the King of Prussia, and the
Powers

Powers in alliance with the Court of Berlin and inimical to Russia, entered suddenly, at the head of a considerable army, the territory of Russian Finland, whence the idea of passing by a direct and rapid march to Peterburgh seemed not wholly chimerical. But a subject of bitter chagrin awaited him in the absolute and pertinacious refusal of his officers to engage in offensive war, on the patriotic ground, or perhaps the traitorous pretext, that the King had not, agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution of 1772, obtained the previous consent of the States.

The Court of St. Peterburgh, on the first intimation of the attack from Sweden, had called for the aid and assistance of Denmark, conformably to the terms of the Treaty of Alliance subsisting between the two Courts. Denmark had been for some years past under the administration of the Prince Royal, whose knowledge and prudence, far exceeding the immaturity of his age, were the happy result of a good natural understanding, improved to the utmost by an excellent and admirable education. The Prince Regent, on his accession to power, had restored the former Ministers of the Danish Court, displaced by Struensee, to their offices, amongst whom was the Count de Bernstorff, whose wisdom and firmness have in the course of events been rendered very conspicuous. On the present occasion, the Court of Copenhagen entered
entirely

entirely into the views of the Czarina ; and in the month of September 1788, a large body of Danish troops, commanded by Prince Charles of Hesse Cassel, accompanied by the Prince of Denmark in person, passing over to Norway, unexpectedly entered the Swedish province of Wermlandia, and advanced to the city of Gottenburgh with trivial opposition.

Alarmed at this formidable invasion, the King of Sweden repaired in person, with expedition almost incredible, to the defence of this important place ; which being attacked thus unprepared, seemed very unable to resist the force of the Danes. But at this critical moment the Courts of London and Berlin interposed their powerful mediation in favor of Sweden. Early in October, Mr. Hugh Elliott, Envoy at Copenhagen, addressed himself first by letter and afterwards personally to the Prince Regent, requiring him, in the name of the Allied Courts, to consent to an immediate cessation of hostilities. " War, said the Ambassador, is perhaps at this very moment declared with Denmark by Prussia and England. But if your Highness will consent to what I propose, I will immediately dispatch couriers to stop, if possible, the invasion of a Prussian army in Holstein, and the sailing of the British fleet."

Under these circumstances the resolution of the Prince was soon taken, and a suspension of arms
signed

signed on the part of Denmark, October 9, 1788, which, after an interval of delay, was converted into a Treaty of Neutrality.

The beginning of the following year was signalized by the death of the Grand Signor Achmet IV. a prince apparently of beneficent and upright intentions, but whose talents were utterly inadequate to the mighty task of restoring the declining empire of the Ottomans to its pristine prosperity and greatness. He was succeeded by his nephew, Selim III. son of the late Emperor Mustapha, whose first act of authority consisted in the deposition of the Grand Vizier, Jussuf Pacha, who had conducted the operations of the last campaign with singular ability and personal success.

The Emperor, sinking under the pressure of disease and disappointment, had retired to Vienna; and the renowned Marshal Laudohn being appointed to the chief command, the operations of the war were renewed with consummate skill and wonderful increase of vigor. After the reduction of Gradisca, this veteran hero proceeded to form the siege of Belgrade; and on the 8th of Oct. 1789, that important city, the bulwark of the Ottoman Empire, surrendered on terms of honorable capitulation. The remainder of the campaign presented a series of the most rapid successes. Cladova, Semendria, Czernitz, &c. followed the example
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of Belgrade. Orsova only attempted a serious resistance, and it was not reduced till after a long investment and blockade.

On the eastern side, the Prince of Cobourg, General of the Austrian army in Walachia, after gaining a considerable advantage in an action fought near Foczan, attacked, in conjunction with the Russian General Suwarrow, with a very inferior force, September 22, 1789, the army of the new Grand Vizier, Hassan Pacha, a rash and ignorant commander, at Martinessti, and gained a complete victory. This was attended with the immediate capture of Bucharest, the capital of Walachia, and the almost entire reduction of the country north of the Danube. In the mean time, Bielgorod on the Black Sea, and the city of Bender on the Tartarian frontier, surrendered to the arms of Russia, now conducted by Prince Potemkin.

During this campaign the war in the North was carried on little to the advantage of Sweden: for although the King of Sweden had entirely re-established his authority, and taken a severe vengeance on the individuals who by their audacious and inflexible contumacy had arrested the progress of his arms, he could not so easily regain the advantages he had lost by that unexpected and unseasonable opposition. The immense power of Russia was now fully exerted. Sweden was reduced to act upon the defensive in Finland; and

various naval encounters took place, in which the bravery and superior skill of the Swedes did by no means compensate for the Russian superiority of force.

In the ensuing campaign of 1790, the triumphs of the Russian arms over the Ottomans continued without any considerable interruption. The progress of these barbarous conquerors had been throughout marked with blood and desolation; but the capture under General Suwarrow, of the city of Ismail, taken by storm December the 22d, 1790, exceeded in horror every action of the present war, and may vie with that of any preceding one. The garrison, consisting of the flower of the Turkish army, was massacred in cold blood, and the inhabitants indiscriminately given up to the worse than brutal licentiousness of an enraged soldiery.

The military successes of the Austrians under the heroic Laudohn, served only to incite the faithless and perfidious Joseph to renew his attempts against his subjects of Flanders and Brabant. Count Murray, distinguished by his lenity of temper, was succeeded in the government by Count Trautmansdorff; and the military placed under the command of General Dalton, an officer of approved skill, but of unrelenting and savage ferocity.

The new system commenced with the revival
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of the former attempt against the University of Louvain. This being resolutely resisted, the Rector and Professors were expelled by the point of the bayonet, August 1788, and many lives lost by the indiscriminate firing of the soldiery. Similar outrages and excesses taking place at Antwerp, Mechlin, &c. in consequence of the orders issued by the Government; and military law, enforced by military execution, being in a manner proclaimed through the provinces, a prodigious emigration of the principal inhabitants immediately succeeded. The emigrants being favored and protected by the Dutch Government, now under the influence of England and Prussia, assembled in numerous bodies on the frontier; at length, in the autumn of 1789, they entered Austrian Flanders in great force, and in a very short space of time overran the whole country, a few fortresses excepted, the Austrians flying before them with the most disgraceful precipitation.

The Emperor now once more offered, in the most flattering and conciliatory language, to restore to them their ancient Constitution, and even to endow them with additional privileges; but his overtures were rejected with scorn. The States of Brabant assembling at Brussels December the 22d, 1789, in concert with the Deputies of the other provinces, formally disclaimed allegiance to the Emperor, and proceeded to the ap-

pointment of an Administration. General Vandermerfch, distinguished for his patriotifm and bravery, was nominated to the command of the troops. M. Vander-noodt was declared Prime Minifter, and M. Van-Eupen Secretary of State.

In the month of January 1790, the plan of a federal Conftitution was formed by the BELGIC States—fuch was the appellation they now affumed, nearly fimilar to that of the United Provinces. Unfortunately, however, it foon appeared that the leaders of the revolt, either little understanding or little regarding the effential rights of the people, had merely changed the Imperial defpotifm to an Aristocratical tyranny. The Catholic religion was eftablifhed in its moft intolerant form, the power of arbitrary imprifonment was affumed, the liberty of the prefs difallowed, and the immunities of the privileged orders confirmed and even extended.

In the midft of thefe tranfactions, and while the Infurgents were at the height of their fuccesses, died, February 1790, the Emperor Jofeph. He was fucceeded in his hereditary dominions by his brother Leopold, Grand Duke of Tufcany, and who now took upon him the ftyle and title of King of Hungary. This prince, as the Sovereign of a fmall State, had acquired the reputation of moderation, and even fagacity. But in proportion to the elevation of his fituation his faults

faults became more conspicuous, while his excellences either wholly disappeared, or were henceforth very dimly seen.

Interesting as the transactions now related appeared in the view of Europe, they nevertheless yielded both in importance and singularity to the events which were at the same time taking place in the kingdom of France.

The appointment of the Archbishop of Toulouse as successor to M. de Calonne, proved the source of equal disappointment to the Court and to the Nation. On his elevation to the post of Minister, his patriotism seemed to vanish; and, by losing the confidence of the People, he deprived himself of the power of being serviceable to the Monarch. The project of the Court to obtain the sanction of the Assembly of Notables to the measures in contemplation had proved wholly abortive; recourse must now again therefore be had to the Parliament of Paris; and on the 12th of June 1787, an edict was sent to that body for enregistry, imposing a heavy duty on stamps. Instead of a loyal and dutiful compliance, the Parliament demanded the communication of such documents as should enable them to judge of the necessity of introducing new taxes. That this was a just claim, they said, the very expression of *verifying* the royal edicts implied.

The refusal of this demand produced a refusal

on their part to enregister the edict ; and after violent debates, and repeated efforts of the patriotic party in Parliament, it was at length voted that a National Assembly would be necessary previous to the imposition of a new tax, and a resolution at the same time passed to supplicate the Sovereign to assemble the STATES GENERAL of the kingdom.

In the Remonstrance presented on this occasion by Parliament to the Throne, the stamp duty is pronounced more dangerous than even the exploded *gabelle* ; and they remark, “ that after five years of peace, after an augmentation of the revenue during the present reign of five millions sterling, it was scarcely to have been expected that the name of TAX should have been pronounced by a beneficent Sovereign, but for the purpose of alleviating the burdens of the people.”

The answer of the King was peremptory and haughty. Far from conceding to the wishes and prayers of the Parliament, he rose still higher in his demands. Reserving to a future day the declaration of his intentions respecting the stamp tax, he transmitted to them a new edict of far greater importance, for commuting the existing *vingtièmes* into a regular and equal land-tax, “ which from the zeal and loyalty of his Parliament, his Majesty was pleased to say, he expected them immediately to register.”

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The Parliament, assuming more intrepidity as the danger became more imminent, summoned the Peers of France on the following day, as was usual in great emergencies, to assist in their deliberations; and it was voted in full assembly, that the Parliament persisted in their resolution, and renewed their supplication to the Sovereign to assemble the States General of the kingdom.

Before the second Address could be presented, a Royal Message was delivered, announcing the intention of the King to hold a Bed of Justice. The Parliament, immediately re-assembling, came to several resolutions expressive of their determined resistance. The Bed of Justice was nevertheless held: and in defiance of the resolutions read by the First President, M. D'Aligre, the edicts were forcibly enregistered. These proceedings, contemptuously described as "the empty form of collecting by the Keeper of the Seals the opinions of the Assembly, where no one could give a vote," were at the subsequent meeting of Parliament declared null and void, and expunged from their records.

This resolute opposition of the Parliament produced a wonderful effect on the already highly agitated state of the public mind. Such were the apprehensions entertained by the Government of the general spirit which pervaded the mass of the people, that great numbers of the military were

affembled at Paris, and the Members of the Courts of Justice were obliged to pafs to their fittings through armed ranks of foldiers with bayonets fixed.

The government of France plainly appeared at this moment to be a government reſting merely on the precarious baſis of military force, without poſſeſſing, as a collateral ſecurity, a ſingle particle of the eſteem, confidence, or affection, of the nation. On the 15th of Auguſt, 1787, *lettres de cachet* were iſſued againſt the Parliament of Paris, transferring their fittings to Troyes, in Champagne, one hundred miles from the capital. Previous to their exile they paſſed an animated reſolve, “ That the French Monarchy would be reduced to a ſtate of deſpotiſm, if Miniſters, abuſing the authority of the King, might diſpoſe of men’s perſons by *lettres de cachet*, of their property by beds of juſtice, of cauſes civil and criminal by annullings and evocations, and ſuſpend the courſe of juſtice by particular exiles or arbitrary tranſlations.”

All France ſeemed to intereſt itſelf in the diſgrace of the Parliament. The flame of oppoſition and diſaffection increaſed every moment. Almoſt all the public bodies in the kingdom joined in petitioning the Throne, not in an humble and ſubmiſſive, but in a bold and peremptory tone, for the recall of that Aſſembly, and the convocation
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of the States General. The Parliament of Grenoble declared "the rights of property to be equally sacred, and secured by the same laws, as the right of the King to the throne;" and the Parliament of Besançon, in reprobating the emission of the *lettres de cachet*, scrupled not to affirm "that the Parisian Magistrates ought to have yielded no sort of obedience to them."

In this situation the new Minister, wavering, hesitating, and trembling for his safety, advised the Monarch, in his answer to the address of the Court of Aids, September 2, to signify his intention for the present to suspend the execution of the obnoxious edicts; and on the 19th of that month letters of revocation were issued, and the Parliament was permitted to resume its functions. The first measure of the executive government subsequent to this event, a measure highly consonant to the predominant spirit of liberty in the nation, was the promulgation of an edict for the toleration of the Non-Catholics, nearly similar to the famous edict of Nantz, repealed in the last century. This popular law was registered by the Parliament without difficulty; but with respect to the financial projects of the Government they continued as refractory as ever. The plan now proposed by the Minister was that of a series of loans, amounting in the aggregate to about eighteen millions sterling, for five successive years, at the end of which term he en-

gaged the honor of the Sovereign that the States General should be convoked. This offer was treated with contempt. To promise a convocation of the States General when the deficiency of the finances should be filled up, was said to amount to a promise to call them together when they would no longer be wanted. The embarrassments of the Minister hourly accumulated. The expedient of a Bed of Justice had been tried with very ill success. It was now, therefore, resolved to hold a *Séance Royale*, in which the measure should be debated in the King's presence, previous to the enregistry, as a milder and more equitable mode of proceeding. Upon this occasion M. Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, by the command of his Majesty, stated to the Parliament, in an eloquent and *instructive* oration, the established and unalterable principles of the French Monarchy. "To the King alone belonged the sovereign power, and to God only was he accountable for its exercise. To the King belonged the power of convoking the States; he alone could judge of their utility and necessity, and he was the sole arbiter of the grievances and complaints of his subjects. He ventured to assert, that the wish now generally entertained of calling together the States General had ORIGINATED with the King, whose zeal for the public good perpetually outran the desires of his people. He therefore rebuked the Parliament for the disrespectful
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importunity with which they had solicited this measure; and he declared the establishment of provincial assemblies, on the plan devised by the late Minister, to be fraught with more solid advantages to the community at large."

The sitting continued seven hours. The debates of the Parliament, notwithstanding the presence of the Sovereign, were conducted not only with freedom, but with violence and asperity. It was affirmed by one Member, l'Abbé Sabatier, "that the only difference between a Bed of Justice and a *Séance Royale* was, that one had all the frankness of despotism, and the other all its hypocrisy." And M. Freteau, speaking of the recent accommodation between England and France on the subject of Holland, said, "it was a proceeding at which Louis XIV. would have blushed." At length the King rose and declared, "that having heard the sentiments of the assembly, he persisted in his opinion; he therefore directed the edict of the successive loans to be immediately registered." On this the Duke of Orleans, First Prince of the Blood, who aspired to the distinction of Head of the popular party, declared to the King, "that he regarded this measure as illegal." The King having retired in anger, the Duke formally recorded his dissent, and the Parliament passed a resolution abjuring every sort of concern in the enregistry that had then taken place. On the following day the Duke
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of Orleans and Messrs. Sabatier and Freteau were sent into exile—the former to his chateau in the country, the two latter to imprisonment in distant parts of the kingdom; and by express command of the King, the resolution of Parliament was erased from their records.

The famous remonstrance of the Parliament on these violent proceedings, presented to the King March 1788, after several previous ineffectual ones, was fraught with the most glowing and energetic sentiments of liberty. They declare, “That the laws of Nature and of the Constitution shall never reproach them for preserving, in such a crisis, a shameful inactivity, or a guilty silence—Liberty is declared by them to be an imprescriptible right, and Justice an universal duty, anterior to the laws, and equally obligatory on the Monarch and the Subject. The practice of *lettres de cachet* overturns this system—Justice thereby becomes a mere illusion, and Liberty an empty name. Where no personal security exists, public safety is but an imaginary bliss; and where the practice of *lettres de cachet* subsists, personal security cannot exist. Could your Majesty but interrogate those victims of arbitrary power abandoned and forgotten in those impenetrable dungeons where silence and injustice ever dwell, you would then know to what torments is condemned the wretch for whom the sun rises without hope, and the night returns without repose.

pose. We have authority to believe that the Duke of Orleans and Messrs. Sabatier and Freteau are not guilty; were they so, the right of judging them is reserved for the Parliament, and the prerogative of pardoning to your Majesty. Liberty is not a privilege, but a right; and it is the duty of all Governments to respect that right. It is not a Prince of the Blood, nor two Magistrates, that the Parliament claims now in the name of the laws and of reason; it is three French individuals—**THREE MEN.**” To this remonstrance the King, with true monarchical apathy and pride, answered, “that his Parliament must with due respect and silence confide in his wisdom, and that he forbade them to have or publish any farther deliberations on the subject.”

A project more rash and chimerical than any hitherto entertained by the Minister, was now disclosed. This was no less than the establishment of a supreme Court by the name of the **COUR PLENIERE**, consisting of Members to be nominated by the King, and to be vested with the power of enregistering the royal edicts—thus superseding the existing Parliaments in the highest and most appropriate branch of their authority. The Parliament of Paris, apprised of the fatal stroke that was meditating, published, May 7, a declaration, copies of which were transmitted to all the other Parliaments, expressive of their determined resolution to oppose

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to the utmost this arbitrary and unconstitutional innovation. “The system of complying with the King’s absolute will, say this Assembly, as expressed in his different answers, proves the Minister’s destructive project of annihilating the principles of the National Government, which Parliament is bound to maintain, and from which it will never depart.”

The Court, resolving to prosecute their nefarious designs, issued orders for the arresting Messrs. D’Espremenil and Monsambert, two celebrated Counsellors and patriotic Members of the Parliament; and a party of the military surrounding at midnight the seat of justice, demanded the immediate surrender of the two magistrates. A most animated remonstrance from the Parliament was the result of this act of tyranny—happy had the sentiments it contained produced their just effect on the mind of the Monarch! “Your Parliament is confirmed, SIRE, say they, by every proceeding, of the entire innovation which is aimed at in the system of Monarchy; but, SIRE, the French nation will never adopt the despotic measures to which you are advised: the fundamental laws of the kingdom **MUST** not be **TRAMPLED** ON, and your authority can only be esteemed so long as it is tempered with justice. We beseech your Majesty not to suffer apparent or momentary advantages to divert your attention, as they may only produce unhappy
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consequences. Your Majesty will sooner or later discover the justice of our representations.”

A Bed of Justice being in defiance of the warnings and threatenings of Parliament held, and the edict for the establishment of the COUR PLENIERE forcibly enregistered, the most violent commotions ensued throughout the kingdom, which every where wore the appearance of hostility and war. The First President of the Parliament, in the name of that Assembly, informed the King that the Parliament would acknowledge no authority which infringed on the complete exercise of their prerogatives. The Parliament of Rouen pronounced the edicts in question to be null and void, and all persons assisting in the execution of them to be traitors to the nation; and for this daring act of patriotism *lettres de cachet* were immediately executed against them. The Parliaments of Rennes, of Grenoble, and of Metz, distinguished by their zeal in the same cause, were in like manner ordered into banishment. Great bodies of the military were in motion; and every step taken on the part of the Court indicated a resolution to persevere in the plan of coercion, when, on the sudden, the courage of the King and his Ministers once more totally failed them; and an order of Council was published, August 8, fixing the convocation of the States to the first of May 1789, and SUSPENDING

during the interval the institution of the *COUR PLENIERE*.

On the 16th of August a second *Arret* of Council was promulgated, avowing the inability of the Court to answer the ordinary demands upon the Royal Treasury; and directing the future payments to be made partly in money, and partly in notes bearing an interest of five per cent. This was regarded as a direct act of bankruptcy; and the clamor, confusion and consternation which ensued were so great; that the Archbishop of Toulouse, no longer able to resist the torrent, thought proper to resign his office after an administration of little more than a year, distinguished by its inconsistency, imbecility, and temerity. To console him in his disgrace, he was translated to the rich Archiepiscopal See of Sens, and decorated with the Roman purple.

The voice of France called aloud for the re-instatement of M. Necker, who was now a second time placed at the head of the finances. The reputation of the new Minister operated as a sort of charm. By the adoption of wise measures adapted to the present exigencies, the immediate embarrassments of Government were removed. All eyes were now turned to the approaching convocation of the States General, previous to which a second Convention of the Notables was held (October 5, 1788) in order to determine several important questions

tions that had arisen relative to the formation of the Assembly of the States. It appeared to be nearly the unanimous opinion of the Notables; that it should be constructed on the model of the last Assembly convened in 1614; and a doubt was even suggested, whether any power short of that of the States General deliberating in the antient manner by the established orders of Nobles, Clergy, and the *Tiers Etat*, could superinduce upon it any material alteration. The Notables were dissolved on the 12th of December 1788.

The final decision of the Court was at length made known by a decree of Council, dated 27th of December: by which it was determined, that the number of deputies to the ensuing States General should not fall short of one thousand; that it should be apportioned with all practicable accuracy to the population and financial contributions of the different bailliages; and that the representation of the *Tiers Etat* should be equal to the sum of the representations of the other two orders—a concession eagerly desired by the nation, and attended with the most important consequences.

At length, on the 5th of May 1789, a day ever memorable in the annals of France, and of the world, the Assembly of the States General met at Versailles, and the session was opened by a speech from the King, couched in terms of patriotic and paternal regard, such as princes well know upon

occasion how to adopt. Although the excessive repugnance of the Court to the adoption of this measure had been most notorious, his Majesty congratulated the Assembly on the arrival of the day which he had so long *panted* to see. "The public spirit," said the Monarch, "is in a ferment, but an Assembly of the Representatives of the Nation will certainly hearken to no other counsels than those founded on justice and wisdom. Whatever may be expected from the most tender solicitude for the public good, whatever can be asked from a Sovereign the sincerest friend of his people, you may, you ought to hope from me." At this period, no doubt, the Court was ready to submit to the necessity, which it could not but recognize, of making great and permanent concessions for the satisfaction of the nation, and the restoration of the public tranquillity. But to ascribe to the Monarch the most distant idea of a voluntary departure from the antient and established prerogatives of sovereignty, would be the extreme of weakness and credulity.

The first object of the States was the "verification of their powers." This ceremony the *Tiers Etat* insisted, to the astonishment of the superior orders, could only take place in a common assembly, voting not by orders, but by poll. The admission of this pretension involved in it no less than the absolute subversion of the antient Constitution of the States; and it was resisted in the strongest

strongest manner by the superior orders, as a flagrant usurpation. On the other hand, the *Tiers Etat* plainly perceived that the antient mode of voting by orders would reduce them, the real representatives of the people, to whom it peculiarly appertained to establish freedom in France, to mere ciphers.

After six weeks of inaction, the *Tiers Etat*, at the suggestion of the Abbé Syeyes (June 17), took the daring and decisive step of declaring itself the Legislative Body, by the appellation of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, and proceeded to the verification of their powers.

On the 19th of June, the Chamber of the Clergy passed a resolution, importing their acquiescence in this decision. Alarmed in the highest degree at the situation of affairs, the Monarch held on the 23d a Royal Session, in which he proposed a plan of government, liable indeed to many objections, but containing the great outlines of a free Constitution. Agreeably to this plan, the distinction of orders was preserved, allowing them nevertheless to debate in common on emergent occasions, with the Royal approbation. In fine, the King declared, in virtue of his Royal authority, the proceedings of the 17th null and void—and ordered the Deputies immediately to separate. This was the decisive moment. An unreserved obedience to the order of the King would have

rendered them contemptible in their own eyes, and in those of the Nation, which had received with unbounded acclamation the resolution reprobated by the Monarch. The question to be determined was, whether they would be satisfied to accept from the Royal benignity the imperfect and precarious boon now offered? or whether, at the imminent risque of their lives and fortunes, they would make one grand effort to establish a constitution founded on the eternal and immutable principles of equal and perfect freedom? Impelled by a glorious and resistless enthusiasm, they hesitated not for a moment which of these alternatives to embrace. When the King retired, he was followed by all the Nobles and a part of the Clergy: the Commons alone remained motionless on the benches. The Marquis de Brezé, Grand Master of the Ceremonies, addressing himself to the President, M. Bailli, said, "SIR, you know the orders of the King:"—to which the President with Roman dignity replied, "The people of France in their collective capacity have no orders to receive." And M. Mirabeau, a Member highly distinguished in the sequel by his talents and eloquence in the Assembly, starting up, added, "Go tell your master, that we are here by the power of the people, and that nothing shall expel us but the bayonet."

On their next meeting, the Assembly were joined by the majority of the Clergy, and forty-nine mem-

bers

bers of the Nobility, with the Duke of Orleans at their head; and on the 27th, at the express instance of the King, agreeably to his characteristic inconstancy, by the remaining members of the superior orders; though the Duke of Luxemburgh predicted, as it is said, to the Monarch, "that from the day the States should vote by numbers only, from that moment he was at their mercy."

The assent of the King was however false and hollow. An army of 35,000 men, collected from various parts, were stationed under the command of Marshal Broglie in the vicinity of Versailles and Paris. Camps were marked out for a still greater force, and lines of fortification drawn. A most spirited remonstrance was presented to the King by the Assembly, requesting, or rather insisting upon the removal of the troops. This was peremptorily refused; but his Majesty declared his willingness to indulge the Assembly by a removal of their sittings to Soissons, a situation far more commodious for the purposes of the Court.

On the 11th of July M. Necker was suddenly dismissed, and ordered to depart the kingdom in twenty-four hours; and with him his friend M. Montmorin, Minister for Foreign Affairs. In the disgrace of M. Necker the Assembly saw their own ruin determined: and they passed a resolve, that the late Ministers carried with them the confidence and regret of the Nation. But the popular en-

thufiasm having now reached its height, a moft astonishing infurrection took place at Paris on the 14th of July, in which the cafile of the Baftille was carried by ftorm; the foldiery refufing to obey the orders of their officers, and many joining the affailants.

The Monarch, aftonifhed and intimidated at thefe proceedings, once more varied his policy; and, appearing in perfon the next day in the National Affembly, declared “ he had iffued orders for the immediate removal of the troops.” A burft of joy and acclamation fucceeded; and it was now at laft hoped, that the Monarch, fenfible of the evil counfels by which he had been deceived and mifled, would not henceforth deviate from the path of political rectitude. M. Necker and Count Montmorin were immediately re-inftated in their offices. The Count d’Artois, Marfhal Broglio, the Prince of Condé, and other leaders of the Court Faction, were compelled to feek for fafety in flight: and on the 17th of July the King made his triumphal entry into Paris.

The Affembly now proceeded without interruption in their labors; and in a fhort time feveral very important decrees, containing the firft principles of the new Conftitution, importing the fubordination of the Executive, the fupremacy of the Legislative, and the independency of the Judicial Powers, were prefented for the Royal acceptance.

After

After a delay of many weeks, and an urgent re-application, the Royal assent was most reluctantly given, with an express salvo for the ancient essential and constitutional prerogatives of the Crown. All the former jealousies were now revived; and it was universally rumored and believed, that preparations were in train to facilitate the retreat of the King to Metz in Lorraine, where the Royal standard was to be raised in hostile opposition to the National Assembly. Inflamed and enraged with this dreadful apprehension, another popular insurrection, of a nature not less extraordinary than the former, took place, October the 6th, in which a nocturnal attack was made on the palace of Versailles, the King and the Queen, by whose fatal counsels the Monarch had been chiefly guided, made captives, and conducted to Paris, where the palace of the Tuilleries, secured by a strong military guard, was assigned them for their future residence. The effect of this violence on the person of the Sovereign was an explicit and unconditional acceptance on his part of the Articles of the Constitution, formerly presented; and the National Assembly removed their sittings to Paris, where they were henceforth deeply occupied in executing the Herculean task of regenerating the whole system of the national polity, laws and government.

Amongst the decrees which most excited the admiration or astonishment of the world were those

which pronounced the annihilation of all feudal privileges, the abolition of all distinction of orders, the resumption of tithes and other ecclesiastical and monastic property; the dissolution of monastic institutions; the allotment of the kingdom into a new territorial division, under the name of Departments, eighty-three in number, nearly equal in population and extent; finally, the extinction of the Provincial Parliaments, and the establishment of Departmental Assemblies, of Courts of Justice, and the Trial by Jury in each Department. The general principles on which the government of the kingdom was modelled, were comprehended in a Declaration of Rights, drawn up with great precision and ability; and which may serve as a perpetual Charter of Liberty to mankind*.

It

* This famous DECLARATION, which well deserves a place in the frontispiece of every National Code of Laws, is substantially as follows:

I. Men were born, and always continue, free and equal with respect to their rights. Civil distinctions therefore can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible Rights of Man. And these Rights are Liberty, Property, Security, and Resistance to Oppression.

III. The Nation is essentially the source of all Sovereignty.

IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another.

V. The Law ought only to prohibit actions hurtful to Society.

VI. The

It is no wonder that a Revolution so extraordinary, and which, notwithstanding certain unhappy concomitant

VI. The Law is an expression of the will of the community. All being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honors, places and employments, without any other distinction than that created by their talents and virtues.

VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed.

VIII. No one ought to be punished but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence.

IX. Every man is to be presumed innocent till *conviction of guilt*.

X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even his religious opinions; provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order.

XI. Every man may speak, write, and publish freely—being responsible for the abuses of this liberty in cases determined by law.

XII. A public force is necessary only to give security to the Rights of Men and Citizens.

XIII. Public contributions ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their several abilities.

XIV. Every Citizen has a right, by himself or his representative, to a free voice in determining the necessity and appropriation of public contributions.

XV. Every community has a right to demand of its agents an account of their conduct.

XVI. Every community, in which the separation of powers is not determined, nor a security of rights provided for, wants a Constitution.

XVII. The

concomitant irregularities and excesses, afforded so fair a prospect of future and permanent happiness, should excite great exultation amongst the Friends of Liberty in England. The first public demonstration of this appeared on the occasion of an anniversary meeting of a Whig Association in the metropolis, known by the name of the Revolution Society, on the 5th of November, to celebrate the memory of that great Monarch, by whose heroic interposition, at a crisis of imminent danger, the laws and liberties of Great Britain were, under the favoring auspices of Heaven, settled on a solid and permanent basis. Previous to the assembling of the members at the usual place of festive meeting, a Sermon or Discourse on "the Love of our Country" was preached to such as chose to hear, at a Chapel belonging to the Dissenters at the Old Jewry, by the famous Dr. Price; in which the primary principles of government were stated in a mode which the sanction of a century had rendered familiar in this country; and the great doctrines of Liberty inculcated with all that emphasis and energy which characterized the pen of that distinguished and venerable patriot. "The improvement of the world

XVII. The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity legally ascertained, and upon condition of a previous and just indemnity.

depended," as the preacher affirmed, "on the attention given by men to this topic. Nor will mankind be ever as virtuous and happy as they are capable of being, till the attention to it becomes universal and efficacious. If we forget it, we shall be in danger of an idolatry as gross and stupid as that of the antient heathens, who, after fabricating blocks of wood or stone, fell down and worshipped them." At the conclusion of this discourse, in expatiating on the favorableness of the present time to all exertions in the cause of Liberty, he broke out into the following eloquent exclamation—
"What an eventful period is this! I am thankful that I have lived to it: and I could almost say, LORD! *now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have lived to see a diffusion of knowledge which has undermined superstition and error; I have lived to see the rights of men better understood than ever, and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it. I have lived to see thirty millions of people indignantly and resolutely spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice; their King led in triumph, and an arbitrary Monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.— After sharing in the benefits of one Revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other Revolutions, both glorious; and now methinks I see the ardor for liberty catching and spreading, and a general

neral amendment beginning in human affairs—the dominion of Kings changed for the dominion of Laws, and the dominion of Priests giving way to the dominion of Reason and Conscience. Be encouraged, all ye friends of freedom, and writers in its defence ! The times are auspicious. Your labors have not been in vain. Behold kingdoms admonished by you, starting from sleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming justice from their oppressors ! Behold the light you have struck out, after setting America free, reflected to France, and there kindled into a blaze, that lays despotism in ashes, and warms and illuminates EUROPE !”

Impressed with these noble and elevated sentiments, the Society, whose numbers on this occasion far exceeded those of any former anniversary, unanimously resolved, on the motion of Dr. Price, to offer in a formal address “their congratulations to the National Assembly, on the event of the late glorious Revolution in France.” This being transmitted by the Chairman, Lord Stanhope, to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, and laid by that distinguished nobleman before the Assembly, was received with loud acclamations. “It belonged,” said the Duke de la Rochefoucault in his reply, “to Dr. Price, the Apostle of Liberty, to propose a motion tending to pay to Liberty the fairest homage—that of national prejudices.” In that Address is seen the dawn of a glorious day, in which two adverse nations

tions shall contract an intimate union, founded on the similarity of their opinions, and their common enthusiasm for liberty." Also the Archbishop of Aix, President of the National Assembly, transmitted to Lord Stanhope, in a manner the most polite and flattering, the vote of the Assembly, relative to the Address, stating, "that the Assembly was deeply affected with this extraordinary proof of esteem, and directing the President to express to the Revolution Society, the lively sensibility with which the National Assembly had received an Address, breathing those sentiments of humanity and universal benevolence, that ought to unite together in all countries of the world the true friends of Liberty, and the happiness of mankind."

Such was the general state of things, when the Parliament of Great Britain was convened at Westminster, January the 21st, 1790. The King's Speech contained nothing remarkable. It slightly and ambiguously glanced on the affairs of France, in declaring "the internal situation of the different parts of Europe to have been productive of events which had engaged his Majesty's most serious attention." But early indications appeared of the light in which the recent transactions in that kingdom were viewed by the Court. Lord Valletort, in moving the Address, took occasion to contrast the tranquil and prosperous situation of England with the anarchy and licentiousness of France, and

and to stigmatize the Revolution in that kingdom as an event the most disastrous, and productive of consequences the most fatal which had ever taken place since the foundation of the monarchy. This language was highly applauded by the old prerogative phalanx, distinguished by the appellation of the King's Friends. But these sentiments unfortunately were far from being confined to that inveterate and dangerous faction.

Upon the debate which took place on February the 9th, relative to the Army Estimates, Mr. Burke argued in favor of a reduction of the Peace Establishment, from that state of perfect security which the nation at present enjoyed—professing that, on a review of all Europe, he “did not find that politically we stood in the smallest degree of danger from any one state or kingdom it contained, nor that any foreign powers, but our own allies, were likely to obtain a preponderance in the scale. “France,” said Mr. Burke, “has hitherto been our first object in all considerations concerning the balance of power. But France is in a political light to be considered as **EXPUNGED** out of the **SYSTEM** of **EUROPE**. Whether she could **EVER** appear in it again, as a leading power, was not easy to determine: but at present he considered France as not politically existing; and **MOST ASSUREDLY** it would take **MUCH TIME** to restore her to her former **ACTIVE EXISTENCE**. *Gallos quoque in bellis floruisse*

floruisse audivimus, might possibly be the language of the rising generation. It was said, as she had speedily fallen, she might speedily rise again. He doubted this. The fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and opposed by the laws of physical and political gravitation. In a political view, France was low indeed; she had lost every thing, even to her name.

—————*Jacet ingens littore truncus,
Avolsuq; humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.*

He was astonished at it. He was alarmed at it. He trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatness. The French had shewn themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto appeared in the world. In one short summer they had completely pulled down to the ground their Monarchy, their Church, their Nobility, their Law, their Army, and their Revenue. Were we absolute conquerors, and France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should blush to impose upon them terms so destructive to all their consequence as a nation, as the duration they had imposed upon themselves. In the last age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France, in the net of a relentless despotism — a despotism indeed proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, splendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the imposing

posing robes of science and literature. Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from licentious violence—a danger of being led from admiration to imitation of the excesses of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy—of a people whose government is anarchy, and whose religion is atheism. Mr. Burke pronounced the French nation very unwise. What they valued themselves upon was, in his opinion, a disgrace to them. They had gloried, and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory, in making a revolution. All the horrors and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to this revolution, which attend its progress, and which may eventually result from its establishment, pass for nothing. The French have made their way through the destruction of their country to a bad Constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their State, to which they were called by their Monarch, and sent by their country, they had rashly destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the State, and to give it a steady direction. These they had melted down into one incongruous ill-connected mass; and, with the most atrocious perfidy and violation of all faith among men, laid the axe to the

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the root of all property, and consequently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set in confiscating all the possessions of the Church. They had made and recorded a sort of institute and digest of anarchy, called "A Declaration of the Rights of Man:" thus systematically destroying every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this *mad déclaration* they had subverted the State, and brought on such calamities as no country, without a long war, had ever been known to suffer. Mr. Burke declared that he felt some concern that this strange thing called a Revolution in France should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the Revolution in England. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution, as it is called, and that of France, are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. What we did, was in truth and substance not a revolution made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our Constitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the Monarchy. The nation kept the same ranks, the same subordinations, the same franchises, the same order in the law, the revenue, and the

magistracy; the same Lords, the same Commons, the same Corporations, the same Electors. The Church was not impaired. Her estates, her majesty, her splendor, her orders and gradations continued the same. She was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of that intolerance which was her weakness and disgrace. Was little done then because a Revolution was not made in the Constitution? No—every thing was done; because we commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Instead of lying in a sort of epileptic trance, exposed to the pity or derision of the world for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, the State flourished; Great Britain rose above the standard of her former self. All the energies of the country were awakened, and a new æra of prosperity commenced, which still continues, not only unimpaired, but receiving growth and improvement under the wasting hand of time.”

Mr. Fox, notwithstanding his personal regard and friendship for Mr. Burke, thought it necessary, in justice to the rectitude and dignity of his own character, to declare “his total dissent from opinions so hostile to the general principles of liberty; and which he was grieved to hear from the lips of a man whom he loved and revered—by whose precepts he had been taught, by whose example he had been animated to engage in their defence. He vindicated the conduct of the French army in

refusing to act against their fellow-citizens, from the aspersions of Mr. Burke, who had charged them with abetting an abominable sedition by mutiny and desertion—declaring that, if he could view a standing military force with less constitutional jealousy than before, it was owing to the noble spirit manifested by the French army; who, on becoming soldiers, had proved that they did not forfeit their character as citizens, and would not act as the mere instruments of a despot. The scenes of bloodshed and cruelty that had been acted in France, no man, said Mr. Fox, could hear of without lamenting. But when the grievous tyranny that the people had so long groaned under was considered, the excesses they had committed in their efforts to shake off the yoke could not excite our astonishment so much as our regret. And as to the contrast which Mr. Burke had exhibited, respecting the mode in which the two Revolutions in England and France were conducted, it must be remembered, that the situation of the two kingdoms was totally different. In France, a free Constitution was to be created. In England, it wanted only to be secured. If the fabric of government in England suffered less alteration, it was because it required less alteration. If a general destruction of the antient Constitution had taken place in France, it was because the whole system was radically hostile to liberty,

and that every part of it breathed the direful spirit of despotism."

Mr. Sheridan, with still less reserve and attention to personal respect, reprobated the political sentiments which had been that night advanced by Mr. Burke. "The people of France," said Mr. Sheridan, "it is true, have committed acts of barbarity and bloodshed which have justly excited indignation and abhorrence. That detestation and abhorrence however are still more justly due to the government of France prior to the Revolution; the tyranny and oppression of which had deprived the people of the rights of men and of citizens, and driven them to that degree of desperation which could alone have incited those unexampled acts of cruelty and revenge which had been practised in the first agitation and violence of the effort to regain their freedom. Could it be expected, that men in their situation should be capable of acting with the same moderation and the same attention to humanity and sensibility as characterised freemen? Were the mad outrages of a mob an adequate ground for branding the National Assembly with the stigma of being a bloody, ferocious, and tyrannical democracy? It was a libel on that illustrious body thus to describe them. A better Constitution than that which actually existed, it is allowed that France had a right to expect. From whom were they to receive it? From
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the bounty of the Monarch at the head of this courtiers? or from the patriotism of Marshal Broglio at the head of the army? From the faint and feeble cries emitted from the dark dungeons of the Bastille? or from the influence and energy of that spirit which had laid the Bastille in ashes? The people, unhappily misguided as they doubtless were in particular instances, had however acted rightly in their great object. They had placed the supreme authority of the community in those hands by whom alone it could be justly exercised, and had reduced their Sovereign to the rank which properly belonged to Kings—that of administrator of the laws established by the free consent of the community.” The House appeared, during a long and most interesting discussion, greatly agitated by this shock and conflict of opinions. But Mr. Pitt preserved a cautious and politic silence as to the merits of the revolution which had taken place; lavishly applauding, nevertheless, Mr. Burke for the zealous and seasonable attachment he had displayed to the principles of the British Constitution.

The spirit by which the Court was now actuated still more evidently appeared in their conduct relative to the Dissenters, who had signalized themselves by the exuberance of their joy at the late events in France. Since the favorable decision of the late session relative to the repeal of the

Test Laws, they had not ceased their efforts by every means in their power to increase the number of their friends in the House of Commons. Provincial meetings were convened by them in every part of the kingdom; and resolutions, framed in terms for the most part harsh and revolting, passed, expressive of their sentiments of the injustice and oppression under which they suffered. And in contemplation of the approaching general election, they had even the gross indiscretion, in many of their public votes, to recommend a marked preference in favor of those who had shewn themselves the friends and advocates of equal and universal liberty. In the stead of Mr. Beaufoy, a friend and partisan of the Minister, Mr. Fox was now solicited to move the House a third time for the repeal of the Acts in question; to which he gave a ready and generous assent. By appearing to consider the repeal of the Test Laws as a matter of great magnitude and importance, the Nation at large, which had originally regarded the question with indifference, were led to believe it to be a matter of high and serious import. Counter-meetings of the Friends of the Church were called, in which the repeal of the Test was deprecated as fatal to its security. The Clergy revived with incredible success the obsolete and senseless clamor, that the CHURCH WAS IN DANGER. All possible encouragement was given to these artifices of faction and efforts

efforts of bigotry by the Court; so that when the period arrived at which the destined motion was to be made, the Dissenters were astonished to find the Government, the Church, and the Nation combined in passionate opposition to a claim which to them appeared founded on the clearest principles of reason, policy, and justice.

On the 2d of March Mr. Fox brought forward his motion of repeal, which, unmindful of its present extreme unpopularity, and fixing his attention only on the essential and immutable rectitude of the measure, he supported with a wonderful display of ability. He said, that it was to him a matter of triumph, that the very people who had imputed to him designs hostile to liberty and subversive of the Constitution, had requested him to plead their cause on that day. This was at once a refutation and reparation of the WRONG they had done him. He said, he was himself a member of the Established Church, and thought an establishment, if not necessary, at least useful and advisable. And should any attempts be made to invade the just rights of the Church, she should find him as ready to stand forward the champion of those rights, as he was this day to plead those of the Dissenters; and he hoped the time would come, when the Church would see his conduct in its true light, and acquit him of any design upon her splendor, influence, or greatness.

ness. Persecution, said Mr. Fox, is a bond of union. Remove the barriers which separate the Dissenters from the community of citizens, and in their collective capacity they would be no longer known. Men unite to resist oppression: but cease to oppress, and the union is dissolved. Continue it, and you render the union still more compact and firm, till resistance, at first perhaps weak, gradually becomes formidable, and finally successful. And experience shews, that when oppression has been carried to certain lengths, men think that the only way to destroy the oppressor is to destroy the oppressor. Such is the tendency and such the termination of this wretched system of policy. For any Government to extend its jurisdiction over the opinions of individuals, said this magnanimous statesman, is at once absurd and tyrannical. It is absurd, for opinions must and ought to be free. They are not the proper objects of human authority, and they may in fact be perfectly innocent and harmless, when in a mere speculative view they perhaps appear fraught with mischief and danger. It is tyrannical, for it would furnish a pretext for every species of oppression and persecution. It is not to control opinions, but actions, that government is instituted. And then only has the State a right to interfere, when by any overt act a man has offended against any known law. Then, and then only,

only, is punishment justly inflicted, when a man by his conduct has proved himself criminal ; and not when it is inferred, and perhaps most unjustly inferred, from his opinions, that he may possibly become so. Such, said Mr. Fox, is the absurdity of the laws in question, that the Legislature has for many successive years regularly passed an Act for indemnifying those who presume to serve their country at their own peril. To this miserable expedient are men driven, rather than repeal a law which they themselves blush to execute."

Mr. Pitt, who had done himself honor by the temper and moderation with which he had opposed the former applications, now indulged some expressions of asperity. " Neither the merits nor demerits of individuals ought, he said, to have any influence in the discussion of the present question : yet was the conduct of the Dissenters liable to just reprehension, who, at the very moment they were reprobating the Test Laws, discovered an intention of forming associations through the country for the purpose of imposing a Test upon the Members of that House, and judging of their fitness for discharging their parliamentary duty from their votes upon this single question. He was far from wishing to throw any stigma upon the Dissenters ; but he affirmed it to be EXTREMELY PROBABLE, that they might exercise the power they demanded for the subversion of the present Establishment. The important

important question at issue, he asserted, plainly was, whether the House ought to relinquish at once those acts which had been adopted by the wisdom of our ancestors to serve as a bulwark to the Church, whose constitution was so intimately connected with that of the State, that the safety of the one must be always affected by any danger that threatened the other. To toleration the Dissenters were undoubtedly entitled. They had a right to enjoy their liberty and their property, to entertain their own speculative opinions, and to educate their offspring in such religious sentiments as themselves approved. But the indispensable necessity of a permanent Church Establishment for the good of the State, required that toleration should not be extended to equality; if it were, there would be an end for ever to the wise policy of prevention, and a door would be opened to the absolute ruin of the Constitution."

Mr. Burke seconded the Minister in a speech of far more virulence, and in present circumstances therefore of far more efficacy. He expressed his "utter contempt of all abstract principles of natural right; these, he said, were annihilated by society, which secured the possession of every comfort which those proud and boastful rights impotently held out, but could not bestow. He astonished and alarmed the House with reading several passages from the writings of Dissenting Divines on the subject

ject of Ecclesiastical Establishments, expressed with the usual acrimony and violence of theological polemics. From these testimonies Mr. Burke inferred the inveterate enmity of the Dissenters to the Church; and he adjured the House to suffer the fatal incidents which had taken place in France, and the sudden ruin of the Gallican Church, to awaken their zeal for the preservation of our present happy and excellent Establishment." On the division the numbers were, ayes 105, noes 294; so that the majority against the repeal had increased since the last session from 20 to 189 voices.

In consequence of the unhappy manner in which this question was treated, the spirit of religious bigotry, prejudice, and animosity was revived throughout the kingdom in an extraordinary degree. The grand fabric of policy which it had been the labor of a century to rear, and the glory of the House of Hanover for two successive reigns to cherish, was now in a moment of rashness and resentment demolished and overthrown. The Dissenters on their part can by no means be acquitted of blame. Considering the great plausibility which may be given by eloquent and artful men to principles the most absurd and erroneous, it is no wonder that many highly respectable persons, far removed from contempt as to knowledge and understanding, should regard the
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the repeal of the Test Laws as attended with a degree of risque and danger *. Till the PASSIONS of the public were awakened, it is however extremely evident that the arguments of the Dissenters, and of their advocates, both in and out of Parliament, made a sensible impresson in their favor ; but when they proceeded to a rude and arrogant mode of urging their claim, the voice of reason was lost in the subsequent conflict. Had the Dissenters conducted themselves with the respect and deference due to the Government of a country even when in error, it is by nomeans improbable that at a future period the Court might have

* “ The sufferings of men in their civil rights upon religious accounts,” says Bishop HOADLEY in his memorable answer to Bishop SHERLOCK, “ was the INFLAMING CONSIDERATION—and what gave rise to those passions which in the last century produced such fatal effects. The contrary conduct, therefore, would have the contrary effect. Let all hardships and all oppressions cease. Let there be no civil punishment, or civil suffering, or civil inconvenience, call it as you please, on account of what is the dictate of men’s private conscience, unless it immediately affect the Civil Government. If the former method has been tried, and has been seen to blow up disaffection into violence, then the true cure for these evils is to prevent them by acting a contrary part, and trying that which never yet has had in any part of the world so fatal effects. To go on in the old way of continuing grievances and burdens, is only to pave the way to the same evils whenever time and opportunity shall offer ; and this as certainly as that the same human nature will be worked upon in the

have *suffered* the repeal to pass; but by pressing the repeal with a boldness and precipitancy which allowed no salvo for the honor of Government, they could expect no other than a decided and acrimonious opposition. It is nevertheless very remarkable in one view, that the measure in question should be opposed with such pertinacity by the Executive Government, since the very object of the repeal was merely to remove a restraint upon the exercise of its prerogative. And if the object of these successive applications had been attained in its utmost extent, it would still have depended upon the pleasure of the Crown, whether a single

the same manner by the same methods; or as certainly as that the same causes, all things concurring, will ever produce the same effects. Those evils were begun by partiality and oppression, and therefore the true lasting effectual remedy would be for Government to abolish all partiality as to civil rights, and all hardship wherever there is equal affection to the Civil Government, properly so called. Admitting, for argument sake, the disaffection of the Dissenters to the Government at former periods, if that disaffection to the Civil Constitution, testified by former actions, were a just ground for making such exclusive acts, then certainly the truest affection to the present Civil Constitution, testified through a long series of years, and in times the most critical and dangerous, is the justest reason in the world for putting an end to these acts." Such were the noble sentiments, and such the generous and enlightened policy with which the Dissenters were not only uniformly treated, but publicly defended, by those men in whom the House of Brunswick once placed their trust and confidence.

Dissenters should have been employed in any office for which a compliance with the Test was previously necessary. The conduct of the Dissenters, too eagerly solicitous to remove a stigma which they were conscious they did not deserve, must indeed be acknowledged unwise and indefensible. But when was wisdom supposed the characteristic of a promiscuous and countless multitude? The conduct of Government was also at least equally unwise. But from the Government of a great nation we have a right to expect wisdom; and from the palpable want of it during the present reign, evils and mischiefs beyond all power of calculation have resulted. After the fatal experience of thirty years, that most important of all political truths remained to be discovered—that mankind are with infinitely more ease and efficacy to be governed by mildness than severity.

Shortly after the decision of the House upon this business, Mr. Flood, so long celebrated as a patriot and orator in the Irish House of Commons, and who had sat some years almost undistinguished in the British Parliament, brought forward a plan of Parliamentary Reform, in conformity to which an additional number of Representatives, to the amount of one hundred, was to be admitted into the Legislative Body, in a proportional ratio to the population of each county, by the election of the resident householders only. This was a bold and happy effort

effort at reform ; and it was supported by the mover in a very able and eloquent speech, in which, adverting to the present state of things in France, he declared “ that it was the want of timely and temperate reforms that had made a revolution necessary in that country. Those who opposed such reforms might be enemies to revolution in their hearts, but they were friends to it by their folly.”

This motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, Member for Norwich, the obsequious and devoted admirer of Mr. Burke, who adopted in their full extent all his eccentricities and deviations from the rule of right, but who followed him in his superior lines of character, his genius, and his eloquence, with very unequal steps. “ At the close of the American war, Mr. Windham said, a deluge of opinions had been let loose, a clamor had been raised, and a parliamentary reform demanded—as a remedy for the evils we felt from it. Happily those wild notions had long since subsided; the danger, however, was now breaking out afresh; and were he otherwise a friend to the proposition, he should have objected to it on account of the time at which it was introduced. Where was the man who would be mad enough to advise them to repair their house in the hurricane season ?”

Mr. Pitt entirely coincided in these reasonings of Mr. Windham, and declared, “ that were the motion before them the precise proposition he himself

self had formerly offered, he should now vote against it from a conviction of its actual impropriety. But at a more seasonable opportunity he would MOST CERTAINLY again submit his ideas upon the subject to the consideration of the House."

Mr. Fox declared, "that he saw no reason why we should be struck with a panic on account of the situation of affairs in France; and in allusion to Mr. Windham's metaphorical argument, he affirmed, that no season could be more proper to begin a repair than when a hurricane was near and ready to burst forth." Mr. Flood perceiving the general sentiments of the House, even of those Members who had formerly favored the idea of Parliamentary Reform, to be adverse to the motion, at length assented to withdraw his proposition.

The business relative to the abolition of the Slave Trade went on slowly and heavily. Every artifice of procrastination was used on the part of the Slave-merchants and Planters, and the whole session passed over in the hearing of evidence, and examination of witnesses.

The trial of Mr. Hastings also proceeded with almost equal languor. On the 16th of February (1790) the charge respecting presents was recapitulated by Mr. Burke; but in the entire course of the session the Court sat only thirteen days. The enthusiasm of those who wished and expected to have seen a great public delinquent brought

brought to speedy and exemplary justice, was fast changing to compassion for the man who seemed destined to live a life of impeachment, and to have become the object of a relentless persecution. The evidence on three articles only of the general charge out of twenty was as yet closed on the part of the Commons, after which Mr. Hastings was to enter upon his defence, and the Commons were to reply; so that in all probability the judges and the witnesses, the accusers and the accused, would be all swept away by the hand of Time before the trial could arrive at its legal termination. The common sense of mankind revolted at this procedure. It appeared manifest to all, that this was not the mode in which human affairs could or ought to be conducted. The real merits of the cause were lost in the immensity of the detail. It was not to be expected or imagined that the public at large could pretend to form any judgment respecting it. This only without hesitation they inferred, that if Mr. Hastings was so criminal as he was represented, a short and simple statement of facts would suffice to prove his guilt. But Westminster Hall was converted into a LYCEUM, a School of Eloquence, and all was seen confused and magnified through the mist of rhetorical declamation.

The House of Commons had indeed originally proposed, that the Lords should decide separately upon each article, which might doubtless have

tended considerably to shorten the proceedings; but this their Lordships refused, as an unfair and partial mode of determining upon the merits of so complicated a case, and in which many of the articles of impeachment were so intimately connected. Towards the close of the session, a resolution passed the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Burke, "That the House do authorize the Managers to insist only upon such and so many of the charges as may appear to them conducive to the obtaining speedy and effectual justice;" and Major Scott was, by the order of the House, reprimanded by the Speaker in his place, for ascribing, in a certain libellous publication, the procrastination of the trial to the systematical artifices of the Managers.

On the 31st of March, 1790, Mr. Dundas brought forward his annual statement of the debts and revenues of the East India Company, as required by the Regulation Act. He represented, according to annual custom, their situation as in the highest degree prosperous and flourishing; and what is very remarkable, he did not conclude his eulogium of the present year, with asking a loan to enable them to avoid the horrors of insolvency. Through the wise and equitable administration of Lord Cornwallis, the revenues of Bengal had been advanced during the last year, without the aid of any new imposition, from one million eight hundred

dred thousand pounds to two millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The present Governor General, on his accession to his high office, had stated the situation of the provinces as most wretched and deplorable. In his dispatch to the Court of Directors, dated August 2, 1789, he says, "Independent of all other considerations, it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interest of the Company, that the PRINCIPAL LANDHOLDERS and TRADERS in the interior parts of the country should be *restored* to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with decency, according to the customs of their several *castes* and religions. I am sorry to be obliged to say, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at present, excepting the class of shroffs and banians, who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of these provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must include almost every zemindar in the Company's territories." And in his Council-minute of September 18, 1789, his Lordship writes, "I can safely assert, that ONE THIRD of the Company's territory is now a jungle, inhabited by WILD BEASTS!"

One of the primary and most important measures of the new Governor General was, to lease the lands

in perpetuity at an equitable valuation to the actual occupants; in allusion to which momentous transaction his Lordship thus forcibly expresses himself to the Directors: "The security of property, and the certainty which each individual will now feel of being allowed to enjoy the fruits of his labors, must operate uniformly as incitements to labor and industry." This could not but be construed as a bitter satire on the conduct of his predecessor; and as amounting to a very explicit acknowledgment of the misery and oppression which the inhabitants had long suffered under his capricious, haughty, and tyrannical domination.

In the month of April Mr. Pitt presented, as usual, his statement of the national revenue and expenditure; and it was very consolatory to the public to be informed that the receipt of the Exchequer had surpassed that of the year preceding in the sum of half a million, and more so to be told that still greater accessions might reasonably be hoped from the uninterrupted enjoyment of the inestimable blessings of peace. It therefore excited peculiar astonishment, when in about a fortnight from this period, viz. May 5th, 1790, a Royal Message was delivered by the Minister, announcing a state of things which bore the undisguised and menacing aspect of war.

To elucidate this matter, it is necessary to mention that the celebrated circumnavigator Cook,

in his last voyage of discovery, touching at divers ports on the western coast of North America, purchased from the natives a number of valuable furs bearing a high price in the Chinese market. This branch of commerce proving very lucrative, a spot of ground was in the year 1788 procured from the Indians, and a regular establishment, defended by a slight fortification, formed at a place called Nootka Sound, situated about the 50th degree of latitude.

This being regarded by the Spaniards as a flagrant encroachment on their exclusive rights of sovereignty, the Princessa, a Spanish man of war dispatched for this purpose by the Viceroy of Mexico, in the following spring, seized without ceremony upon the fort, and captured such English vessels, the Iphigenia, Argonaut, &c. as were found trading on the coast. At the same time the Spanish Commandant, hoisting the national standard, declared that the whole line of coast from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of latitude belonged to the King of Spain. After some delay, and much loss and vexation to the proprietors, the captured vessels were restored by order of the Viceroy, on the supposition, as he declared, "that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in question to attempt an establishment on that coast."

Of these particulars the Court of London was

informed by the Spanish Ambaffador fo long fince as the 10th of February; and his Excellency at the fame time requested “that meafures might be taken for preventing his Britannic Majefty’s fubjects from frequenting thofe coafts, and from carrying on their fisheries in the feas contiguous to the Spanish continent, as derogatory to the incontestable rights of the Crown of Spain.” This was the exact counterpart of the memorable affair of Falkland Islands, which had fo nearly involved Europe in a war twenty years before. The Minister of that day, had he continued in power, would doubtlefs have avoided striking a fecond time upon the fame rock; but it has been obferved, not without too much color of plaufibility, from facts like the prefent, that although individuals gain wifdom by experience, nations do not.

The claims of Spain, in relation to her rights of dominion and fovereignty in America, were doubtlefs in the higheft degree chimerical, and could perhaps be equalled in extravagance only by the claims of Great Britain. By the treaty of 1763 the river Miffiffippi, flowing from north to fouth in a direct courfe of 1500 miles, was made the perpetual boundary of the two empires; and the whole country to the weft of that vaft river belonged to his Catholic Majefty, by juft as valid a tenure as the country eaftward of the river to the King of England. Exclusive of this recent and decisive
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line of demarcation, by which the relative and political rights of both nations were clearly ascertained, the Spanish Court referred to antient treaties, by which the rights of the Crown of Spain were acknowledged in their full extent by Great Britain.

Charles III. King of Spain died December 1788, and his son Charles IV. the present Sovereign, confiding in the justice of his claims, offered with dignified candor to submit the decision of this question to any one of the Kings of Europe, leaving the choice wholly to his Britannic Majesty. "It is sufficient (says the Spanish Minister, Count Florida Blanca) for the Spanish Monarch, that a Crowned Head, from full information of the facts, shall decide as he thinks just; adding, that on a late application to the Court of St. Petersburg, in relation to similar encroachments on the part of the Russians, the Empress had given the most positive orders that no settlement should be formed on that line of coast. As to the non-occupancy of the particular spot in question by the Spaniards, the Court of Madrid justly observed, that such a plea, if admitted, would tend, by the incongruous intermixture of settlements, to the utter annihilation of all definite and permanent boundaries."

The reply of the Court of London to the Memorial of the Spanish Ambassador was high and haughty. "The act of violence mentioned in the Memorial, necessarily suspended any discussion

till an adequate atonement had been made for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain."

On the statement of these facts in the Royal Message, the House unanimously joined in an Address to the King, assuring his Majesty of the determination of his faithful Commons to afford his Majesty the most zealous and affectionate support, in such measures as may become requisite for maintaining the dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and the essential interests of his dominions." A vote of credit passed the House for the sum of one million; and vigorous military and naval preparations were made in both kingdoms, in the contemplation of an immediate declaration of war.

It must be acknowledged that the hostile procedure of Spain had reduced the English Ministry to a difficult dilemma. The value of the settlement at Nootka, in a commercial and national view, was beneath all calculation of insignificance; and it argued culpable inattention in the British Ministers, not to have been better and earlier apprised of the extent of the real or imaginary rights of Spain, whose jealousy at the slightest infringement upon those rights was sufficiently notorious. This extreme irritability was the more pardonable, as Spain had ever with the strictest honor abstained from all violations of the similar claims and pretensions of other countries. A moment's reflection must have evinced, that a British settle-
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ment on the coast of California must be eventually productive of a serious contention with the Court of Madrid: and a slight degree of discretion would have sufficed to obviate this ground of national quarrel. But in consequence of the rash step taken by Spain, the NATIONAL HONOR was now at stake: and Mr. Grey, in moving for papers relative to this transaction, justly observed, “that national honor was not, as some represented it, a visionary thing; a nation without honor was a nation without power. In losing this inestimable attribute, it inevitably lost the genuine spring of its spirit, energy and action. Every nation therefore ought to be careful of its honor; to be careful lest by one mean submission it encouraged an attack upon the dignity of its character—that best security for the preservation of its peace.”

These high and elevated sentiments, suggested by the generous ardor of youth, Mr. Burke's long and eventful experience seemed to regard as susceptible nevertheless of some modification. “He hoped that the national honor would not be found incompatible with the means of amicable accommodation. As we never ought to go to war for a profitable wrong, so we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right. He therefore trusted that the intended armament would be considered
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not as a measure calculated to terminate the war happily, but to carry on the negotiation vigorously. He wished the war might be avoided. He had seen three wars, and we were gainers by none of them. Our ability and resources were doubtless great; but *then* did a country prove its magnanimity most clearly, when she manifested her moderation to be proportionate to her power. What indeed had we to contend for? If all the distant territories of Spain were thrown into the scale of England, we should, like Spain, be only the weaker for our acquisitions."

On the 10th of June, 1790, the King terminated the session, and in his speech signified the probability of a speedy dissolution of the present Parliament; assuring them in handsome terms of "the deep and grateful sense which he entertained of that affectionate and unshaken loyalty, that uniform and zealous regard for the true principles of the Constitution, that unremitted attention to the public happiness and prosperity, which had invariably directed all their proceedings;" and on the day following the Parliament was dissolved by proclamation.

Conscious of her inability to contend alone with the power of England, Spain had in an early stage of the negotiation applied to the Court of France, to know how far she could depend, in present circumstances,

cumstances, upon the fulfilment of the conditions of the Family Compact in case of a rupture with Great Britain.

From the period of the King's compulsive removal to Paris, no symptoms of opposition to the will of the nation had appeared; and by seeming cheerfully to acquiesce in the successive decrees of the Assembly, he had in some measure recovered what of all things is most difficult to regain—LOST CONFIDENCE. “Let us,” said the Monarch, in a speech delivered on a solemn occasion to the Assembly (February 1790), “give ourselves up with good faith to the hopes that we ought to conceive. Continue your labors. Let it be known that your Monarch applauds them. I should have many losses to recount, but I find my happiness in that of the nation. From the bottom of my heart do I express this sentiment. I will maintain the Constitution with my whole power. May this day, in which your Monarch comes to re-unite himself to you, effect in like manner the re-union of all!”

In the plan of the new Constitution, though much was detracted from the prerogative of the Monarch, much was retained: and the authority of the King of France was still amply sufficient for the real purposes of government. He was acknowledged as the sole depositary of the executive power—as the supreme head of the general adm-
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nistration of the kingdom. In virtue of his sanction, the acts of the Legislative Body acquired the force of law. He was constituted not the nominal merely, but efficient Chief of the army and of the navy. The external safety of the State, and the conservation of its rights and privileges in relation to foreign powers, were confided to him. He disposed at his pleasure of the great offices of State. He appointed, recalled, and received Ambassadors, and he was the grand medium of intercourse with foreign nations. He was addressed by the august titles of SIRE and MAJESTY; and to maintain the dignity and splendor of the Crown, he had a Civil List revenue of one million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds per annum. Where then, after all the senseless clamors of the enemies of this Revolution, was as yet the mighty injury the Monarch had sustained? That the Constitution itself, like all other human things, was not free from imperfection, may without difficulty be admitted; but the subsequent misfortunes of France originated from causes which bore no analogy to those defects. They were owing not to the Constitution, whether well or ill constructed, but to the opposition made to its establishment.

The Count de Montmorin having laid, by order of the King, the Memorial of the Spanish Court before the Assembly, this gave rise to a very inter-

esting Report from the Diplomatic Committee, presented to the Assembly by the Count de Mirabeau. With some hesitation, and many high compliments to the English nation, the Report comes at length to the conclusion, "that it would not be just or honorable to annul the solemn engagements subsisting between Spain and France, at an instant when Spain is threatened with the same dangers which she had repeatedly warded off from them." An ardent wish for the establishment of permanent peace and cordial amity with England is notwithstanding the predominant sentiment in this celebrated Report. "Perhaps, say they, the moment is approaching when LIBERTY, triumphant in both hemispheres, shall accomplish the wish of philosophy, by delivering the human species from the necessity of war. What is it but an insidious system of politics that has hitherto represented as our rival a nation whose steps we have followed, whose brilliant example has been a light to direct us in the attainment of our liberties, and with whom so many new motives lead us to cultivate a good understanding?"

Notwithstanding the vote of the National Assembly for an immediate augmentation of the naval force, the Court of Madrid plainly saw the reluctance of the French nation to engage in a war with England; and, yielding to necessity, complied first with the harsh demand of previous restitution
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and indemnification ; and at length, on the 2d of October (1790) a Convention was signed at the Escorial, by which every point in dispute was conceded by Spain. The settlement at Nootka was restored ; the free navigation and right of fishery in the Southern Pacific were confirmed to Britain ; a full liberty of trade was granted to all the north-west coasts of America, beyond the most northerly of the Spanish settlements, unaccompanied, however, by any formal renunciation of their right of sovereignty. And the two powers were, on the other hand, equally restrained from attempting any settlement nearer to Cape Horn than the most southerly of the settlements actually formed by Spain. A very wise article was inserted likewise in this treaty : That in all future cases of complaint, or supposed infraction of the present Convention, no act of violence shall be committed, but an exact report shall be made of the affair to the respective Courts, who will terminate such difference amicably.

Thus ended a dispute frivolous in its origin, but which seemed in its progress to threaten very serious consequences, and which cost Great Britain the sum of three millions in warlike preparations ; though this expence might have been, with great advantage to the general interests of mankind, avoided, by submitting the whole of the dispute, in the mode proposed by Spain, to amicable arbitration.

tration. And so insignificant was the object in contest, that no one either in or out of Parliament has, so far as appears, thought it worth while to enquire whether restoration has really been made in the mode prescribed by the treaty or not.

The ANNIVERSARY of the REVOLUTION in France, which was dated from the fall of the Bastille (July 14), was celebrated throughout the country, and more especially at Paris, with great magnificence. The King assisted in person, and took a solemn oath to maintain the Constitution. The National Assembly and the armed Citizens repeated it amidst the acclamations of innumerable spectators; and the whole kingdom, with one voice, and almost at the same moment, swore to live free or die. In the genuine spirit of antient Greece, was raised on the site of the Bastille a superb column sacred to Liberty: and in the Grecian spirit of citizenship and equality, a Decree of the Assembly had recently passed, abolishing all artificial distinctions of rank—all the Gothic institutions of Chivalry and Knighthood, ribbands, crosses, armorial bearings, and hereditary titles of honor*.

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* After the reduction of the citadel of Syracuse by Timoleon, that great man did not, as we are told, spare the place on account of its beauty and magnificence: but, on the contrary, he invited the Syracusans by public proclamation to join in the
destruction

IN ENGLAND also the French Revolution was commemorated in the metropolis, and various other parts, with great festivity and the most cordial gratulation; the characteristic generosity of the people of England displaying itself upon this occasion in a manner very conspicuous and pleasing.

Soon after this transaction, Mr. Burke, who had in the last session uttered so furious an invective against the French Revolution in the House of Commons, still more transported with rage and rancor at the high degree of prosperity it had now attained, published a book entitled "Reflections on the French Revolution," written with a force

destruction of that bulwark of despotism: and, the building being levelled with the ground, he erected a COMMON HALL there for the seat of judicature, at once to gratify the citizens and to shew that a popular government should be elevated on the ruins of tyranny. When, after thus gloriously re-establishing the liberty of Sicily, an envious and factious Demagogue preferred a public accusation against him in the Assembly of the People, who could not suppress the emotions of their indignation; he immediately stilled the tumult by declaring, "that he had voluntarily undergone so many labors and dangers, that the meanest Syracusan might have recourse when he pleased to the laws:" adding, "that he could not sufficiently express his gratitude to the GODS, in permitting him to see all the Syracusans enjoy the liberty of saying what they thought fit." Let the admirers of such distinctions declare, what TITLE could add dignity to the name of TIMOLEON.

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of eloquence and energy of declamation calculated to produce the most powerful effects.

The object of this elaborate treatise was twofold :
 1. To expose to the public resentment and indignation those persons who had in this country manifested their approbation of the Revolution in France ; and, 2. To place that Revolution itself in an odious and abominable light, as an event to be deplored, detested, and deprecated. And, in an Appendix to this work, he with most atrocious and unexampled malignity invites and exhorts all Christian Princes to make, what he styles, “ a common cause with a just Prince dethroned by rebels and traitors.” The deluded people of France, to be rescued from the evils they had brought upon themselves, must, as he affirmed, be SUBDUED. And he intimates that this war, or crusade, is to be conducted on principles different from any former one. “ The mode of civilized war,” says he, “ will not be practised ; they must look for no modified hostility ; all which is not battle will be MILITARY EXECUTION.” The members of the Revolution Society, and the other commemorators of the French Revolution, he inveighs against in terms of the most unqualified abuse ; and he charges Dr. Price in particular with having *fulminated*, in his Revolution Sermon, principles little short of treason and rebellion. “ His doctrines,” says Mr. Burke, “ affect our Constitution in its vital parts. He

affirms that his Majesty is almost the only lawful King in the world, because the only one who owes his crown to the choice of his people. As to the Kings of the world, all of whom, *except ONE*, this Arch-pontiff of the Rights of Men, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness, of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervor of the twelfth century, puts into one sweeping clause of *ban and anathema*, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude over the whole globe, it behoves them to consider how they admit into their territories these Apostolic Missionaries, who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful Kings. Nothing can be more untrue, than that the crown of this realm is held by his Majesty by the choice of the people. Whilst the legal conditions of the COMPACT OF SOVEREIGNTY are performed, he holds his crown, as Mr. Burke virtually affirms, in CONTEMPT of their choice* :” *i. e.* according to this novel and extraordinary mode of reasoning, in conforming his conduct to the conditions of the national choice, he reigns in actual contempt of their choice. Dr. Price having asserted the abstract right of the People, as exemplified at the

* The words of Mr. Burke are literally “the choice of the Revolution Society.” But if his Majesty reigns in contempt of the choice of one part of the people, he reigns doubtless, by a parity of reason, in contempt of every part.

Revolution,

Revolution, to depose their Governors for misconduct, and frame a Government for themselves; Mr. Burke says, “the people of England utterly disclaim it; they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes.” But *how* the people can, in any given or possible circumstances, *resist their own act*, is a paradox which Mr. Burke attempts not to solve. Certain it is that Dr. Price advanced, in this famous discourse, no other principles than those which Mr. LOCKE had urged a hundred years before in defence of the title of King William and the validity of the Revolution Government. Amongst innumerable passages to the same purpose, a single citation may well suffice in vindication of a doctrine resting on the immovable foundation of common sense. “Though in a constituted Commonwealth,” says that immortal writer, “standing upon its own basis, and acting according to its own nature, that is, acting for the preservation of the Community, there can be but one Supreme Power, which is the Legislative, to which all the rest are and must be subordinate; yet the Legislative being only a FIDUCIARY POWER, to act for certain ends, there remains still in the People a supreme power to remove or alter the Legislative, when they find the Legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them. For all power given with trust for the attaining an end, being limited by that end, whenever that end is manifestly

neglected or opposed, the trust must necessarily be *forfeited*, and the power devolve into the hands of those that gave it, who may place it anew where they shall think best for their safety and security. And thus the Community perpetually retains a supreme power of saving themselves from the attempts and designs even of their Legislators, whenever they shall be so foolish or so wicked as to lay and carry on designs against the liberties and properties of the subject. If they who say this hypothesis lays a foundation for rebellion, mean that it *may* occasion civil wars or intestine broils, to tell the people that they are absolved from obedience when illegal attempts are made upon their liberties and properties, they may as well say, upon the same ground, that honest men may not oppose robbers or pirates, because this may occasion disorder or bloodshed. I desire it may be considered what kind of peace there will be in the world, which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppressors. Polyphemus's den gives us a perfect pattern of such a peace; such a government, wherein Ulysses and his companions had nothing to do but quietly to suffer themselves to be devoured. Are the people to be blamed if they have the sense of rational creatures, and can think of things no otherwise than as they find and feel them? And is it not rather their fault, who put things in such a posture, that they would not have them

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them thought as they are? But whether the mischief hath oftener begun in the people's wantonness or in the rulers' insolence, I leave to impartial history to determine."

From the date of the fatal publication of Mr. Burke, who seemed ambitious to signalize himself by setting not merely a palace or a temple, but the world itself on fire, the nation was divided into two violent and openly hostile parties. The Tory faction, which had hitherto scarcely dared to whisper their dislike—now, under the sanction of Mr. Burke's authority, became bold and clamorous in their vociferations. And the principles advanced by Mr. Burke, ever grateful to the ear of Princes, at once obliterated all past offences, and placed him in the foremost rank of favorites and courtiers. This extraordinary production gave rise to numberless replies, of which by far the most memorable was that written by Thomas Paine, the author of the famous pamphlet styled COMMON SENSE, which by its almost magical effect on the minds of the people of America, at a most important crisis, paved the way for the declaration of independency. His present work, RIGHTS OF MAN, was written with no less power of intellect and force of language; and made a correspondent, perhaps an indelible, impression upon the public mind. Not content with pointing out and exposing with the most sarcastic severity the absurdities and misrepresentations

sentations of Mr. Burke—not content with painting in just and striking colors the abuses and corruptions of the existing government, he with daring and unhallowed hand attacked the principles of the Constitution itself—describing it in terms the most indecent as radically vicious and tyrannical; and reprobating the introduction of aristocracy or monarchy, under whatever modifications, into any form of government, as a flagrant usurpation and invasion of the unalienable rights of man. “When we survey,” says this temerarious writer, “the wretched conditions of man under the monarchical and hereditary systems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a GENERAL REVOLUTION in the principle and construction of governments is necessary.”

This pamphlet unfortunately appearing at a time when a large proportion of the community, and those the most zealously attached to liberty, were from causes already specified in a state of great irritation and discontent; and the book, notwithstanding its absurd and mischievous political positions, being written in a style and manner which “came home to men’s business and bosoms,” innumerable converts were made to its general system, and infinite pains were taken to circulate it amongst
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the body of the people*. Political Associations were also instituted in every part of the kingdom, professing

* A few detached quotations from this famous publication may serve as specimens, to gratify curiosity, of the wonder-working power with which it cannot be denied to have been written. "The countries of the old world have been long harassed by the quarrels and intrigues of their Governments. Age after age has rolled away for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness. Invention is continually exercised to furnish new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches prosperity as its prey. All monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, and plunder their object—wearied with human butchery, they sit down to rest, and call it peace.—If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart and hypocrisy of countenance that reflection would shudder at, and humanity disown, it is Kings, Courts, and Cabinets, that must fit for the portrait. War is the pharo-table of Governments, and Nations the dupes of the game.—Government on the old system is an assumption of power for the aggrandizement of itself—on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society. Monarchy is the master-fraud which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers. There is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of government, that has not appeared before. The trade of Courts is beginning to be understood; and the affectation of mystery, with all the artificial foreery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire. No question has arisen within the records of history that presses with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or out, or Whig or Tory, or High or Low Church shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization shall take place.—When it shall

professing to have in view the Reform of the Constitution, but which with too much reason were suspected really to aim at its subversion. Such were the lamentable consequences resulting from the rashness and folly of Mr. Burke—whose boasted *panacea* operated upon the body-politic as a most deadly poison; and which served to prove that learning, parts, and eloquence may subsist in the highest perfection, without being accompanied with a single particle of wisdom.

The new Parliament assembled on the 25th of November, 1790. In his opening speech, the King signified “his satisfaction that the differences with Spain were brought to an amicable termination. He observed, that since the last Session of Parliament a foundation had been laid for a pacification between Austria and the Porte—that a separate peace had actually taken place between Russia and Sweden; but that the war between Russia and the Porte still continued. The principles on which I have hitherto acted,” said the Monarch, “will make me always desirous of employ-

be said in any country in the world, My poor are happy, neither ignorance nor distress is to be found amongst them—my gaols are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars—the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive—the rational world is my friend, because I am the friend of its happiness—when these things can be said, then may that country boast its Constitution and Government.”

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ing the weight and influence of this country in contributing to the restoration of general tranquillity.”

The terms of the Convention with Spain were approved and ratified in both Houses by great majorities—but not unanimously. For the papers and documents relative to the negotiation being partially withheld, Mr. Grey moved an adjournment, declaring “that without them it was impossible to know whether the late disputes were owing to the restless ambition and unjust claims of Spain, or to the rashness, presumption and ignorance of his Majesty’s Ministers.” In the Upper House, the Marquis of Lansdowne expressed his “determination not to join in a vote of approbation of the conduct of Ministers, who had permitted a set of unknown adventurers to fit out ships with *fine names*, and under Portuguese colors and papers to break through a system regarding Spanish America, which had been sanctioned by the policy of Europe for more than 200 years.”

To defray the expence of the Armament, Mr. Pitt, with the laudable resolution to suffer no permanent increase of debt, proposed various temporary taxes, which would discharge the incumbrance in four years—with the assistance of five hundred thousand pounds, which he had it in contemplation to take from the *unclaimed dividends* lying in the Bank of England, the amount of which he estimated

mated at six hundred and sixty thousand pounds. This latter proposition excited a just alarm in all the great chartered companies, and in the commercial and mercantile world in general. It was strongly and ably opposed in the House by Mr. Fox, Mr. Thornton a Bank Director, and Mr. Samuel Whitbread, recently returned as Member for the Borough of Bedford—a young man of great personal and mental accomplishments, of a disposition open, noble, and ingenuous; and whose ardor of mind, bordering on the enthusiasm of public virtue, was happily regulated by an excellent understanding and correct judgment. It was urged, “that agreeably to the terms of the original contract between the Government and the public creditors, the Directors of the Bank are constituted trustees for the public creditor. When the money is once paid into the Bank, it ceases to be public money, and is instantly converted into private property; which must there remain a sacred deposit till it is claimed by the private individuals to whom it appertains. And even in case of the expiration of the Charter of the Bank of England, the Directors still remain a Corporation by law, for the express purpose of executing their delegated trust. What mischief may not result from the admission of a power in Government, arbitrarily to depart from the conditions of the contract actually made with the public? Under the very term *unclaimed dividends,*

dividends, is indeed veiled a gross fallacy. Exclusive of the dividends of the last three years, which are not properly *unclaimed* but merely *unreceived* dividends, the balance amounts scarcely to a fifth part of the sum which the Minister proposes to seize. If the recent and fluctuating balances of the Bank are thus liable to seizure, the Minister may one day order the money to be paid into the Bank, and the next he may without any violation of public faith command it to be repaid into the Exchequer. But in fact this is no other than a measure of injustice and violence, calculated to compel the Bank to relinquish their trust when the original and express purposes of it are evidently unaccomplished."

After much hesitation and contest, the Minister consented, by way of compromise, to accept of a loan of five hundred thousand pounds from the Bank, without interest, so long as a floating balance to that amount should remain in the hands of the cashier.

On the 17th of December (1790) Mr. Burke moved, "that the House do resolve itself into a Committee, to take into consideration the state of the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq." This being done, he made a second motion, "that an Impeachment by this House, in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, against Warren Hastings, Esq. for high crimes and misdemeanors, is still pending." From this proposition, the entire corps of Lawyers in the House

House with scarcely an exception declared their total dissent: and Mr. Erskine, whose talents at the Bar were of the highest rank, and who had in the general tenor of his practice distinguished himself by his zealous attachment to the principles of the Constitution, in an elaborate speech endeavored to shew that in consequence of the dissolution of Parliament the Impeachment had *abated*; and on this ground he was supported by Mr. Hardinge, Mr. Mitford, and Sir John Scott.

Upon this great question, in the decision of which the honor, the dignity, and authority of the House were so deeply involved, the Speaker with great propriety rose to deliver his opinion. "If the maxim laid down by the Lawyers were admitted as just, the consequence was obvious. The Impeachment of a profligate or corrupt Minister might, by the insidious intervention of the prerogative, at any time be rendered nugatory and abortive. In the view of the Constitution, and even by the forms of Parliament, the Impeachment is preferred not by the House of Commons merely, but by all the Commons of England; and the House can be considered in relation to the prosecution as no more than the agents and attorneys of the people at large. A second House of Commons therefore, though certainly possessing a discretionary power of dropping the prosecution, if upon due consideration they are of opinion that it does not rest upon

upon a just foundation, are as certainly at full liberty to proceed in it, if in their judgment conducive to the safety or the interests of the State. In an Impeachment of the nature of the present, it would scarcely be imagined that twenty-two complex articles could by any mode of investigation be decided upon in a single session. If then, agreeably to the genius of the antient Constitution, Parliaments themselves were to be made annual, the labor would be truly Syfiphean; as such a trial *never* could arrive at a legal termination. Such were the plain dictates of common sense; but in resorting to rules of law, and precedents of Parliament, doubts and difficulties presented themselves. Upon those remote and obscure precedents which occurred previous to the Civil Wars of the last century little stress was laid: but during the reign of King Charles II. the question had come repeatedly under the formal and regular discussion of both Houses. These precedents, and such as had since occurred, the Speaker had accurately examined; and in his Report of them upon this occasion commented upon with great judgment and ability. In the famous case of Lord Danby (A. D. 1679), the Parliament was unquestionably dissolved, for the purpose of screening the Minister from the effects of the Impeachment then actually pending against him. But the next Parliament understood their privileges too well to make the flightest

slightest concession on this important constitutional point. And in compliance with the claims of the Commons, the House of Peers, March 19th, 1678-9, RESOLVED, 'that the dissolution of the last Parliament doth not alter the state of the Impêachments, (viz. that of the Earl of Danby, and the Lords accused as parties in the Popish Plot) brought up by the Commons in that Parliament.' In conformity to this decision, the trial of the Earl of Danby was continued in no less than four successive Parliaments, till in February 1683-4, no Parliament being then sitting, or likely to sit, his Lordship was bailed by authority of the Court of King's Bench.

" On the 19th of May 1685, the first and only Parliament of King James II. was convened; and the question coming immediately before them, respecting the validity of the proceedings on the late Impêachment, it was almost unanimously determined, that the resolution of March 1679 * be reversed

* In the conference between the two Houses, which preceded and gave rise to this famous resolution, Serjeant Maynard, one of the Managers of the Impêachment, said, " That which is most insisted upon is, that the charge now made against this Lord was presented in another Parliament. It is true. But under favor, what is once upon record in Parliament *may* at any time afterwards be proceeded upon. I conceive it *hath* been done. However, in a case of this nature—if there were not, I hope you would

reversed and annulled; and Lord Danby and the other Lords were discharged from their recognizances. But it being evidently the province of the Peers in their judicial capacity *jus dicere* and not *jus dare*, the reversal of the Declaratory Resolution of 1679 was regarded by the Commons as of no weight or authority whatever. In the second Parliament convened after the Revolution, an order was made by the Lords, April 1690, to take into consideration, whether Impeachments continue from Parliament to Parliament; but the House adjourned the decision of this question from time to time till the Parliament was prorogued. And on their next meeting, October 1690, the Earls of Peterborough and Salisbury, impeached by the preceding Parliament, were discharged from their bail; but whether in virtue of the Act of free and general pardon that had recently passed, or of the Resolution of May 1685, is not expressed.

“In 1695, the Earl of Danby, now Duke of Leeds, was a second time impeached, on grounds totally distinct from the former: and this Impeachment, notwithstanding the reversal of 1685, continued pending under several successive Parlia-

would MAKE A PRECEDENT.” In the case of Lord Stafford, who urged in arrest of judgment that his Impeachment was pending in three different Parliaments, the House refused, as a point already determined, to hear the arguments of Counsel upon it.

ments, though for the most part in an almost dormant state, for no less than six years; till on the 24th of June, 1701, the House of Lords resolved, ‘That articles having been exhibited against the Duke of Leeds, to which he had answered, and the *Commons not prosecuting*, the Impeachment and Articles should be dismissed.’

“On the 1st of April 1701, the Earls of Portland and Orford and the Lords Somers and Halifax were impeached: but the Commons refusing to exhibit articles against them in the mode prescribed by the Peers, these Impeachments were on the last day of the session dismissed.

“The next Parliament, which met December 1701, it is true, took no steps whatever to revive the Impeachments; not that they admitted the principle of abatement by dissolution, but that, being of a political complexion totally different from the preceding Parliament, they, with a great majority of the people of England, considered the public conduct of these great WHIG LORDS not only as innocent, but in the highest degree meritorious.

“In July 1715, the Earl of Oxford was impeached. In June 1716, the Parliament was prorogued; and on their subsequent meeting, February 1717, the Earl petitioning that his imprisonment might not be indefinite, a Committee was appointed by the House to search for and report such precedents

dents as relate to the continuance of Impeachments from session to session, and from parliament to parliament; which Report being read, it was moved to resolve, ‘ That the Impeachment of the Commons against the Earl of Oxford is determined by the intervening prorogation.’ This was negatived on the division by 87 to 45 Lords. But a protest ensued signed by ten Lords, in which the general proposition is assumed, that a dissolution would determine the Impeachment; and their Lordships affirm, that there is no essential difference in law between a prorogation and dissolution. If so, the inference surely is, that the 87 Lords would have decided similarly in the case of dissolution. It deserves specific notice, that Lord Chief Justice Holt, that great authority on all points of constitutional law, in the case of *Peters and Benning*, 13th William III. publicly delivered it as his opinion, notwithstanding the existing Resolution of 1685, that Impeachments begun in one parliament might be prosecuted in another. And this appears to have been at all times the prevailing opinion of the WHIGS. Upon a general review of these facts and precedents, the Speaker gave it as his deliberate and decided judgment, that the Impeachment was still legally pending; and that the Resolution of 1685, passed, as there was reason to believe, by the corrupt influence of the Court, and in defiance of a solemn prior decision of both

Houses, and which in no instance since the Revolution had been formally and avowedly acted upon, was wholly invalid and nugatory."

In this opinion Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and the most eminent parliamentary authorities on both sides concurred. The motion of Mr. Erskine for a *search* into precedents was negatived by a majority of 143 to 30 voices; and the original motion of Mr. Burke triumphantly carried without a division.

After a short interval, Mr. Burke made a third motion, "that the Managers be instructed to proceed to no other parts of the Impeachment, excepting such as relate to contracts, pensions, and allowances;" which was carried with trivial opposition.

By the resolution of the 23d of December 1790, the Lords found themselves reduced to a dilemma not very pleasant. On a message from the Commons, that they were ready to proceed in their evidence, a Committee was appointed by their Lordships to search into precedents, which occasioned a suspension of the business till nearly the conclusion of the session. At length the Report being made, Lord Portchester moved, May 16, "that their Lordships now proceed in the trial." This was opposed by the Lord Chancellor, who recommended the appointment of a second Committee to search for more precedents, and defended by Lord Loughborough, now the oracle of

Whiggism in the House, in a very able speech, in the course of which he warned their Lordships “not to act uncautiously with regard to the popular part of the Constitution. Let them not deny that the people were any thing, lest they compelled them to think they were every thing. In commenting upon the precedents before the House, he pointed out the fallacies of Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES and other COURT SYCOPHANTS, and rested his argument on the authority of the great Constitutional Lawyers Hale, Holt, and Foster. His Lordship said, he had it in charge from the Lord President, Lord Camden, who was prevented from personal attendance, to state that Nobleman’s opinion as perfectly co-incident with his own: and the Lord President had left with him an opinion of the famous Selden, that the new Parliament, convened in consequence of the Duke of Buckingham’s Impeachment 1628, were authorized to have called upon their Lordships for judgment against the Duke.” The abatement of the Impeachment was on the other hand maintained by Lord Kenyon, Lord Abingdon, &c. but on the division, the motion of Lord Portchester was carried by a great and decisive majority. And their Lordships, with the Resolution of 1685 still standing in their Journals; acquainted the House of Commons by message, that they were now ready to proceed in the

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trial. But very little progress was made in it during the short remainder of the session.

Soon after the recess of Parliament (February 21, 1791), Mr. Mitford, a lawyer of eminence in the House, moved, with the previous sanction and approbation of Government, for a Bill to relieve the English Catholics from the legal penalties still existing and in force against them. The proposed Act of Toleration was however confined to such of the Catholics as should subscribe a certain declaration or *protest* against the assumed authority of the Pope, &c. drawn up in terms to which it could scarcely be expected that the majority of Catholics could conscientiously assent.

Mr. Fox rose to object to the Bill, not for what it did, but for what it did not contain. He entreated that the Bill might be made general. "Let the Statute Book, said this great statesman and advocate of toleration, be revised, and strike out all those laws which attach penalties to mere opinions." And Mr. Burke joined in reprobating the absurdity and iniquity of those statutes which condemn every man who worships GOD in his own way, as guilty of treason against the State. Mr. Pitt commended these sentiments, but thought it not *prudent* to *act* upon them; and the Bill passed in its present form: in consequence of which a most invidious and mischievous line of distinction

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was drawn between the protesting and non-protesting Catholics, neither of whom were chargeable with, or suspected of, the slightest tincture of disloyalty to the State.

In the course of the session, Mr. Fox, ever active in the cause of liberty, moved for a Bill to ascertain the rights of juries in the matter of libel. With respect to the pretended distinction between law and fact, Mr. Fox observed, "that when a man was accused of murder, a crime consisting of law and fact, the Jury every day found a verdict of guilty: and this was also the case in felony and every other criminal indictment. Libels were the only exception, the single anomaly. He contended, that if the Jury had no jurisdiction over libels, the Counsel who addressed them on either side as to the criminality of the publication were guilty of a gross and insolent sarcasm. Mr. Fox put this matter in a remarkably strong point of view, by adverting to the law of treason. It was admitted on all hands, that a writing might be an overt act of treason. In this case, if the Court of King's Bench were to say to the Jury, 'Consider only whether the criminal published the paper—do not consider the nature of it—do not consider whether it correspond to the definition of treason or not'—would Englishmen endure that death should be inflicted without a Jury having had an opportunity of delivering their sentiments, whether the

individual was or was not guilty of the crime with which he was charged? Mr. Fox wished to know, whether the modern doctrine of libels did or did not extend to high treason?" On its transmission to the House of Lords, the Bill was opposed on the second reading by the Lord Chancellor, on pretence of its being too late in the session to discuss a measure of such importance. The principle of the Bill was most ably defended by the Law Lords Camden and Loughborough, with whom Lord Grenville concurred; but the Bill was finally postponed.

The evidence on the Slave Trade being at length closed, Mr. Wilberforce, on the 18th of April 1791, brought forward his long expected motion of Abolition, which he introduced with a copious and masterly display of the arguments in favor of that measure. The crimes and villanies to which this horrid traffic had given rise, were detailed with a minuteness which placed not merely the persons actually concerned, but human nature itself, in a light the most degrading and detestable. And the mover remarked with all the eloquence of feeling and of truth, that the history of this commerce was written in characters of blood. "Let us, said he, turn our eyes for relief from this disgraceful scene to some ordinary wickedness." No such relief, however, was as yet to be obtained from the justice and humanity of the House; for, on concluding

cluding his speech with moving "for a Bill to prevent the farther importation of African Negroes into the British Colonies," it was negatived by a majority of seventy-five voices.

Had the same motion been made two years before, while the feelings of the House were freshly awakened, there can scarcely exist a doubt but that it must have succeeded. Such is the importance of seizing the fortunate and favorable moment of action! To qualify this refusal, a Bill was introduced and passed, for chartering a Company for the purpose of cultivating West Indian and other tropical products at Sierra Leona on the coast of Africa, by the use of free negroes; an experiment which is likely to be productive, at no distant period, of very important effects.

It had been long a subject of complaint, that the great and extensive province of Canada continued under a government in the highest degree arbitrary and despotic. This government was indeed acknowledged to be merely temporary; but excuses were not wanting to prolong the duration of it. At length Mr. Pitt, in pursuance of an intimation in the Royal Speech, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal certain parts of the Act respecting the government of Canada passed in the 14th year of his Majesty's reign; and to enact farther provisions for the better government thereof. By the proposed Bill, the province was di-

vided into two distinct governments, by the appellations of Upper and Lower Canada. Councils nominated by the Sovereign, and Houses of Assembly chosen by the People, were established in each. The Habeas Corpus Act was asserted as a fundamental law of their Constitution: and by a very important and admirable clause the British Parliament were restrained from imposing any taxes whatever, but such as might be necessary for the regulation of trade and commerce; and to guard against the abuse of this power, the produce of such taxes was to be at the disposal of the respective Provincial Legislatures. Upon the whole, this Bill contained a noble charter of liberty, and did honor to the Minister who proposed, and to the Assembly which adopted it. The clauses in the Bill which militated against the general principle of it, were opposed by Mr. Fox with extraordinary animation and ability. "The great object of all popular assemblies," Mr. Fox said, "was, that the people should be fully and fairly represented; but when the assembly of one province was to consist of only sixteen, and the other of thirty persons, they deluded the people by a mockery of representation. They seemed to give them a free Constitution, when in fact they withheld it. And he hoped it would never be said, that the Constitution of Canada was modelled after that of England. That these representatives should be elected
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for the term of seven years, he reprobated as equally inconsistent with freedom. Even in England, where the frequent return of elections was attended with so much real inconvenience, the propriety of the Septennial Bill was justly a subject of doubt: but in a country so differently circumstanced as Canada, there could be no plausible objection to annual or at most triennial elections. Another strong ground of objection with Mr. Fox was, that the Legislative Councils were unlimited as to numbers by any other restriction than the pleasure of the King; to whom a power was also reserved of annexing to certain honorary and titular distinctions an hereditary right of sitting in Council. As to hereditary honors, or hereditary powers, to say they were good or not, as a general proposition, was difficult—but he saw nothing so good in them as to warrant their introduction into a country where they were not known. He did not think it wise to destroy them where they existed; but to create them where they did not exist, he considered as exceedingly unwise. He could not account for it, unless it was that, Canada having been formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving those titles of honor, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplored, and to revive in the West that spirit of chivalry which had fallen into so much disgrace in a neighboring country.”

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These incidental expressions awakened the resentment of Mr. Burke, who on the re-commitment of the Bill, May 6, rose, as he said, to speak to its general principle. He enlarged upon "the importance of the act which they were now about to perform. The first consideration was, the competency of the House to such an act. A body of rights commonly called the *Rights of Man* had been lately imported from a neighboring kingdom. The principle of this new code was, that all men were by nature free, and equal in respect of their rights. If this code therefore were admitted, the power of the House could extend no farther than to call together the inhabitants of Canada to choose a Constitution for themselves. The practical effects of this system might be seen in St. Domingo and the other French Islands. They were flourishing and happy till they heard of the Rights of Man. As soon as this system arrived among them, Pandora's box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open; hell itself to yawn, and every demon of mischief to overspread the face of the country." Mr. Burke continuing to launch out into the most violent invectives against the Constitution and Government of France, was repeatedly and loudly called to order, and at length compelled to sit down.

Mr. Fox, when the tumult had subsided, with firmness defended his former sentiments relative

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to the French Revolution; and repeated, "that he thought it upon the whole one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind. In this assertion however he spoke of the *Revolution*, not of the *Constitution*, which still remained to be improved by experience and accommodated to circumstances. The Rights of Man, which his Right Honorable Friend had ridiculed as visionary, were the basis of the British Constitution. Our Statute Book recognized 'the original inherent rights of the people as men, which no prescription could supersede, no accident remove or obliterate.' These had once been the principles of his Right Honorable Friend, from whom he had learned them. His Right Honorable Friend had said with equal energy and emphasis, 'that he knew not how to draw a bill of indictment against a whole people.' Having been taught by him that no revolt of a nation was caused without provocation, he could not help rejoicing at the success of a Revolution resting upon the same basis with our own—the immutable and unalienable Rights of Man."

Mr. Burke rose again, and in vehement terms insisted "that he was perfectly in order; and that the discussion of the Quebec Bill was a proper opportunity to put the country on its guard against those dangerous doctrines which prevailed in France, and which had found so many advocates

cates here. He observed, that he had differed on many occasions from Mr. Fox, but there had been no loss of friendship between them. But there was something in the ACCURSED French Constitution that envenomed every thing."

Mr. Fox on hearing this interrupted him, saying "there was no loss of friendship."

Mr. Burke replied "THERE WAS—he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty, and their friendship WAS at an END."

Mr. Fox, on whom the attention of the House was now eagerly fixed, rose to reply, but his feelings were too powerful for utterance. All the ideas so long cherished, of gratitude, esteem and affection, rushed upon his susceptible and generous mind; and involuntary tears were observed to steal down his cheek. A profound and expressive silence pervaded the House. At length Mr. Fox, recovering himself, said, "that however events might have altered the mind of his Right Honorable Friend, for such he must still call him, he could not so easily consent to relinquish and dissolve that intimate connection which had for twenty-five years subsisted between them. He hoped that Mr. Burke would think on past times; and, whatever expressions of his had caused the offence, that he would at least believe such was not his intention."

The concessions of Mr. Fox made no visible
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impression on the haughty and unbending temper of Mr. Burke; and from this day a schism took place in the politics of the Opposition party, which has been productive of very important consequences.

As the most luminous introduction to the principal remaining transaction of this Session of Parliament, it will be proper now to advert to the actual situation of affairs on the Continent.

No sooner had Leopold King of Hungary assumed the Austrian sceptre, than he resolved on terminating the war with Turkey; and under the powerful mediation of England and Prussia, a convention was concluded August 1790, at Reichenbach, after a negotiation of some months, protracted in the unavailing hope of retaining possession of Belgrade, that important fortress, which, fifty years before, England had exerted her utmost influence to secure to the House of Austria. But now, swayed by Prussian counsels, and eagerly solicitous to advance the interests of that upstart and insolent power, in contra-distinction to those of Austria, the antient and genuine ally of Britain, she harshly and peremptorily insisted on its restitution, in common with all the other Austrian conquests, to the Ottoman Porte. In return, the Austrian Netherlands were guaranteed to the House of Austria, and the possession of the Imperial Crown eventually ensured to his Hungarian Majesty.

Majesty. The Flemings refusing, notwithstanding their present state of abandonment, to return to the Austrian dominion, a great military force was sent into the country in the autumn of 1790, under the command of Marshal Bender, which quickly effected their total reduction; and on the 1st of January, 1791, a solemn *Te Deum* was sung at Bruffels in celebration of that happy event.

Sweden also, disappointed in her views and projects of ambition, thought proper to sign a separate peace with Russia, August 1790, on the basis of the former treaties of Abo and Nyftadt.

The Courts of London and Berlin, elated with the success of their mediation at Reichenbach, now in high and arrogant language signified to the Empress of Russia their pleasure that peace should be restored between the Ottoman and Russian Empires, on the terms of a general restitution of conquests. The Empress replied with equal haughtiness, "that she would make peace and war with whom she pleased, without the intervention of any foreign power." Not however choosing too far to provoke the resentment of these formidable and self-created arbitrators, she secretly intimated her willingness to conclude a peace with Turkey, on the condition of retaining the country eastward of the Neister, as a reasonable indemnification for the expences of the war. This
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was a waste and desert tract of territory, valuable only for the security it afforded to her former acquisitions, and for including within its limits the strong and important fortrefs of Oczakow. This being peremptorily refused, the Empress broke off the conference, and determined to prosecute the war.

On the 28th of March, 1791, Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the House of Commons from his Majesty, importing, “ that the endeavors which he had used in conjunction with his allies to effect a pacification not having proved successful, his Majesty judged it requisite, in order to add weight to his representations, to make some further augmentation of his naval force.” And this message being taken into consideration, Mr. Pitt enlarged much on the necessity of attending to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. “ The influence of the Turkish Empire, he said, was of great effect in the general scale. Its present situation was such as to afford just cause of apprehension to other powers: and to PRUSSIA in particular it must be highly injurious, to suffer the Turkish Empire to be diminished in force and consequence. He therefore moved an Address, assuring his Majesty that his *faithful Commons* would make good such expences as may be found necessary.” This Address was opposed

posed with the whole strength and energy of the Opposition.

Mr. Fox said, “ the Right Honorable Mover of the Address had enveloped himself in mystery and importance, but explained nothing. When the balance of power was mentioned as a reason for arming, it ought to be shewn how it was endangered. We had no quarrel with the Empress of Russia: we had no alliance with Turkey. But by the absurd pride of interfering in the affairs of every Sovereign State, we involved ourselves in continual expence, and were exposed to the perpetual hazard of war. It was to second the ambitious policy of Prussia, and not for any interests of our own, that we were now called upon to arm. The Czarina, it was well known, had offered to give up all her conquests but a barren district, unprofitable and worthless except for a single place contained in it, which place was Oczakow. But would any one seriously pretend that the balance of Europe depended upon the trivial circumstance, whether Oczakow should in future belong to the Empire of Russia or of Turkey? That this was even with Ministers themselves a novel idea, was plain; for Oczakow had been taken in 1788, and in 1789 his Majesty had assured the Parliament and the Nation, that the situation of affairs was such as promised us a continuance

tinuance of peace." The question was at length carried in favor of the Address by 228 to 135 voices.

The prospect of a war with Russia, on these frivolous grounds, gave more dissatisfaction to the public at large than any measure of Mr. Pitt's administration. And on the 12th of April Mr. Grey moved, and supported with a very extensive display of knowledge and political ability, a series of resolutions expressive of the impolicy and inexpediency of this measure. On the part of the Ministry the importance of Oczakow was magnified to a most ridiculous excess. It was styled the key of Constantinople, whence it led to the acquisition of Alexandria and the Lower Egypt. The success of the Ministry in former negotiations was ostentatiously dwelt upon, and the confidence of the House challenged in terms unusually strong and pointed.

Mr. Sheridan with sarcastic keenness asked the Minister, "on what basis this confidence was to rest. Did he recollect the different prospect to which we had been directed to turn our eyes in this year? Did he recollect that this was the promised millennium, that halcyon year in which we had been flattered, instead of fresh burdens, with a reduction of expence, and a clear surplus for the extinction of the public debt? The system

we had adopted in concert with Prussia was, he said, a system of ambition, of vain glory, and of intrigue, and it had fastened upon us a concern above all others pernicious—that of English interference in German politics. As to the doctrine of confidence in Ministers, he totally abjured it. The more constitutional doctrine was that of suspicion and watchfulness. The Minister had indeed risen wonderfully in his demands. He recollected the time when he had contented himself with asking only for a guarded and rational confidence. He then advanced to the pitch of a firm and steady confidence; and it was at last grown to a blind and implicit confidence. And it appeared that the degree of confidence required rose in an exact *ratio* to the absurdity of the measure to be adopted.” On the division, the effect of the extreme unpopularity of the war without doors, and the ability with which it was exposed and ridiculed within, strikingly appeared, the numbers being 179 ayes to 259 noes.

To enter into a war in the face of such a minority was wholly impossible. The point in dispute was instantly and wisely given up by the Ministers; Oczakow and its district remained with Russia; and in the course of the ensuing summer (August 1791) peace was concluded between the two empires. The session of Parliament

ment terminated June 10, 1791, his Majesty expressing his perfect satisfaction at the zeal with which the two Houses had applied themselves to the consideration of the different objects which he had recommended to their attention.

The state of affairs in France, though passed over in total and discreet silence in the speech, was now become very critical. That once popular minister M. Necker, finding his measures thwarted and opposed by the more popular leaders of the Assembly, and equally destitute of the confidence of the Court, had sent in his resignation September 1790, and was suffered to retire without one expression of public regret—such is the caprice and inconstancy of the people! Previous to his resignation, but certainly not by his advice, a decree had passed the Assembly, imposing an oath upon the whole body of the Clergy “to maintain to the utmost of their power the new Constitution of France, and *particularly* the decrees relative to the civil constitution of the Clergy.”

By the former decrees of the Assembly relative to the Clergy, all connection with the See of Rome, spiritual and temporal, was virtually abolished; and the oath was upon other accounts so obnoxious, that it could not possibly be taken by the majority of the Clergy *ex animo*. It was, in fact, productive of the most pernicious conse-

quences. The Pope by a Bull denounced the sentence of excommunication against those of the Clergy who took the civic oath: it was refused by multitudes in the church; and those who submitted to it became, in resentment of the outrage offered to their feelings, far more inimical to the Constitution and dangerous to the State than before. A most severe and unjust decree was subsequently promulgated, by which the non-juring Clergy were not only deprived of their benefices, but subjected to heavy penalties for non-compliance; in consequence of which numerous emigrations of that unfortunate class of men took place.

On the 22d of January, 1791, the King of France communicated to the Assembly a letter from Leopold King of Hungary, now advanced to the dignity of Emperor, containing strong protestations of amity towards France, but at the same time intimating, that to consolidate that friendship the revocation of the decree of August 4, 1790, will be necessary; that all innovations in virtue of that decree be abolished, and matters put upon their antient footing. This was the famous decree which annihilated all feudal and seignorial rights, and in the scope of which several of the petty Princes of Germany, possessing fiefs in Lorraine and Alsace, were comprehended; and so far as the right of property was affected by the decree, compensations had been offered by the Assembly,
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and by some of these Princes actually accepted. This, however, now served as a pretext and cover for the measures in contemplation of the Court of Vienna, which had already stationed *cordons* of troops on the Suabian frontier, and northward from the circles of the Rhine to the banks of the Meuse. The Assembly, on this occasion, voted a large augmentation of military force, regardless of the intimation of the King, that the Emperor had, in this instance, acted merely officially, in conformity to the decrees of the Diet. The King himself did not escape the suspicion of entertaining a private and dangerous correspondence with the Imperial Court; and he was entreated by the Assembly, formally and explicitly to announce the Revolution which had taken place to the different Courts of Europe.

The popular jealousies and discontents were still more openly and rudely indicated. On the 18th of April, being on the point of setting out from Paris to the palace of St. Cloud, to pass the Easter, the royal carriage was stopped by an immense crowd of persons, not all of the lowest rank, under the apprehension of an intended escape, and consequently Counter-Revolution. And notwithstanding the entreaties and protestations of M. de la Fayette, Commandant of the National Guard, who attended the King's person, and pledged himself for his secu-

city, he was finally compelled to desist from his purpose, and return to the Tuilleries.

On a complaint of this insult to the Assembly, the President made a respectful apology to the King; and his Majesty, *properly attended*, put in execution his design of visiting St. Cloud.

Anxious to regain the ground he had lost, the King, in compliance with the request of the municipality of Paris, dismissed from his person those men who were most notoriously disaffected to the Constitution.

M. de Montmorin was ordered to write, in the name of the Monarch, a circular letter, expressed in terms the most popular and captivating, to his Ambassadors at the different Courts of Europe, "to the end," as it is expressed, "that no doubt may remain with regard to his Majesty's intentions, his acceptance of the free form of Government, and his irrevocable oath to maintain it."

In return, the President of the Assembly waited on his Majesty with an address of thanks and felicitation for the fresh proof he had given of his regard for the Constitution. "For the first time, Sire," said the President, "those sacred maxims which announce the Rights of Man have made their appearance amidst the mysteries of diplomatic correspondence. Strangers shall now learn from yourself, that it was by your aid the French Constitution

was

was regenerated, and that you are its guardian, its defender, and its avenger. Seated on the first throne in Christendom, you have given the first example of a great Monarch proclaiming the liberties of his people to mankind. A happy calm has now succeeded to the stormy hopes and fears between which the Nation wavered in uncertainty. You have now imposed silence on the detractors of our New Constitution. The hydra of faction had a hundred heads, and you have cut off the last of them."

To this the King, with deep hypocrisy, replied, "I am charmed beyond expression at the warmth of esteem which the National Assembly is pleased to express towards me. If they could but read my heart, they would there see sentiments engraved on it, that would well justify the confidence of the Nation. All distrust would then be banished from their bosoms, and we should all be happy."

This, however, was but a transient and fallacious calm; nor was distrust, for a single moment, really banished from their minds. Unhappily the event but too well justified their suspicions.

On the night of the 20th of June (1791), the King, Queen, Dauphin, and Princess Elizabeth, sister to the King, also the Count and Countess de Provence, suddenly disappeared. They had, as it was quickly discovered, made their escape through a subterranean passage extending from the Tuilleries

to the Seine. Monsieur and Madame took the road to Mons; the rest of the Royal Family that of Montmedi. The King left behind him a paper, in which he formally revoked all his past oaths and solemn declarations, as the effect of compulsory influence, prohibiting the Ministers from signing any order, and enjoining the Keeper of the Seals to send them to him when required in his behalf.

On the first emotions of resentment at the discovery of this event, the King's arms and effigies were taken down and broken by the populace of Paris. A proclamation of the Assembly, however, soon restored order. The royal authority was formally suspended by a decree of the Assembly, and a Provisional Executive Council appointed. The National Guard were instantly in arms; and deputations from all the different public bodies appeared at the bar of the Assembly, with the strongest and firmest professions of patriotism and obedience.

Scarcely had the first emotions of indignation subsided, when it was announced that the King and Queen had been arrested in their progress, at a place called Varennes, near the frontier. They were quickly brought back to Paris, and again quietly confined to the palace of the Tuilleries.

On the 27th of June, Commissioners from the Assembly waited upon the King, to receive his written declaration respecting the late event. His Majesty

Majesty asserted, "that he had no intention of leaving the kingdom, but meant merely to fix at Montmedi, till the vigor of the government should be restored, and the Constitution SETTLED." The respect due to Majesty was still preserved, but confidence was for ever at an end. It was incontrovertibly proved, that the King had long carried on a secret correspondence with M. de Bouillé, Governor of Metz, and Commandant of the forces on the German frontier, who had sent a detachment to escort the King to Montmedi; a position to be maintained only by force, and whence, in case of necessity, he could easily retreat to the Austrian territory of Luxembourg. The accidental arrest of the King entirely disconcerted these measures; and M. de Bouillé made his escape into Germany, where he published a furious declaration against the Assembly, calculated only to injure the cause he meant to serve.

In consequence of the repeated perfidies of the King, it was proposed by some of the bolder, perhaps the wiser Members of the Assembly, to declare an abdication, and to place the Dauphin on the throne. On the question being agitated in the Assembly, it was asked, what could be done with the King in case of a deposition; to which one of the Members replied, "Let him go and keep school at Corinth." But the milder and more moderate counsels prevailed. The King remained at the
Tuilleries,

Tuilleries, vigilantly guarded, till the fabric of the Constitution was completed.

On the 3d of September, the CONSTITUTIONAL ACT was presented to the King, who signified his acceptance of it in writing, September 13; and on the following day he appeared at the Assembly, introduced by a grand deputation of sixty Members, solemnly to consecrate the assent he had given; concluding with an oath "to be faithful to the Nation and to the Law, and to employ the powers vested in him for the maintenance of the Constitution."

On the 30th of September (1791), the Constituent National Assembly, after an uninterrupted session of two years and four months, terminated its existence by a spontaneous dissolution; leaving behind it, notwithstanding some human errors and frailties, an illustrious and never-dying fame. Under whatever varying form freedom may subsist in France, the primary establishment of it must doubtless be ascribed to the heroic courage and enlightened patriotism of this Assembly: and in the emphatic words of the Roman orator it may with propriety be asked, "*Quæ enim res unquam, proh sancte Jupiter! in omnibus terris est gesta major, quæ gloriosior, quæ commendatior hominum memoriæ sempiternæ?*"

In England the Anniversary of the Revolution in France was again celebrated, not without a certain

tain mixture of indiscretion, considering the lowering aspect of the political horizon in France, contrasted with the brilliant prospect of last year, and the odium it had incurred in consequence of the events which had since taken place in both kingdoms. Party spirit at this period raged throughout England in a more violent degree than had been known since the days of Sacheverel; and in no place more than in the great and opulent town of Birmingham, distinguished by the residence of the celebrated PRIESTLEY, equally famous in the different capacities of philosopher and divine. As a theologian he had signalized himself as the grand restorer of the antient Unitarian system, maintained at the æra of the Reformation by Socinus and other learned men of the Polish or Cracovian school; and which, refusing divine honors to the Founder of the Christian Religion, acknowledged him merely in the character of a Teacher and Prophet sent from GOD, and demonstrating the authenticity of his mission by *signs and wonders*, which GOD did by him.

The extraordinary and transcendent ability with which this simple but obnoxious system was vindicated by Dr. Priestley, as the genuine unadulterated doctrine of primitive Christianity, had brought over to his opinions numerous converts, and had excited against him still more numerous enemies. Regarding civil establishments of Christianity as
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the grand barrier to the propagation of the truth, he had in various publications argued against them with great force, inveighing against the corruptions to which they had given rise, though otherwise of a disposition mild and beneficent, with extreme bitterness and acrimony. He had on all occasions expressed himself on the subject of Government, as an intrepid and zealous defender of the civil and religious rights of mankind; of this he had given a recent proof in a most able and masterly reply to Mr. Burke's famous book on the French Revolution.

It is superfluous to say that he was under these circumstances the object of detestation to the bigoted, of wonder to the ignorant, and of dread to the interested and the artful. Every possible artifice having been put in practice to excite the passions of the populace against him, the day of the commemoration of Gallic liberty was deemed a fit occasion to carry the nefarious designs previously concerted into execution. The friends of liberty, assembled for that purpose at an hotel in the town, were during the dinner insulted by a furious mob without, shouting, with the occasional intermixture of horrid imprecations, CHURCH and KING! which words, it may be observed, however innocent or venerable in their unconnected state, are when conjoined the symbol of all mischief. At five o'clock the company dispersed, but the windows of the hotel were nevertheless

nevertheless broken by the mob, who seemed then inclined to separate.

But this would have been a petty and common revenge. Incited and inflamed anew by their leaders, they bent their course to the chapel where Dr. Priestley usually officiated; this they set on fire, and afterwards proceeded to the old meeting, which they demolished in the same manner. At ten o'clock the mob, now mad with rage and intoxicated with liquor, took the route of Fair-hill, the residence of Dr. Priestley, about a mile distant from the town. Happily the family had notice just sufficient to effect their escape; but the house, furniture, library, and philosophical apparatus were set on fire, and consumed in their more than Vandalian rage of destruction. The four following days were employed in the demolition of the elegant houses and villas in the town and its vicinity, belonging to those persons who had chiefly distinguished themselves as advocates in the cause of Gallic liberty, or by their attachment to the religious principles of the great Heresiarch Dr. Priestley.

During this time the magistrates of the place, who were suspected of conniving at the first beginning of this tremendous riot, and who had not read or attempted to read the Riot Act, were struck with terror and consternation; nor was any effectual effort made to check these infamous and disgraceful proceedings—far worse indeed than any disorders

orders that had as yet occurred in the progress of the French Revolution—till the arrival, on the Sunday evening, of three troops of dragoons from Nottingham; in a short time after which, reinforcements daily arriving, order and tranquillity were perfectly restored. Many of the rioters were taken into custody and brought to trial, but three only were capitally punished. Such was the superior lenity of the Government on this occasion, contrasted with the rigors of the Special Commission issued for the trial of the London rioters in 1780, on which occasion thirteen persons were, under the sanction of the Lord President Loughborough, included in the same indictment!

The latter months of the year passed over in gloomy silence. The Parliament was not convened till the 31st of January 1792. The King announced in his speech “the marriage of his son the Duke of York with the Princess Frederica, daughter of his good brother the King of Prussia. He informed the two Houses that a treaty had been concluded, under his mediation and that of his allies, between the Emperor and the Ottoman Porte, and preliminaries agreed upon between the latter of those powers and Russia. The general state of affairs in Europe promised a continuance of peace, and he was induced to hope for an immediate reduction of the naval and military establishments.”

The address of thanks and approbation moved
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by Mr. Charles Yorke, and seconded by Sir James Murray, excited some severe animadversions from Mr. Fox, who, in allusion to the cession of Oczakow to Russia, observed, "that it required no moderate share of assurance for Ministers to say to gentlemen who had supported their measures as wise and necessary, 'That which you last session contended for as of the utmost importance, we have now abandoned as of none. Will you have the goodness to move an address approving what we have done?'" Mr. Fox thought it extraordinary that, in mentioning the inestimable blessings of peace and order, no notice was taken of the violent interruption of order which had occurred in the course of the summer. At the close of the eighteenth century we had seen the revival of the spirit and practice of the darkest ages. It would have been well if his Majesty had spoken of those riots in the terms they merited. They were not riots for bread—they were not riots in the cause of liberty, which, however highly to be reprobated, had yet some excuse in their principle; they were riots of men neither aggrieved nor complaining—of men who had set on foot an indiscriminate persecution of an entire description of their fellow-citizens, including persons as eminent for their ability, as blameless in their conduct, and as faithful in their allegiance, as this or any country could boast."

Mr. Pitt deprecated with warmth the invidious
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revival of a subject so unpleasant and unprofitable, and wished rather to call the attention of the House to the flourishing condition of the commerce and finances of the nation, of which in a short time he proposed submitting to the House a correct statement. Accordingly on the 17th of February the Minister, in the course of a most eloquent and animated speech, delineated a picture of national prosperity, more flattering than even the most glowing imagination had ventured to suggest. "The amount of the permanent revenue, with the land and malt duties annexed, from January 1791 to January 1792, he estimated at 16,730,000*l.* being 300,000*l.* more than the aggregate of the preceding year. The permanent expenditure, including the interest of the debt, the annual million applied towards its extinction, the civil list, and the military and naval establishments, he calculated at 15,810,000*l.* leaving a clear surplus of more than 900,000*l.* In this state of things he thought himself authorized to propose the repeal of a part of the more burdensome taxes, to the amount of about 200,000*l.* per annum; and at the same time to apply the sum of 400,000*l.* to the reduction of the national debt, in aid of the annual million appropriated by Parliament. This would still fall far short of his estimate of the national ability, and there was good ground to believe that we had not reached by many degrees the summit of our prosperity.

sperity. When the debentures to the American Loyalists should be discharged, which would happen in about four years, an addition of near 300,000l. would accrue to the revenue. In consequence of the general improvement of credit, the three per cents. would soon rise so high as to enable the Parliament to effect a reduction of the four, and, as soon as by law redeemable, of the five per cents. which would add the sum of 700,000l. or little less to the sinking fund. The indefinite additions which might be expected from the increasing produce of the existing taxes, the result of our rapidly increasing commerce, must mock all calculation. Our exports had risen one-third in value since the year 1783, i. e. from 14,741,000l. to 20,120,000l. and our internal trade had increased in at least an equal proportion. Thus shall we be enabled to make a swiftly accelerated progress in the essential work of liquidating the national debt, and in a very short space of time to reach a point which perhaps not long since was thought too distant for calculation. On the continuance of our present prosperity it is indeed impossible to count with certainty; but UNQUESTIONABLY there never was a time when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect a durable peace than at the present moment." After developing with much ability and sagacity the hidden but operative springs of the returning prosperity of the country, the Minister

concluded with the following memorable words :
 “ From the result of the whole I trust I am entitled to infer, that the scene which we are now contemplating is not the transient effect of accident, not the short-lived prosperity of a day, but the genuine and natural result of regular and permanent causes. The season of our severe trial is at an end; and we are at length relieved, not only from the dejection and gloom which a few years since hung over the country, but from the doubt and uncertainty which, even for a considerable time after our prospect had begun to brighten, still mingled with the hopes and expectations of the public. We may yet indeed be subject to those fluctuations which often happen in the affairs of a great nation, and which it is impossible to calculate or foresee; but as far as there can be reliance on human speculations, we have the best ground from the experience of the past to look with satisfaction to the present, and with confidence to the future. *Nunc demum redit animus, cum non spem modo ac votum securitas publica, sed ipsius voti fiduciam et robur assumpsit.*”
 Such were the brilliant hopes which the nation was at this moment of exultation taught to indulge, and with such dazzling splendor rose the morn of a year destined to set in darkness, calamity, and blood!

The papers relative to the Russian armament being laid on the table, Mr. Grey noticed several
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material omissions, and an entire chasm in the correspondence from October 31, 1790, to May 26, 1791, and moved "that the papers thus withheld be laid before the House." Mr. Pitt affirmed, that the papers called for by Mr. Grey were highly improper to be produced. He did not think it consistent with good policy, to disclose circumstances which might endanger the situation of our public alliances; and again urged the necessity of confidence in the Executive Government. Mr. Fox indignantly replied, "that the confidence of the Nation was placed in their Representatives; and if those to whom they had given their confidence should transfer that confidence to the Minister, they were *betrayed*, not represented. As to this pretended necessity of confidence, there need be nothing secret where there was nothing wrong; yet pending the negotiation with Russia they were kept in the dark, and, by a climax in confidence, when the negotiation was terminated, they were still denied information." In the course of the debate it was forcibly observed, in allusion to the projected war with Russia, "that it would require more eloquence even than that which had been lately employed in describing the prosperity of this country, to justify a measure which put its prosperity so much to the hazard."

On the evidence of the papers actually produced, and the facts publicly ascertained, Mr. Whitbread

on the 27th of February (1792) moved a resolution of censure on the Ministers, importing, "that Oczakow was not an object of sufficient importance to justify the armed interference of this country." Mr. Whitbread said, "it was the most self-evident of all propositions, that no arrangement affecting Oczakow could in any way affect the political or commercial interests of Great Britain. We exported nothing thither, we imported nothing from it: the ostensible cause of the dispute, therefore, could not be the real cause. There was ground to believe the existence of a secret negotiation, by which Prussia flattered herself with the hope of obtaining Dantzic and Thorn as a compensation for permitting the Empress of Russia to retain possession of Oczakow. It appeared that the Empress had so early as December 1789 requested the interference of Great Britain to effect a peace, upon the terms of extending her frontier to the Niester; and erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Bessarabia, and Wallachia into an independent principality under a Christian Prince. These terms were refused by the Court of London, and the Empress was told that no attention would be paid to any terms not resting upon the basis of a *status quo*. At length, after blustering, threatening, and arming, came the humiliating Memorial of the 29th of June 1791, which at once conceded all that we had negotiated, threatened, and armed, to obtain."

The motion was ably supported by Mr. Grey, who remarked, “that since the affair of Holland the Minister had become intoxicated with power, and fancied he could parcel out kingdoms and provinces at his pleasure. He seemed as much delighted with this idea as Don Quixote with books of chivalry, and amused himself with curvetting in this court, prancing in that, menacing here, vaunting there—in a word, out-heroding Herod.”

Mr. Fox took a comprehensive view of the question, and dwelt with much energy and effect on the folly of making Oczakow a primary object of negotiation, and the inconsistency and disgrace of its subsequent abandonment. “Oczakow, said he, was every thing by itself; but when Ministers added to Oczakow the honor of England, it became nothing. Oczakow and honor weighed nothing in the scale. Honor is, in the political arithmetic of Ministers, a *minus* quantity to be subtracted from the value of Oczakow. Against the vain theories of men who project fundamental alterations upon grounds of mere speculative objection, the Constitution may be easily defended; but when they recur to facts, and shew me how we may be doomed to all the horrors of war by the caprice of an individual, who will not even condescend to explain his reasons, I can only fly to this House, and exhort you to rouse from your lethargy of confidence into the active mistrust and vigilant control which

are your duty and your office." On the division there appeared for the question 116, against it 244.

A motion similar to that of Mr. Whitbread was nearly at the same time made by Earl Fitzwilliam in the Upper House. It was opposed by the Lords Grenville and Hawkeſbury, the latter of whom threw much light on the real motives of the late interference, by expatiating largely on the *ingratitude* of Russia, and the injurious conduct of that Power during *the late war*; and it evidently appeared by the language of this secret adviser of public measures, that the ARMED NEUTRALITY of the Empress, although twelve years had passed since the date of it, was not yet forgotten or forgiven. And Lord Carlisle did not therefore express himself with perfect accuracy, when, in reviewing the political objects of the armament, his Lordship said, "he believed they might ALL be resolved into the endeavor to obtain for Prussia *Dantzic* and *Thorn*." The motion was negatived by a majority of 82 to 19 voices.

Although it appeared by the event of the motion of Mr. Wilberforce in the preceding session, that the enthusiasm of Parliament on the subject of the Slave Trade had greatly subsided; that of the public at large was nevertheless increasing, and it had now attained its highest pitch. The table of the House of Commons was covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom, imploring in earnest language

language the abolition of that iniquitous and inhuman traffic.

On the 2d of April (1791) the House resolved itself into a Committee on the Slave Trade, at the instance of Mr. Wilberforce, who moved, at the close of a very able speech, a second time the question of Abolition. Mr. Wilberforce declared, “that from his exertions in this cause he had found happiness, though not hitherto success. It enlivened his waking and soothed his evening hours, and he could not recollect without singular satisfaction that he had demanded justice for millions who could not ask it for themselves—AFRICA! AFRICA! he exclaimed with passionate emotion, your sufferings have been the theme that has arrested and engages my heart. Your sufferings no tongue can express, nor no language impart.” Mr. Wilberforce was powerfully supported by many of the most respectable members of the House; amongst whom Mr. Whitbread particularly distinguished himself by the energy and animation of his remarks. “It was the necessary quality of despotism, he said, to corrupt and vitiate the heart: and the moral evils of this system were still more to be dreaded than the political. But no mildness in practice could make that to be right which was fundamentally wrong. Nothing could make him give his assent to the original sin of delivering man over to the despotism of man. It was too degrading to

tee, not the produce of human labor, but man himself, made the object of trade."

In consequence of the ardor displayed by the nation at large in this business, it was at length determined to concede what it was now become difficult, perhaps dangerous, to withhold. Mr. Dundas, advanced to the dignity of Secretary of State by the resignation of the Duke of Leeds—and the organ of the interior Cabinet in the House of Commons—now therefore, after a plausible speech recommending to the House the adoption of a middle and moderate plan, such as would reconcile the interests of the West India Islands with the eventual abolition of the trade, thought proper to move that the word "gradual" might be inserted before "abolition."

Mr. Pitt, who had invariably supported the measure of abolition, not as a Minister merely, but as a man feeling for all mankind, declared his decided disapprobation of the amendment proposed by his Right Honorable Friend; and, in a speech fraught with argument and eloquence, conjured the House not to postpone even for an hour the great and necessary work of abolition. "Reflect," said Mr. Pitt, "on the 80,000 persons annually torn from their native land! on the connections which are broken! on the friendships, attachments and relationships that are burst asunder! There is something in the horror of it that surpasses all the bounds of imagination. How shall we repair the
 mischiefs

mischiefs we have brought upon that continent? If, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Britain! Shall we not rather count the days and hours that are suffered to intervene, and to delay the accomplishment of such a work? I trust we shall not think ourselves too liberal, if we give to Africa the common chance of civilization with the rest of the world. If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see a reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which, at some happy period in still later times, may blaze with full lustre; and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope, that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length in the evening of her days those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world—

— Nos primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis;
 Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.

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In this view, as an atonement for our long and cruel injustice towards Africa, the measure now before the House most forcibly recommends itself to my mind. The great and happy change to be expected in the state of her inhabitants is, of all the various and important benefits of the abolition, in my estimation incomparably the most extensive and important." Thus nobly can Mr. Pitt at times redeem his errors, and deviations from rectitude; and still preserve a place in the esteem of the wise, and affection of the good. The amendment of Mr. Dundas was nevertheless carried on the division by a majority of 68 voices. On which he subsequently moved, "that the importation of negroes into the British colonies should cease on the 1st of January 1800." This, on the motion of Lord Mornington, was after great difficulty and debate altered to January 1, 1796. A series of resolutions founded on this basis were then agreed to, and sent up for the concurrence of the Lords.

But these resolutions were fated to meet with a very cold reception in the Upper House; and from a large proportion of their Lordships a most determined opposition. As this was a favorite measure with the nation, and had indeed been supported in a peculiar manner by the *voice of the people*, they were highly and justly offended to see the Duke of Clarence, third son of the King, commence his career of public life with a violent declamation
 against

against the abolition, and invective against its advocates; whom he falsely and foolishly represented as actuated by the spirit of political and religious fanaticism. With a view to protract, and if possible to dismiss the business, the Lord Chancellor moved, "that evidence be heard, not before a select committee, according to the proposition of Lord Grenville, but at the bar of the House." This was seconded by Lord Hawkesbury, the well known and inveterate enemy of the abolition; of whom it has been affirmed with the utmost bitterness of sarcasm, "that in spite of the habitual fraud and falsehood of his character, he is earnest and sincere in his contempt of virtue and hatred of freedom." The motion being carried, the House slept over the business during the remainder of the session.

Mr. Pitt having, in his speech on the motion for the repeal of the Test, avowed in the most unequivocal and *unguarded* terms the right of the Dissenters to a full and complete toleration; Mr. Fox embraced the opportunity of bringing forward in the course of this session a motion for the repeal of those penal statutes, which, notwithstanding the existence of the Toleration Act, were still in force against those who in any manner impugned the doctrine of the TRINITY. He shewed from a specification of authentic facts, that these laws were far from being a mere dead letter; not to mention the hatred and opprobrium which they

were

were the means of creating. Such was the wretched bigotry fostered and cherished by these laws, that a Bishop of the Church (Dr. HORSLEY) had not scrupled in a recent publication to declare "that, Unitarianism being *heresy*, even the moral good of the Unitarians was sin." Mr. Fox expressed his ardent wish to extirpate heresy by *fire*—not indeed in the old mode of burning heretics, but by burning all those statutes which formed the code of persecution." Mr. Pitt appeared on this occasion somewhat embarrassed, and rested his opposition chiefly on the disuse and oblivion into which the acts in question had fallen, and the dangerous alarm which might be excited by the repeal—disclaiming in warm terms the principles and character of a persecutor. Mr. Fox in reply remarked, that he knew not how to distinguish between a persecutor and an advocate for penal laws in matters of religion, which was the precise definition of the term. As to the general alarm, of which Mr. Pitt was apprehensive, it was the bitterest satire upon the spirit of his own Administration, to suppose the temper of the public so fatally changed, as not to endure the repeal of laws so execrable, and till a recent period so generally the subject of execration. Mr. Fox's motion was rejected by a majority of 79 voices*.

On

* As a striking historic contrast to the spirit displayed by the British

On the 21st of May, Mr. Whitbread brought forward a motion of enquiry on the subject of the
Birmingham

British Government at this period, it may not be improper to select a few passages from the Speech of M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, a Protestant Clergyman and Member of the National Assembly, on moving the 10th Article of the Declaration of Rights, on the subject of Religious Toleration, and which was received by the Assembly with the highest approbation and applause.—“ Liberty is a common right. All citizens have a right to it, or no one has. He that would deprive others of their liberty, attacks his own, and deserves to lose it. Shall in the 18th century the barbarous policy be adhered to of dividing a nation into a favored and a disgraced *caste*?—I will not do the nation the injustice to suppose, that it could pronounce the word *Intolerance*. But, Gentlemen, it is not Toleration that I plead for—it is Liberty. Toleration! Sufferance! Pardon! Clemency! What ideas of injustice do not these words convey, if difference of opinion be indeed no crime? Toleration! For ever be proscribed the word, which holds us out as Citizens that deserve pity; which exhibits us as culpable persons, who require pardon from those whom chance or education leads to think in a manner different from ourselves! Error, Gentlemen, is not a crime. He who professes it, takes it for truth—it is truth to him—he is obliged to profess it, and no man, no society of men has a right to forbid him. And who, Gentlemen, in this mixture of error and truth, who is he that will dare to affirm he has never been deceived—that truth is constantly with him, and error with others? I *demand* then, Gentlemen, for the French Protestants, for all the Non-Catholics of the kingdom, that they be placed on the same footing in every thing, and without any reserve, with all the other Citizens.—Permit it not, Gentlemen, generous and free Nation! do not allow to be cited as a precedent for you, the example of those nations, who, still intolerant, pro-
scribe

Birmingham riots. He introduced this motion by an excellent speech, containing a copious statement of the facts and circumstances which led to a suspicion, that the Magistrates had been most culpably remiss in their duty on this occasion; and even that Ministers had been negligent in their exertions for the suppression of those disorders. Mr. Whitbread referred the House to the proceedings of a former House of Commons, who, on a similar occasion, A. D. 1716, had addressed the King (Geo. I.) in terms expressive of the utmost

scribe your worship amongst them. You are not designed to receive examples, but to give them. Europe, which aspires to Liberty, expects from you great lessons, and you are worthy to furnish them.—You are too wise, Gentlemen, to be astonished that there are men who think differently from you; who worship God in another manner than you do; and you will not regard the difference of opinion as an injury done to you. Taught by the experience of ages, by the errors and the sufferings of your ancestors, you will say without doubt, It is time to lay aside the sword of persecution so deeply stained with the blood of our countrymen. It is time to restore to them their too-long-forgotten rights. It is time to break in pieces those unjust barriers which separate them from us; and to unite in one common bond of affection these oppressed and proscribed Citizens, so long estranged from the bosom of their country. They will present themselves to you covered with the blood of their fathers, and they will shew you the marks of their own chains.—My country is free. Let her shew herself worthy of Liberty, by equally imparting it to all classes of Citizens, without distinction of rank, birth, or religion.”

indignation

indignation and abhorrence of the spirit which had incited those atrocious outrages; and requesting that full compensation might be made to the sufferers. Mr. Whitbread insisted on the disgrace which England would incur in the view of Europe, if a man, who had done so much honor to his country by his philosophical and literary talents, as Dr. Priestley, should fail to obtain a signal reparation for the injuries he had sustained. "Should he," said this animated speaker, "by the spirit of persecution be compelled to abandon his native soil, there is no nation which would not be ready and eager to afford him an asylum. He can go to no country where his fame has not gone before him." Mr. Whitbread said, "he knew that toleration was the language in fashion; but it was very easy for men to have toleration on their lips, and persecution in their hearts." Mr. Secretary Dundas, in reply, vindicated the Government very satisfactorily from the suspicion of not having exerted themselves to the utmost in quelling the riots. He said, "that Government did not prosecute the Magistrates who were charged with neglect of duty, because the Attorney General was of opinion, that there was no probability of conviction, and an ineffectual prosecution might be attended with very disagreeable consequences." Mr. Whitbread's motion was ably supported by Mr. Smith and Mr. Windham, but more particularly by Mr. Grey,

Grey, in an admirable speech, well deserving deep and permanent attention.

In answer to some harsh reflections of Mr. Dundas, on the recent conduct of the Dissenters, Mr. Grey thus nobly and eloquently expressed himself: "I do not, Sir, stand here as the professed advocate of the Dissenters; but whilst we exclaim against the rash and intemperate language of some amongst the Dissenters, let us impartially and seriously ask ourselves, if no just cause has been given to them of discontent or of resentment? It is well known, that the Dissenters have ever distinguished themselves as the zealous advocates of the glorious Revolution—that they have been always numbered amongst the most firm and steady adherents of the Protestant succession, and of the illustrious House of Hanover when that succession was supposed with reason to be in danger; and at a time when the reigning family did not depend upon the CHURCH as its chief bulwark and support. Conscious of their fidelity and attachment to the government under which they lived—an attachment which the circumstances of the times afforded them frequent and decisive occasions to demonstrate—exercising under the express sanction of the State their inherent right of private judgment in religion—they at length applied to the Legislature to be restored to the privileges of citizens, of which they had been so long unjustly

justly divested. When this claim was refused with every circumstance of indignity and insult—when they were branded as the implacable enemies of the State—when they were reproached, notwithstanding their uniformly peaceable demeanor, as seditious and factious hypocrites—when the ridiculous and obsolete Tory clamor was revived, that the CHURCH *was in DANGER*—when they were told ‘ that the extent of their loyalty might be measured by the blood of a King—can we wonder that they should discover the passions and feeling of men?—that anger should beget anger—that in the collision of zeal against zeal, the voice of reason should be overborne and lost? Are we really desirous of establishing universal and permanent content and satisfaction? The experience of all ages shews, that the only effectual mode is to annihilate all legal oppression. While the spirit of intolerance predominates in the counsels of any country, there will necessarily be discontent, resentment, and anger. And it is in vain to expect to obviate the evil consequences of such a system; or to re-establish the general tranquillity, by adding contumely to oppression, or by an attempt to defend injustice by falsehood. We are ourselves zealously attached to the Constitution, because we enjoy in their full extent the privileges and immunities derived from it. But what right have we to expect the same attachment from those who are

excluded from these privileges? Though to us the Constitution is the object of affection and reverence, to them whom it injures and oppresses it is an odious and tyrannic Constitution. Wherever political partialities prevail, and political distinctions are injuriously admitted, there political animosities will be excited. Such is the nature of man; and of this we may rest assured, that equity is the only safe and permanent basis of policy: and till we determine to regulate our conduct by this principle, discontents and animosities must and will prevail. And the disorders and commotions which we now lament, are the genuine offspring of that policy to which unhappily for our peace and security we are still resolved to adhere." The motion was finally negatived by a great and decisive majority.

The Libel Bill introduced in the last session by Mr. Fox, and which was lost in the House of Lords, was this session triumphantly carried through both Houses, and passed into a law—notwithstanding the pertinacious opposition of the Law Lords Thurlow, Kenyon, and Bathurst. The Marquis of Lansdowne sarcastically observed in the debate, that he did not blame Lawyers for making a stand against the present Bill. It was well worth a struggle on the part of the profession. It was a proud ambitious profession, desirous of obtaining power over all. And if the Noble Lord
at

at the head of the King's Bench could overthrow it, as his Lordship had studied politics as well as law, he would reign Lord Paramount of England." The Law Lords joined in a protest against the Bill, which will remain as a perpetual monument of the triumph of common sense over legal and professional subtilty.

Another point was also gained during this session in favor of the general system of freedom, by a Bill introduced into the House of Peers by Lord Elgin, for the relief of the Scottish Episcopalians, who had long been subject to heavy penalties on the original ground of notorious disaffection to the Revolution Establishment. But, like other *high-flying* and Jacobitical Tories, they were now become most conspicuous for loyalty amongst the loyal. An objection however was started by the Lord Chancellor, whether, according to a clause in the present Bill, specifying the description of persons to be relieved, the State could with propriety recognize the validity of ordination by Bishops exercising their functions independent of the State. And, in his profound knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity, his Lordship ventured even to intimate his doubts, whether Bishops could *exist* in any Christian country not authorized by the State." But his Lordship being assured by the Bishop of St. Davids, who spoke in favor of this "afflicted part of the Church of Christ," that Christian Bishops

existed three hundred years before the happy alliance between Church and State took place, under the auspices of the Emperor Constantine the Great, his Lordship was pleased to declare himself satisfied; and the Bill passed without any farther opposition.

In consequence of the spirit of discontent, and even of disaffection, by which a considerable proportion of the community seemed at this period to be animated, and which had given rise to various political associations of an alarming nature, and in which ideas of government reform were carried to a visionary and dangerous extreme; it was thought proper by many of the most distinguished advocates of Constitutional Liberty, about this period to institute a society under the name of the "Friends of the People," for the sole purpose of effecting a Reform in Parliament on the principles so often stated and so ably enforced by Mr. Pitt, and other judicious patrons of reform, presuming that all other necessary and beneficial reforms would follow in safe and regular gradation. About thirty Members of Parliament entered their names as members of this Association, which also comprehended many of the most eminent characters in the kingdom, whether in respect of political or literary ability. It is remarkable, that this most useful and laudable association, this broad and lofty mound thrown up for the defence of the Constitution

tution against the rage of republican innovation, seemed to excite more the alarm of the Government than all the other associations united. And when Mr. Grey, himself a member of the new society, gave notice of his intention to move, in the course of the ensuing session, for an enquiry into the state of the representation, Mr. Pitt rose with unusual vehemence to declare "his total disapprobation of introducing, at a period so critical and dangerous as the present, a discussion of such difficulty and importance. This he affirmed was not a time for experiments; and if he was called upon either to risque this, or for ever to abandon all hopes of reform, he would say he had no hesitation in preferring the latter alternative. He saw with concern the Gentlemen to whom he alluded, virtually united with others who professed the reform of abuses, and meant the subversion of government." The expediency and policy of timely and temperate reform were on the other hand powerfully argued by the friends of the projected motion. "As to the obnoxious allies of the late associators, Mr. Fox said, the objection might be completely retorted by asking the Minister, 'Whom have you for your allies?' On the one part there are infuriated republicans, on the other the slaves of despotism. The first are the rash zealots of liberty, the latter its inveterate and determined foes." The consternation of the Mini-

sters evidentially appeared by a ROYAL PROCLAMATION almost immediately issued against the public dispersion of all seditious writings, and against all illegal correspondencies—exhorting the Magistrates to vigilance, and the People to submission and obedience.

This proclamation being laid before the House (May 25), and an Address moved of approbation and support, it was opposed by Mr. Grey with much warmth, and the Proclamation itself condemned in severe terms as a measure insidious and pernicious. The “diligent enquiry” enjoined by the Proclamation after the authors and distributors of *wicked and seditious writings*, could only tend to establish an odious and arbitrary system of ESPIONAGE. This was the system which had made the old government of France so much the object of general detestation, and it was a system unworthy of the Sovereign of a free people to recommend. Mr. Grey strongly intimated his belief, that the real object of the Proclamation was merely to discredit the late Association in the view of the public.”

This Mr. Pitt disclaimed in very explicit terms; and expressed his high respect for many of the members of the Association in question, declaring “that he differed from them only in regard to the time and mode which they had adopted for the attainment of their object. The Association in
question,

question, he said, did not come within the scope and purview of the Proclamation, which was levelled against the daring and seditious principles which had been so assiduously propagated amongst the people, under the plausible and delusive appellation of the Rights of Man." The Address was finally carried without a division, and receiving the concurrence of the Upper House was presented in form to the King. It was followed by Addresses from all parts of the kingdom : and the Ministry, finding their strength, commenced prosecutions against a prodigious number of offenders, amongst whom Thomas Paine stood most conspicuous. Notwithstanding the professional ability of Mr. Erskine, whom he had engaged as his advocate, he was found guilty of the charge ; but foreseeing the probability of this event, he had previously absconded to France.

The attention of Parliament towards the conclusion of the session was forcibly drawn to the situation of India—for some time past involved in a general war, the origin and progress of which it may be proper concisely to explain. From the æra of the peace of Mangalore, concluded by the Company with Tippoo Saib in 1784, the power of that Prince had been regarded as very formidable. He was avowedly and devotedly attached to the interests of France, to which country he had soon after that event sent a splendid embassy, and established

an intimate friendship and alliance. The period however at length arrived, when, France being occupied with other and greater objects, a severe vengeance might be safely taken on the TYRANT OF MYSORE for all his real or pretended perfidies and oppressions. The Dutch East India Company had in the last century conquered from the Portuguese two forts, situated within the territory of Mysore, called Cranganore and Acottah. These they had recently disposed of by purchase to the Rajah of Travancore, an ally of the English Company. Tippoo resenting the conduct of the Dutch, and affirming that the Rajah had no right to make any such purchase within the limits of his territory, marched a considerable military force in the summer of 1789 against Cranganore, with a professed intent to reduce it to his dominion. The conduct of the Rajah in making the purchase in question, on so precarious and invidious a title, was severely censured by the Government of Madras; and Mr. Holland, the President, warned him to desist from his ambitious designs.

In consequence of the powerful mediation thus interposed, Tippoo withdrew his troops, still, however, asserting his claim to the feudal sovereignty of the forts, and offering, as it is said, to submit his pretensions to any impartial arbitration. But on the 1st of May, 1790, the Rajah, relying, as it afterwards appeared, on the support of the superior
Presidency

Prefidency of Bengal, made an offensive attack on the army of Tippoo Sultan; and the war having thus commenced, the English Government was *bound in honor and justice* to defend their ally. This the Company were the better enabled to do, not merely from their knowledge of the state of France, but from the treaties they had actually formed with the Nizam of the Decan, and the Mahratta States, for the exprefs purpose of humbling the power of Myfore.

The grand Carnatic army immediately affembling, under the command of General Meadows, marched through the fouthern or Coimbetore country, and penetrating the *Ghauts* or paffes of the mountains, advanced towards the city of Seringapatam, the capital of Myfore.

On the western fide, the Bombay army, under General Abercrombie, after reducing Cannanore and feveral other places on the coaft, entered the kingdom of Myfore; which, notwithstanding the pretended oppreffion of the Government, exhibited every where the marks of the higheft cultivation and profperity. The Sultan defending himfelf with great refolution, and no mean difplay of military fkill, General Meadows found himfelf under the neceffity of retreating to the vicinity of Madras; where, in the month of Decembr (1790), Lord Cornwallis affumed the command of the army in perfon.

The plan of the war was now entirely changed,

and a grand effort resolved on, to force a passage to Seringapatam through the country lying directly westward of Madras.

On the 21st of March, 1791, the important town of Bangalore was taken by storm, with little loss on the part of the British, but with a dreadful carnage of the unresisting garrison.

On the 13th of May, the army, by extraordinary exertions, arrived in sight of the superb capital of Mysore, defended by the Sultan in person: and, on the next day, an action took place, in which Tippoo was said to be defeated; though he does not appear to have sustained any very considerable loss: and the swelling of the Cavery (in an island formed by the branches of which Seringapatam is situated), together with the want of provisions, compelled Lord Cornwallis to begin his retreat to Bangalore, almost before his victory could be announced.

General Abercrombie, who had advanced through the *Ghauts* on the opposite side, with a view to form a junction with Lord Cornwallis, was now also obliged to lead back his army, fatigued, harassed and disappointed, over the mountains they had so lately and with such difficulty passed. During these transactions the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept discreetly aloof, leaving the burden of the war almost entirely to the British.

But the next campaign, for which Lord Cornwallis

wallis made unremitting preparations, opened under more favorable auspices.

Early in February, 1792, the eastern and western armies, resuming their former plan of operations, effected, before the end of the month, a junction under the walls of Seringapatam; the forces of the Peishwa and of the Nizam encamping also at a small distance, and furnishing to the British army a plentiful supply of stores and provisions.

On the 7th of February, a general attack was made by moonlight on the lines of the Sultan, which was attended with important effects; Tippoo being compelled to relinquish his former advantageous position, which covered his capital, and Seringapatam was in consequence of this defeat closely and completely invested.

The situation of Tippoo being now in the highest degree alarming and almost hopeless, he thought proper to send a *Vakeel* to the camp of Lord Cornwallis to sue for peace; which the British General granted on the severe terms, 1. Of his ceding one half of his dominions to the Allied Powers. 2. Of paying three crores and thirty lacks of rupees, as an indemnification for the expences of the war. 3. The release of all prisoners; and, 4. The delivery of two of his sons as hostages for the due performance of the treaty.

On the 26th of February, the Princes, each mounted on an elephant magnificently caparisoned, proceeded

proceeded to the British camp, where they were received by Lord Cornwallis with all possible demonstrations of kindness and affection. The eldest, Abdul-Kalic, was about ten ; the younger, Mirzaud-Deen, about eight years of age. The Princes were attired in white muslin robes, with red turbans richly adorned with pearls, and they conducted themselves with a politeness and propriety which astonished the spectators.

On the 19th of March, 1792, the definitive treaty, signed by the Sultan, was delivered by the young Princes, with great solemnity, into the hands of Lord Cornwallis ; but the sums specified in the second article not being actually paid, the Princes still remained under the safeguard and custody of his Lordship.

Though the entire knowledge of these transactions had not reached England when the affairs of India came under the discussion of the House of Commons, Mr. Dundas stated the general situation of the Company to be in the highest degree flourishing ; and, by an intricate deduction of figures, he shewed the surplus of the Bengal revenue for the preceding year to be no less than eleven hundred thousand pounds. “ The flourishing state of the revenue was however remarked by Mr. Francis to be not precisely the same thing with the flourishing state of the country, which might be ill able to bear the weight of these impositions. The
feizures

seizures for non-payment of the land revenue were, he said, most alarmingly notorious : and he held in his hand, at that moment, two Bengal advertisements, the one announcing the sale of seventeen villages, the other of forty-two."

This discussion took place on the 5th of June ; and on the 15th the session closed with a speech from the throne, in which his Majesty expressed to the two Houses " his great concern at the actual commencement of hostilities in different parts of Europe, assuring them that his *principal care* would be to preserve to his people the uninterrupted blessings of PEACE."

The second National Assembly of France met October 1, 1791. By an act of patriotic disinterestedness, very indiscreet in its nature, and pernicious in its consequences, the late Assembly had decreed, that no person should be eligible to two successive legislatures. The present Assembly, therefore, was necessarily destitute of the experience, and, according to the general opinion, of the talents likewise of the former. And being chosen at the precise period when the national resentment was at the highest pitch, they were of a much more anti-monarchical complexion. The opening speech of the King was received nevertheless with great applause ; and the President replied in terms of confidence and respect, expressing the united wish of the Assembly to comply with the benevolent

benevolent and patriotic views of the King. "Such, Sire," said he, "is our duty, such are our hopes, and the gratitude and blessings of the people will be our reward." The prospect, however, was quickly overcast. By the King's express desire, on his acceptance of the Constitutional Act, a decree of indemnity had passed respecting the emigrants, without any exception whatever, on the condition of their returning to their country within a limited time. But the Agent deputed on this commission to the Princes at Coblenz was not only treated with contempt and insult, but actually imprisoned, on pretence of his want of passport.

In consequence of this outrage, and of the continuance of the hostile preparations of the emigrants, a decree passed the Assembly early in November (1791), declaring Prince Louis Stanislaus Xavier to have forfeited, in case he do not return to the kingdom in two months, his eventual claim to the Regency; and, by a subsequent decree, the Assembly pronounced the French hostilely assembled on the frontier, guilty of a conspiracy against their country, in case they did not return before the 1st of January 1792; incurring thereby the forfeiture of their estates during their lives, but without prejudice to their children.

On the 18th of November a severe decree passed the Assembly against the nonjuring Clergy, who were accused, with too much reason, of seditious and *incivie* practices.

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To both these decrees the King, insensible or careless of consequences, opposed his Royal veto. The Assembly, astonished at the conduct of the King, addressed him to take effectual measures to prevent the dangers which menaced the country. The King, in reply, assured the Assembly, that the Emperor had done all that could be expected from a *faithful ally*, by forbidding and dispersing all assemblages of Emigrants within his states. And he had acquainted the Elector of Treves, that if he did not, before the 15th of January, put a stop to all hostile dispositions, he should be obliged to consider him as the enemy of France.

The Assembly, however, were not lulled to security by these empty professions. Whatever was done in favor of the emigrants by the German Princes, was plainly done under the sanction of the Emperor; and it was now publicly known that the Emperor had, in concert with the King of Prussia, signed a Convention at Pilnitz in Saxony, August 1791, in the highest degree inimical to France, although no intimation had been given of this transaction from the Executive Power to the Assembly.

The short-lived popularity of the King was now vanished, never to return. Addresses were presented to the Assembly from every quarter of the kingdom, indicating their dissatisfaction with the Court, and their confidence in the firmness and patriotism

triotism of the Assembly. M. de Montmorin, unable to withstand the torrent, resigned his office, and M. de Lessart succeeded.

The republican party, in consequence of the incessant tergiversations of the Monarch, gained great strength; and, forming themselves into a club or society, assembling at the Convent of the Jacobin Friars, recently dissolved, they acquired the popular, and since famous appellation of JACOBINS. The friends of monarchy, on the other hand, had, from a similarity of circumstances, obtained the name of Feuillans.

The designs of Leopold gradually unfolded. On the 21st of December, official notice was given to the French Ambassador at the Court of Vienna, that the Emperor, understanding the Elector of Treves to be under apprehensions from France, had been *constrained* to order Marshal Bender to march to his relief and protection.

The King, in communicating this intelligence to the Assembly, affected great surprise at the resolution of the Emperor. "He could not persuade himself that the *good dispositions* of the Emperor were changed; and wished to believe that his Imperial Majesty had been deceived as to the state of facts, and been made to suppose that the Elector had indeed fulfilled all the duties of good neighbourhood."

Preparations were now at last made for war; but the

the designs of the Emperor not being as yet ripe for execution, the Elector of Treves thought fit on a sudden to change his tone, and to engage that within eight days the hostile assemblages within his dominions should be entirely dispersed.

The public discontents and clamors against the King rising very high, and being charged almost openly with treachery to the Nation, his Majesty was pleased to write (February 17, 1792) a letter to the Assembly, contradicting in very haughty terms these injurious reports, propagated by evil-minded people to alarm the public, and calumniate his intentions. "Nothing, he adds, keeps him at Paris but his WILL; and whenever he has reasons to leave it, he will not disguise them."

The correspondence between the Courts of Paris and Vienna being laid before the Assembly on the 2d of March, it appeared that the Imperial troops in the Netherlands would shortly amount to ninety thousand men. And the dispatch of the Prince de Kaunitz (February 17) openly avowed the concert formed with other powers for *preserving unimpaired* the Monarchy of France; and was throughout expressed in terms of menace and hostility, which left no doubt as to the ultimate determination of the Imperial Court. The Assembly, inflamed with this intelligence, rashly and precipitately impeached M. de Lessart for criminal con-

cealment and disobedience. He was succeeded by M. Dumourier.

On the first of March (1792) died suddenly of a malignant fever, the Emperor Leopold II. He was succeeded by his son Francis II. under the title of King of Hungary; but he was after a short interval elected Emperor of the Romans. This event made not the least change in the system of Austrian policy. Scarcely was the new Monarch seated on his throne, when he communicated to the Court of Berlin his determination strictly and literally to adhere to the terms of the treaty of Pilnitz. The King of France at this period, in conformity to his weak and wavering policy, made another effort to regain the ground he had lost, by nominating March 23, after various unpopular dismissions and appointments, M. Roland to the interior department, M. Claviere to that of Finance, and soon after M. Servan to be Minister of War—men who possessed the entire esteem and confidence of the Nation.

The categorical answer of the Court of Vienna at length arrived, insisting, “ 1. on the restitution of the feudal rights of the German Princes in Lorraine and Alsace; 2. the restoration of Avignon to the Pope; and 3. upon adequate satisfaction that the neighboring powers shall have no reason for the apprehension which arose from the present
weakness

weakness of the internal Government of France." The first two of these propositions being inadmissible, and the last unintelligible, war was on the 20th of April declared against the King of Hungary.

At this crisis a very remarkable letter was written in confidence by the King of France to the King of England, doubtless by advice of his present popular Ministers, expressing in the most flattering terms his obligations to his Britannic Majesty for his impartial conduct, and making the most eager advances to the formation of a treaty of amity and alliance. "Between our two countries, says the French Monarch, new connections ought to take place. I think I see the remains of that rivalry which has done so much mischief to both, daily wearing away. It becomes two Kings who have distinguished their reigns by a constant desire to promote the happiness of their people, to connect themselves by such ties as will appear to be durable in proportion as the two nations shall have clearer views of their own interests. I consider the success of the alliance, in which I wish you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the highest importance. I consider it as necessary to the stability of the respective constitutions, and the internal tranquillity of our two kingdoms; and I will add, that our union ought to COMMAND PEACE TO EUROPE."

It was indeed evident that at this period England

might have commanded peace upon her own terms. Never did this country appear in a higher and more exalted point of view than at this moment ; but from that fatality which has governed almost invariably the counsels of the present reign, she suffered the glorious golden opportunity to pass by unnoticed and unimproved. A distant and evasive answer was returned ; England, it was affirmed, could not mediate without the assent and approbation of both the parties—not recollecting certainly the late armed mediation in favor of the Ottoman Porte. And the patriots of France saw clearly from this moment, that the utmost they had to expect from the policy of the English Court was a cold and suspicious neutrality.

On the commencement of hostilities M. Rochambeau was constituted Commander in Chief of the French armies, a separate command being conferred on M. de Fayette. The war began with an unsuccessful attack upon the cities of Tournay and Mons. M. Rochambeau, conceiving disgust at the conduct of the War Minister, resigned his command to M. Luckner, a veteran officer, by birth a foreigner, and who had acquired great reputation in the German war of 1756—being then in the service of Hanover. The new General did not disappoint the expectations of the public. On the 18th of June the important town of Courtray surrendered to the arms of France, and the example of Courtray

Courtray was soon followed by Menin, Ypres, and St. Ghislain; but on a sudden, to the astonishment of the world, these conquests were evacuated, and the French armies retreated to their former stations in France. Marshal Luckner subsequently declared, that in this business he acted in strict conformity to the positive orders received from the King, who by this time had again adopted violent and dangerous counsels. Into this perpetual fluctuation of system there enters without doubt at least as much of imbecility as of treachery. Having no clear discernment of his own interest, and placing no reliance upon his own judgment, he was willing in a situation of unparalleled difficulty to make trial of any plan that was recommended to him from any quarter. It was truly said of him, "*La dernière venue avoit presque toujours raison avec lui.*" At the present crisis his characteristic weakness seemed to approach the limits of absolute infatuation.

On the 6th of June a decree passed the Assembly, on the suggestion of the Military Committee, for forming a camp of twenty thousand men in the vicinity of Paris. To this the King refused his sanction. The decree against the refractory clergy, which with some variations had a second time passed the Assembly, was also rendered ineffectual by the royal veto; and to crown all, the King on the 12th of June announced in person to the Assembly

the dismissal of the popular Ministers Roland, Servan, and Claviere: and in a short time M. Dumourier also resigned his office. Previous to this event M. Roland wrote that celebrated letter to the King, which, had it not been written otherwise in the rolls of Fate or Providence, might have saved the Monarch and the Monarchy. "The fermentation is extreme, says this firm and virtuous patriot, in the various parts of the empire; it will burst upon us with a DREADFUL EXPLOSION, unless it be calmed by a well-founded confidence in your Majesty's intentions: but this confidence will not be established by mere promises and protestations—it can rest upon facts only. The French Nation know their Constitution can sustain itself; that Government will have all necessary aid whenever your Majesty, wishing well to the Constitution, shall support the Legislative Body by causing their decrees to be executed, and remove every pretext for popular dissatisfaction, and every hope of the malcontents. The Revolution is established in the public mind; it will be completed by the effusion of blood, if wisdom do not guard against evils which can YET be prevented. If force were recurred to, all France would rise with indignation; and, distracted by the horrors of a civil war, she would display that gloomy energy, the parent of virtues and of crimes, ever fatal to those who provoke it." After this fatal step, a succession of Ministers, or phantoms

phantoms of Ministers, passed rapidly over the stage; the general state of things verged towards anarchy, the pillars of the State seemed to bow, and the fabric of Government tottered to its fall.

On the 20th of June an immense crowd assembled in the gardens of the Tuilleries, and, the gates of the Palace being thrown open, the populace entered into the apartment of the King. One of their leaders, more daring than the rest, producing a red cap, the symbol of Liberty, desired the King to put it on. He complied; and, in answer to the incessant and clamorous demands of the mob, he repeatedly declared, "that it was his firm intention to preserve the Constitution inviolate." Though the insults which the unfortunate Monarch was compelled to endure were grievous, no further injury was sustained, and at the approach of night the people were persuaded to disperse. The King made a formal complaint of this outrage to the Assembly; but, in the present situation of things, they could as easily calm the storms of the ocean as the tumults of the people.

At this crisis M. de Fayette, quitting his army without leave or propriety, presented himself unexpectedly at the bar of the Assembly, beseeching, or rather demanding, of them "to save their country from ruin, by dissolving the factious clubs, and inflicting exemplary punishment on the late disturbers of the public peace." By this most im-

prudent and unwarrantable step that General entirely lost the confidence of the Nation, and incurred for this dangerous and unconstitutional interference the severe censure of the Assembly; and he returned in a short time full of resentment and chagrin to his post in the army.

On the 1st of July it was proclaimed by the Assembly, "that the country was in danger." "Your Constitution, citizens, say they, restores the principles of eternal justice; a league of Kings is formed to destroy it—their battalions are advancing." The political horizon in France exhibited the deepest gloom. On the 14th of July the third anniversary of the Revolution was celebrated; but instead of the animating shout of *Vive le Roi!* nothing was heard but the clamorous vociferations of *Vivent les Jacobins!* *A bas le VETO!*

It was in a short time after this ceremony announced, that the combined armies of Austria and Prussia had entered France under the Duke of Brunswic, who had on the 25th of July issued a proclamation which seemed purposely calculated to complete the ruin of the King. In this famous manifesto the most dreadful vengeance is denounced against the French nation. Such of them as are found in arms against the troops of the allied powers, are threatened to be punished as REBELS to their King, and destroyers of the public tranquillity; and the city of Paris, in case the
King,

King, Queen, and the Royal Family are not immediately *set at liberty*, is to be delivered up to the horrors of military execution.

This filled up the measure of the popular fury. It was not doubted but the King had authorized the use thus made of his name, and matters were almost immediately brought to a crisis. On the 3d of August M. Pétion at the head of the sections of Paris appeared at the bar of the National Assembly, to demand the DECHÉANCE of the King. A petition of the same tenor was presented by a countless multitude on the 6th, and the Assembly had appointed the 10th of August to decide upon this grand question; but the discussion was dreadfully anticipated. Early on the morning of the 10th the palace of the Tuilleries was attacked by the Parisian populace; and being resolutely defended by the Swiss Guards, a most bloody conflict took place, which terminated in the total defeat and destruction of the Guards, and the complete triumph of the Parisians. The King at the commencement of the engagement had—not certainly in the spirit of Henry IV.—made his retreat across the gardens of the Tuilleries, with the Queen, to the Hall of the Assembly, who continued their sitting in the midst of this unexampled scene of terror and confusion, and the incessant noise of musquetry and cannon. All freedom of deliberation was now at an end. A decree passed without debate, declaring
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the Executive Power suspended, and summoning a National Convention to meet on the 20th of September. The King and Queen meanwhile were committed close prisoners to the Temple. A most spirited justificatory declaration of the measure of suspension was published by the Assembly, concluding with these words: " We have discharged our duty in seizing with courage on the only means of preserving liberty that occurred to our consideration; we shall be spared remorse at least, nor shall we have to reproach ourselves with having seen a means of saving our country and not having embraced it."

On the following day a new Provisional Executive Council was appointed, consisting of the popular Ministers Roland, Servan, and Claviere, dismissed by the King; to whom was added M. Le Brun, as Minister of Foreign Affairs. M. Luckner, M. Dumourier now acting in the capacity of General in the Army, and the other Commanders, submitted with readiness to the authority of the Assembly. M. Fayette alone attempted resistance; but finding himself wholly unsupported by his troops, he was obliged to make a precipitate escape. Being intercepted in his flight, and delivered up to the Prussians, he was committed close prisoner to the fortress of Spandau, where he has been treated with a severity not to be wholly ascribed to the part taken by him in the *late* Revolution. The
combined

combined armies of Austria and Prussia in the mean time made a rapid and alarming progress. The town of Longwy surrendered on the 21st of August, and in a few days afterwards that of Verdun; yet even in these circumstances the National Assembly had the magnanimity to declare war against the King of Sardinia, who had given repeated and flagrant proofs of his hostile disposition towards France.

Since the deposition of the King the prisons had been filled with persons accused or suspected of disaffection to the existing government; and a sort of phrensy seizing the populace on the expected approach of the Duke, the prisons were forced open on the night of the 2d of September, and a most horrid and indiscriminate massacre of the prisoners took place. It is said that, application being made on this occasion to M. Danton, Minister of JUSTICE, to interpose his authority in order to put a stop to these detestable enormities, he replied, "When the people have done their part I will perform mine."

On the 20th of September the National Convention met at Paris, and a decree immediately passed by acclamation for the eternal abolition of Royalty in France. Such had been the insidious negligence of the Court, that the country was wholly unprepared for its defence; and M. Dumourier, to whom the destiny of France was now entrusted,

entrusted, could scarcely oppose thirty thousand men to the army of the Duke of Brunswic, consisting of eighty thousand. With this small force he determined to make his stand at the Forest of Argonne, the passes of which after repeated attempts the Duke found himself unable to force. The French army receiving continual reinforcements, and the Prussians suffering under the united evils of sickness and famine, he was compelled to the humiliating necessity of commencing his retreat on the 1st of October, and by the 18th the Austrian and Prussian armies had completely evacuated France*. By this time the French arms

* The noble ODE of Buchanan on the retreat of the Emperor Charles V. from Metz, addressed to Henry II. King of France, is admirably applicable to the retreat of Brunswic, and the triumph of Dumourier.

“ Tu bellicosæ dux bone Galliæ
Sperare promptam cuncta superbiam
Compescuisti: tu dedisti
Indomito laqueos furori.

Quis vultus illi? qui dolor intimis
Arsit medullis? Spiritus impotens
Cum claustra spectaret Mosellæ
Et juvenum intrepidam coronam.

Sic unda rupes sævit in obvias;
Clausus caminis ignis inæstuat:
Hircana sic tigris cruento
Dente suas furit in catenas.”

were

were triumphant in every quarter. General Montefquiou entering Savoy on the 20th of September, was received with joyful acclamation at Chamberri the capital, and the whole country submitted almost without resistance. On the other side, the fortresses of Montalban and the entire county of Nice were conquered by General Anselm. On the banks of the Rhine General Custine distinguished himself by the most brilliant successes—reducing successively the cities of Worms, Spire, Mentz, and Frankfort.

Early in November General Dumourier entered the Austrian Netherlands; and on the 5th of November, a day sacred to liberty, attacking the Austrian entrenchments at Jemappe near Mons, he gained a most complete and signal victory, the consequences of which were decisive as to the fate of the Netherlands. Mons instantly surrendered. Tournay, Ostend, Ghent, and Antwerp soon followed; and on the 14th the French General made his triumphal entry into Brussels. And before the end of the year, the whole of the Austrian Low Countries, Luxembourg only excepted, together with the city and territory of Liege, were subjected by the victorious arms of France. Such were the astonishing effects of that glorious enthusiasm, which can only be inspired by the love of FREEDOM *!

In

* Long had the Giant-form on Gallia's plains
Inglorious slept, unconscious of his chains;

Round

In the midst of the exultation occasioned by this unexampled series of triumphs, a decree was passed by acclamation in the Assembly November 19, 1792, in the following terms:—"The National Convention declare, in the name of the French Nation, that they will grant fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty. And they charge the Executive Power to send orders to the Generals to give assistance to such people; and to defend citizens who have suffered and are now suffering in the cause of Liberty."

This famous decree, which deserved to be considered in no other light than as a magnificent

Round his large limbs were wound a thousand strings,
 By the weak hands of Confessors and Kings;
 O'er his closed eyes a triple veil was bound,
 And steely rivets locked him to the ground:
 While stern Bastille with iron cage intralls
 His folded limbs, and hems in marble walls.
 —Touch'd by the patriot flame, he rent amaz'd
 The flimsy bonds, and round and round him gaz'd;
 Starts up from earth, above the admiring throng
 Lifts his colossal form, and towers along:
 High o'er his foes his hundred arms he rears,
 Ploughshares his swords, and pruning-hooks his spears;
 Calls to the good and brave with voice that rolls
 Like Heaven's own thunder round the echoing poles;
 Gives to the winds his banner broad unfurl'd,
 And gathers in its shade the living world.

DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN:

and

and empty vaunt, was productive of very strange and serious consequences. Two other decrees of the Assembly also demand a specific notice: the one erecting the Duchy of Savoy into an 84th department of the French Republic, contrary to a fundamental article of the Constitution, by which she renounced all foreign conquest: the other, on the capture of Antwerp, declaratory of the freedom of navigation on the river Scheldt.

Before we revert to the affairs of Great Britain, it may be proper transiently to notice the situation of the different Powers of Europe not actually engaged in the *crusade* against France.

Great pains had been taken by the Courts of Vienna and St. Peterburg to engage the Republic of Poland in the last war against Turkey; and the King of Poland had been personally present at the memorable interview of Cherson. But the servile dependency on Russia, in which the Republic had been held since the æra of the accession of Stanislaus, was odious to the Poles; and a new interest—that of PRUSSIA—had lately gained the ascendancy in the Diet, under the favorable auspices of which Poland seemed for a time to recover some share of importance in the European scale of power. The proposition of war was rejected; and a treaty of amity and defensive alliance concluded with Prussia February 1790. In

the Diet held at Warsaw May 1791, a new constitutional code was announced and promulgated, to the great joy of the nation, deeply sensible of the evils resulting from her former inefficient and defective form of government. By the new *formula* the crown of Poland was declared to be hereditary, and the executive power vested solely in the Monarch. The privileges of the Aristocracy were circumscribed within narrower limits, and the blessings of liberty in some degree extended to the mass of the people. The King of Prussia, by his Ambassador at Warsaw, formally congratulated the King and the Republic of Poland on this happy event. But soon the scene totally changed. The Empress of Russia declared her entire disapprobation of the late Revolution, and, as the guarantee of the former Constitution, ordered an army of one hundred thousand men to enter the territories of the Republic.

Finding no force sufficient to stop, or scarcely to impede their progress, the Russian Generals proceeded to Warsaw; and the whole country being now in their hands, the new Constitution was forcibly and totally annulled at the ensuing Diet of Grodno. The King of Prussia, far from interposing in their behalf, with unexampled and unblushing perfidy embraced eagerly the opportunity of profiting by their distress, and concluded
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with the Empress a second partition treaty, by which the provinces of Volhinia, Podolia, and the Ukraine, with the half of Lithuania which remained to Poland on the former division, were assigned to Russia. And nearly the whole of Great Poland, with the cities of Dantzick and Thorn, were allotted to the King of Prussia, from whom this new acquisition of territory received the appellation of South Prussia. The Manifesto of the Court of Berlin published on this occasion, and in vindication of these proceedings, declared with effrontery unparalleled, “ that the Poles, misled by designing men, had established a Government subversive of all order in society, and destructive of all happiness amongst individuals.” All these outrages and usurpations the Diet of Grodno, reduced to the lowest state of national humiliation, was ultimately compelled to ratify.

The affairs of Sweden, since the termination of the war with Russia, remained in a perplexed and critical situation. The King of Sweden summoned, in the beginning of 1792, a Diet to meet at Gesle, a solitary and obscure place on the borders of the Bothnic Gulf, 70 miles from Stockholm. During the sitting of the Diet the town was filled with troops. Notwithstanding these precautions, the demands and expectations of the King were by no means answered; and the Diet was finally dissolved in anger. On his return to

Stockholm he was assassinated at a masquerade by an officer of the name of Engerstrom, actuated by the enthusiasm of public and the rancor of personal revenge.

He was succeeded by his son Gustavus IV. a youth of fourteen years of age: and the Regency was vested in the hands of the Duke of Sudermania, brother to the late King, who has conducted himself in his high office with singular prudence and propriety. It was generally understood that Gustavus III. had acceded to the CONSPIRACY of SOVEREIGNS against France, and had even proposed to take the command of the combined armies in person; but the Regent maintained a strict and scrupulous neutrality. The same wise plan was also steadily pursued by Denmark, under the excellent and admirable administration of Count Bernstorff. The Italian and Helvetic Republics adopted the same safe and salutary system. Spain alone appeared wavering and indecisive, agitated by the alternate fluctuations of policy and passion.

In consequence of the transactions of the 10th of August, and the virtual deposition of the French Monarch, Lord Gower, the English Ambassador at Paris, received orders from the Court of London to quit the kingdom, on the slight and frivolous pretext, that, the functions of Royalty being suspended, his mission was at an end. This recall
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was considered by the leading men in France, as a certain and very ominous indication of the enmity of the British Court: nevertheless, as a demonstration of their moderation, and sollicitude for peace, M. Chauvelin the French Ambassador still remained in London, though from this period unacknowledged in any public or authorised capacity. The recall of the English Ambassador at this critical moment, on the ground stated by the English Court, seemed to imply that appointments of this nature are a mere matter of form and compliment between Sovereigns: but if Ambassadors are considered in a higher and juster light, as the necessary means of intercourse between nation and nation, never could the recall of an Ambassador take place at a period when his presence and services were more indispensable.

On the success of the French arms in Flanders, the Court of London gave a still farther proof of their inimical disposition, by making an eager, officious, and unso'icited offer of assistance to the States General in case of need. But their High Mightinesses declared themselves under no apprehension of attack. Also, in direct violation of the Commercial Treaty, an exclusive embargo was laid on vessels freighted with corn for France.

The causes of the deposition of the French Monarch, and the nature of the provocations and in-

juries which preceded and produced that event, not being sufficiently understood in England, it made an impression very unfavorable upon the minds of the generality of the people, already biassed and perverted by the inflammatory declamations of Mr. Burke and his partisans. And the horrid massacres of September completely alienated their minds from the Revolution, although these detestable enormities could not in any rational sense be said to originate in the Revolution, but merely and solely in the opposition made to its establishment. The nation was on a sudden struck with terror at the idea of any political innovation of any kind; and the very name of REFORM became the subject of violent and indiscriminate reprobation.

Under the impression of this prevailing prepossession, an Association openly countenanced by Government was formed in London for the protection of Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers; and an innumerable multitude of pamphlets, in the popular form of letters, dialogues and narratives, were circulated by this means throughout the kingdom, inculcating an unreserved submission to Government, on the old exploded principles of Toryism and High Churchism. In one of the most notorious of these tracts it was urged in favor of Monarchy, "that the King is
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in scripture called the LORD'S ANOINTED ; but who, say these profound politicians, ever heard of an ANOINTED REPUBLIC ?”

The rage of associating spread rapidly through the kingdom ; and in every county, and almost every town, resolutions were subscribed strongly expressive of loyalty and attachment to the King and Constitution, and abhorrence of all levelling and republican doctrines. The populace entering with violence into these sentiments, and their passions being by the methods now put in practice dangerously excited, the cry of CHURCH and KING was vociferated with tremendous clamors from the Tamar to the Tweed ; from the Cliffs of Dover to the Hills of Cheviot.

Previous to this extraordinary display of loyalty, it had been not unusual for the violent zealots of Republicanism in England to transmit addresses to the Convention, declaratory in high-flown terms of their applause and admiration. The most remarkable of these, entitled “ An Address from several Patriotic Societies in England,” was presented, November 7, at the bar of the Convention, containing, in addition to the accustomed complimentary expressions, the most indecent and indefensible reflections upon the Government and Constitution of their own country. “ Whilst foreign plunderers ravage your territories (say these Addressers), an *oppressed part of mankind*, forgetting

their own evils, are sensible only of yours, and address their fervent prayers to the God of the universe that he may be favorable to your cause, with *which theirs is so intimately connected*.—Degraded by an oppressive system of inquisition, the insensible but continual encroachments of which quickly deprived this nation of its boasted liberty, and reduced it almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so gloriously emancipated yourselves—FIVE THOUSAND English citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to step forward to rescue their country from that opprobrium which has been thrown on it by the base conduct of those who are invested with power.—We see with concern that the Elector of Hanover unites his troops to those of traitors and robbers: but the King of England will do well to remember that England is not Hanover. *Should HE forget this, WE will not forget it.*” The President of the Convention, in his answer to this daring and insolent Address, had the extreme indiscretion to use expressions full of respect and complacency. “The sentiments of five thousand Britons,” said he, “devoted openly to the cause of mankind, exist *without doubt* in the hearts of all the freemen in England.” And what is still more surprising, copies of the Address were ordered to be sent to all the armies and departments of the Republic.

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The true key to this most impolitic, rash, and insulting conduct of the Convention, so far as the acts of a democratic Assembly, too oft proceeding from the impulse of the moment, can be traced to system, is, that in consequence of the number of ostentatious, but really insignificant addressees presented at their bar, they were most egregiously deceived with respect to the sentiments of the people of England at this period; and they fancied that, by gratifying their resentment against the Court, they should at the same time recommend themselves to the Nation at large, with whom it is certain that they ardently wished to cultivate a good understanding*.

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* During the whole of our journey, says an intelligent traveller (December 1792), we remarked that the apprehension of a war with England was peculiarly painful to the French. Though flushed with their late successes, and confident against a world in arms, it was evident there was nothing they dreaded more than such an event; not merely on account of the mischief that might ensue, but because it would force them to regard as enemies the only nation in Europe they considered as their friends.—All along the road they anxiously asked us what we thought would be the consequence of the armament in England? We frankly told them we presumed it would be war; and generally observed a moment of silence and dejection follow the delivery of our opinion. The imminence of hostilities, however, in no degree diminished the respect they shewed us as Englishmen: and not only we did not meet with any thing like an insult in the whole of our tour, but, on the contrary, we experienced every where

The decree of the 19th of November filled up the measure of their iniquity in the view of the Court of London; and in combination with the obnoxious addressès, it was regarded as little less than an act of open aggression. Certainly the English Government had just cause of resentment, and an undoubted right to adequate reparation. Unhappily the Court of London, inflamed with indignation, sought not reparation merely, but revenge. Her measures being now determined on, a Royal Proclamation was issued December 1, 1792, announcing the alarming intelligence, “that notwithstanding the late proclamation of the 21st of May, the utmost industry was still employed by evil-disposed persons within the kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the Laws and Constitution; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder, *thereby excited,*

particular kindness and attention. They seemed eager to court our good opinion; and frequently begged us not to ascribe to a whole nation the faults of individuals, and not to charge their Government with disorders its present state of vacillation rendered it incompetent to repress.—I confess I should never have suspected that I was travelling among a nation of savages, madmen, and assassins—I should rather have wished with SHAKESPEARE,

————— That these contending kingdoms,
 England and France, whose very shores look pale
 With envy of each other’s happiness,
 May lose their hatred.

Vide “Tour through the Theatre of War 1792.”

had

had lately shewn itself in acts of riot and INSURRECTION—And that, these causes moving him thereto, his Majesty had resolved forthwith to embody part of the militia of the kingdom.”

On the same day another proclamation was issued for convening the Parliament (which stood prorogued to the 3d of January, 1793) on the 13th of December; the law requiring, that if the militia be drawn out during the recess of Parliament, and this it can only be in case of invasion or actual *insurrection*, Parliament shall be assembled within the space of fourteen days.

The public alarm caused by these proceedings was inexpressible. Every one was convinced of the existence of a PLOT, which was so much the more terrible, from its being invisible and incomprehensible. The Minister did not disdain to heighten the general consternation by the palpable artifices of marching troops to the metropolis, of doubling the guard at the Bank, and of repairing the fortifications of the Tower.

On the meeting of Parliament on the day appointed, the expressions of the first proclamation were repeated in his Majesty's Speech; towards the conclusion of which the real views of the Court became sufficiently manifest. “I have, said his Majesty, carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the Continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with re-
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spect to the internal government of France; but it is impossible for me to see without the most serious uneasiness the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there, of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the States General measures which were neither conformable to the law of nations nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. Under these circumstances his Majesty thought it right to have recourse to those means of prevention and internal defence with which he was entrusted by law, and to make some augmentation of his naval and military force."

On moving the Address in answer to the Speech, a memorable debate arose. Never did the strength and superiority of Mr. Fox's genius appear perhaps so conspicuous as in this moment of national infatuation. "This," said Mr. Fox, "is the most momentous crisis, not only that I have ever known, but that I have ever read of in the history of this country—a crisis not merely interesting to ourselves, but to all nations; and on the conduct of Parliament depends the fate of the British Constitution—perhaps the future happiness of mankind. His Majesty's Speech contains a variety of assertions of the most extraordinary nature. We are told there
exists

exists at this moment an insurrection in this kingdom.—AN INSURRECTION!—where is it? where has it reared its head? Although this insurrection has existed fourteen days, Ministers have given us no light whatever, no clue, no information where to find it. There have been, as I understand, and as every one must have heard, some slight riots in different parts; but I ask, Were the various pretexts of these different tumults false, and used only to cover an attempt to destroy our happy Constitution? I have heard of a tumult at Shields, of another at Leith, of something of the same nature at Yarmouth and Dundee. But were the sailors who demanded an increase of their wages actuated by a design of overthrowing the Constitution? Is there a man in England who is credulous enough to believe it?—The Address now moved says modestly, ‘We are sorry to hear there is an insurrection.’ Of the tumults in the seaports we had some previous knowledge, but the insurrection we learn from his Majesty’s Speech. It has been alleged as a proof of disaffection, that the countenances of many wore the face of joy when the intelligence arrived of the Duke of Brunswick’s retreat. What! is it a sufficient demonstration of republicanism, that men should rejoice in the discomfiture of the armies of Despotism combating against Liberty? Could any man who loves the Constitution of this country wish
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success to the Duke of Brunswic, after reading a Manifesto which violated every principle of justice, humanity, freedom, and true government?—Who will dare to defend that system of tyranny and coercion, which insists that Englishmen shall not indulge any genuine feelings of their own—which tells them that they must not think but by permission—that they must rejoice and grieve as it suits the caprice or the pleasure of the Ministers? Are we to arraign a man for his secret and supposed designs, and arrogate to ourselves at once the province and the power of the Deity?—What innocence can be safe from this more than inquisitorial oppression?—Doubtless there are speculative persons in this country who disapprove of the system of our Government: and there must be such men, as long as the land is free, for it is of the very essence of freedom for men to differ upon speculative points. From the instant that opinion shall be held dependent upon the will of the Minister or the Magistrate, I date the extinction of our liberties as a people.”

In passing to that part of the King's Speech which related to France, Mr. Fox asserted “that there never was a period when this country had so much reason to wish for peace. Never was there a period less favorable to a system of hostility. How frequently have wars been prevented by negotiation! Why then disdain to negotiate
now?”

now?—Because we had no Minister at Paris. And why have we no Minister?—Because France is a Republic. For this punctilio then it is that the blood and treasure of the kingdom are to be expended!—As to the free navigation of the Scheldt, I will not believe that a war can in reality be undertaken for an object so trivial, or that Holland itself would desire or approve it. What was the conduct of France under her former depraved government, when the Emperor menaced the opening of the Scheldt in 1786? Was war declared in order to prevent it? No; they opened a negotiation, and carried the point by amicable interposition. Is not the ultimate object of republicans and levellers aided by plunging the nation in a war without due and previous enquiry? I conjure Parliament to avoid involving the people in so dreadful a calamity, without coolly reflecting on its necessity.”

Mr. Fox concluded with moving an amendment, simply pledging the House “that enquiry should be made into the facts stated in his Majesty’s Speech.” After a debate of many hours, the House divided for the amendment 50, against it 290!

In the House of Lords the Address was carried without a division; but not without a powerful opposition from the Duke of Norfolk, and the Lords Lansdowne, Rawdon, and Stanhope.

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In consequence of the late alarms, the Opposition, or Whig Party, had, as it now appeared, suffered a great and melancholy defection. At the head of the seceders in the Upper House, were the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Portland, and Lords Fitzwilliam, Spencer, and LOUGHBOROUGH, who on the *resignation* of Lord Thurlow at this period was advanced to the Chancellorship; and in the Lower House, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Anstruther, &c. who acquired by this means the popular appellation of ALARMISTS. On the bringing up the report, on the succeeding day, the debate was resumed with fresh vehemence. Mr. Fox most severely censured the Ministers for not having interposed the mediation of Great Britain, in order to preserve the peace of Europe. Had we protested against the project concerted at Pilnitz, and armed to prevent the execution of it, England must have acquired such an ascendancy in the Councils of France as would have completely obviated all the subsequent causes of dissatisfaction. "If," said Mr. Fox, "there exists a discontented or disaffected party in the kingdom, what can so much add to their numbers, or their influence, as a war, which, by increasing the public burdens till they become intolerable, will give proportionable weight to their complaints? He wished therefore that war should be avoided, if possible—that negotia-
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tion should precede hostility. He was fully aware of the arrogant notions of Ministers, who perhaps would not condescend to receive a Minister from the French Republic. If this were the case, let Ministers fairly avow it—that the people of England might know how far the essential interests of the nation were sacrificed to a *punctilio*. Gentlemen should recollect that it was once fashionable to talk of ‘a vagrant Congress,’ of ‘one Hancock’ and ‘one Adams’ and ‘their Crew.’ But surely the folly of this language had been sufficiently proved.” He then moved an amendment, “beseeching his Majesty to employ every means of honorable negotiation, for the purpose of preventing a war with France.” The Motion was opposed by Mr. Burke in a frantic speech, in which he affirmed, “that to send an Ambassador to France would be the prelude to the murder of our Sovereign.” Mr. Pitt was at this time not a Member of the House, having vacated his seat by the acceptance of the lucrative sinecure of the Cinque Ports, void by the death of the Earl of Guildford, once so famous under the title of Lord North.

In the absence of the Minister, Mr. Secretary Dundas entered into a long and elaborate vindication of the measures of Administration; and he concluded with a confident prediction, that “*if we were forced into a war, it MUST prove SUCCESSFUL*
and

and GLORIOUS." The amendment was negatived without a division.

Not discouraged at the ill success of these attempts, Mr. Fox on the 15th of December moved, at the close of a speech which only served to demonstrate how incompetent are the utmost efforts of human wisdom to work conviction in minds distempered by prejudice and passion, "that a Minister be sent to Paris to treat with those persons who exercise provisionally the executive government of France. "This," he said, "implied neither approbation nor disapprobation of the conduct of the existing French Government. It was the policy and the practice of every nation to treat with the existing Government of every other nation with which it had relative interests, without enquiring how that Government was constituted, or by what means it acquired possession of power. Was the existing Government of Morocco more respectable than that of France? Yet we had more than once sent embassies thither, to men reeking from the blood through which they had waded to their thrones. We had Ministers at the German Courts, at the time of the infamous partition of Poland. We had a Minister at Versailles when Corsica was bought and enslaved. But in none of these instances was any sanction given directly or indirectly by Great Britain to these nefarious transactions."

Mr. Francis, in a very excellent speech, remon-

strated and protested against the manner in which the debate had been conducted on the part of the Ministerialists. "How," said he, "has this awful question been agitated? By appeals to our understanding? No—by exciting our passions, by agitating our feelings, by presenting perpetually to our imagination scenes of horror. Thus do the House in fact deprive themselves of all capacity to debate—of all power to judge. They listen with rapture to invectives, and echo them back in shouts and clamors. Is this a British House of Commons? or am I suddenly transplanted by some enchantment into that Convention against which the perpetual theme of reproach is, that they deliberate in passion, and resolve by acclamation?"

In answer to the absurd and puerile objection, that, if we agreed to a negotiation, we should not know with whom to negotiate, Mr. Whitbread asked with energetic animation, "if we knew with whom we were going to make war? If there was no difficulty in deciding upon that point, how could we pretend to be at a loss to know with whom we were to make peace? Doubtless with that Assembly, truly described by his Majesty as exercising the powers of government in France."

Mr. Courtenay animadverted with poignant severity upon the rhapsodical extravagancies which had fallen from Mr. Burke; and he read to the House a passage from the famous pamphlet pub-

lished by him, which he said he considered as the prelude to the Duke of Brunswic's disgraceful Manifesto. Mr. Courtenay said, that "Mr. Burke was the dupe of his imagination. His imagination was a magic lanthorn, presenting a rapid and exhaustless succession of phantasms. There were chivalry—the Duke of Brunswic—Petion faction—National Convention—King of Armenia—Senate of Rome—Marat—Affassinations—Corinthian capitals—Tom Paine—and many other things, making a complete raree-show, for the entertainment of the admirers of that gentleman. Mr. Courtenay acknowledged that he had never felt so much pleasure, as when the Prussians, who had entered France not as soldiers but as ruffians, had been driven back in shame and confusion. He had participated in the triumph when M. Dumourier made his *joyeuse entrée* into Brabant."

Mr. Windham had laid it down as an axiom of policy, "that to be *justified* in negotiating with France, it should be a matter of necessity, not of choice."

"Happy, dignified opportunity to treat!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "when necessity, a necessity arising from defeat and discomfiture, from shame and disgrace, shall compel us to negotiate on terms which would leave us completely at their mercy! How consolatory, to be able to boast that we are at the same time *justified* and **UNDONE!**

—But

—But we are told,” continued Mr. Sheridan; “that to treat with France would give offence to the Allied Powers, with whom we are eventually to co-operate. Are we then prepared to make a common cause on the principles and for the purposes for which those despots have associated? Are the freemen of England ready to subscribe to the Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswic? that detestable outrage on the rights and feelings of human nature! that impotent and wretched tissue of pride, folly and cruelty; which had steeled the heart and maddened the brain of all France! The question is not merely, whether we should go to war or not? but on what principle should it be conducted, and to what end directed? To restore the antient despotism of France? Impossible! Disputes and causes of complaint existing, how were they to be terminated, but by some sort of negotiation? But we were told, that the dignity of the nation forbade a public and avowed communication with the present ruling powers in France. Was the dignity of the nation better consulted by the mean subterfuge of an indirect and underhand intercourse? Was it sacrificed by a magnanimous frankness, and sustained only by dark and insidious disguise? Far from recalling the Ambassador of England from Paris at the late perilous crisis, a *Statesman-like Administration* would

have regarded the post of Minister at Paris, as the situation which demanded the first and ablest talents of the country. It was a situation which afforded scope and interest for the noblest mind that ever warmed a human bosom. The French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced, in favor of the English. What manly sense, and generous feeling, and above all, what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, it was difficult to calculate. But the policy which discarded these, and which substituted in their stead a HOLLOW NEUTRALITY, was an error fatal in its consequences, and for ever to be lamented." The motion was in the end negatived without a division.

Mr. Grey, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Adam distinguished themselves in the course of these debates by very able and eloquent speeches on the part of the Opposition. And the desertion of their *friends*, far from dispiriting the faithful few who remained, seemed to animate them to still higher and more ardent exertions of patriotic zeal. The popular odium incurred by the Leaders of Opposition, and in particular by Mr. Fox, in consequence of their generous endeavors to rescue their country from the gulf of ruin into which it was with such blind and rash precipitancy about to plunge, will appear to posterity scarcely credible. Neither professing a contempt for the public judgment, nor on the
other

other hand yielding for a moment to the tide of popular opinion, Mr. Fox published at this period a very animated and dignified Address to his Constituents, the Electors of Westminster, stating, with admirable force and perspicuity of argument, his reasons for his late parliamentary conduct. The conclusion of this justly celebrated Address is peculiarly striking. "Let us not," says he, "attempt to deceive ourselves. Whatever possibility, or even probability there may be of a Counter-Revolution from internal agitation and discord, the means of producing such an event by external force can be no other than the conquest of France.—The CONQUEST OF FRANCE! O calumniated crusaders, how rational and moderate were your objects! O much injured Louis XIV. upon what flight grounds have you been accused of restless and immoderate ambition! O tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colors have you painted the portrait of a disordered imagination!"

Although the determination of the English Court was from the first sufficiently manifest, the Government of France left no means unessayed to accomplish an accommodation.

On the 17th of December a Memorial was presented by M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, in which he informs his Lordship, that the Executive Council of the French Republic, thinking it a

duty which they owe to the French Nation, not to leave it in the state of suspense into which it has been thrown by the late measures of the British Government, have authorized him to demand with openness, whether France ought to consider England as a neutral or hostile Power; at the same time being solicitous, that not the smallest doubt should exist respecting the disposition of France towards England, and of its desire to remain in peace. In allusion to the decree of the 19th of November, M. Chauvelin says, "that the French Nation absolutely reject the idea of that false interpretation, by which it might be supposed that the French Republic should favor insurrections, or excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever. In particular, they declare in the most solemn manner, that France will not attack Holland so long as that power adheres to the principles of her neutrality. As to the navigation of the Scheldt, M. Chauvelin affirms it to be a question of too little importance to be made the sole cause of a war; and that it could only be used as a pretext for a premeditated aggression. On this fatal supposition, he says, the French Nation will accept war: but such a war would be the war not of the British Nation, but of the British Ministry, against the French Republic; and of this he conjures them well to consider the TERRIBLE RESPONSIBILITY." To this communication

munication Lord Grenville returned a most arrogant and provoking answer. His Lordship acknowledged the receipt of a *Note* from M. Chauvelin, *styling himself* Minister Plenipotentiary of France. He reminds him that the King, since the unhappy events of the 10th of August, had suspended all *official* communication with France; and informs him, that he cannot be treated with in the quality and under the form stated in his *Note*. Nevertheless, “under a form neither regular nor official,” his Lordship condescends to reply—but in a mode which could only tend to inflame the differences subsisting between the two Nations; and which, far from accepting the concessions and explanations made by France, sought only to discover new pretences of cavil and quarrel. In a tone of the most decided and lofty superiority, his Lordship says, “If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and *to confine herself within her own territory*, without insulting other Governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights.” The relinquishment of her recent conquests being thus haughtily demanded of France as a preliminary of peace, it might well be supposed that negotiation was at an end. But the Government of France, in the midst of their tri-

umphs, discovered a degree of temper and moderation in their intercourse with England as surprising as it was laudable. In answer to the letter of Lord Grenville, a Memorial was transmitted from M. Le Brun, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the name of the Executive Council, dated January 4, 1793, framed in terms of singular wisdom and ability, and forming a striking contrast to the pride, petulance, and folly displayed in the communications of the English Minister. They begin with repeating "the assurances of their sincere desire to maintain peace and harmony between France and England. It is with great reluctance, say they, that the Republic would see itself forced to a rupture much more contrary to its inclination than its interest."

In reference to Lord Grenville's refusal to acknowledge M. Chauvelin in his diplomatic capacity, the Council remark, "that in the negotiations now carrying on at Madrid, the principal Minister of his Catholic Majesty did not hesitate to address M. Bourgoign, the Ambassador of the Republic at that Court, by the title of Minister Plenipotentiary of France. But that a defect in point of form might not impede a negotiation, on the success of which depended the tranquillity of two great nations, they had sent credential letters to M. Chauvelin, to enable him to treat according

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to the severity of diplomatic forms. The Council repeat, that the decree of the 19th of November had been misunderstood; and that it was far from being intended to favor sedition—being merely applicable to the single case where the general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call for the assistance and fraternity of the French Nation. Sedition can never exist in an expression of the general will. The Dutch were certainly not seditious when they formed the generous resolution of throwing off the Spanish yoke—nor was it accounted as a crime to Henry IV. or to Queen Elizabeth, that they listened to their solicitations of assistance. As to the right of navigation on the Scheldt, the Council affirm, that it is a question of absolute indifference to England, little interesting even to Holland, but of great importance to the Belgians, who were not parties to the treaty of Westphalia, by which they were divested of that right; but when that nation shall find itself in full possession of its liberty, and from *any motive whatever* shall consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, *France will not oppose it.* With respect to the charge of aggrandizement, France, they say, has renounced and still renounces all conquest; and its occupying the Netherlands will CONTINUE NO LONGER THAN THE WAR.—If these explana-

tions appear insufficient, after having done every thing in our power to maintain peace, we will prepare for war. We shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear."

The reply of Lord Grenville to this Memorial was couched in terms still more extraordinary and irritating than the first. His Lordship declares, "that he finds nothing satisfactory in the result of it. Instead of reparation and retractation, his Lordship complains, that nothing more is offered than an *illusory negotiation*"—as if England had a right to expect that France should give up every point in dispute previous to any negotiation; or as if the offer of evacuating the Netherlands at the termination of the war, and of leaving the Belgians to *settle the question* relative to the Scheldt, together with the positive disavowal of the offensive meaning ascribed to the decree of November 19, did not form a proper and sufficient basis of negotiation. In fact, by these great concessions, every rational object of negotiation was accomplished before the negotiation itself had formally commenced. "Under this form of *extra-official* communication, nevertheless, Lord Grenville goes on to say, that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that ALL THE MOTIVES which gave rise to the preparations STILL CONTINUE. If
however,

however, under the same *extra-official* form, you have any farther explanations, says his Lordship, to give, I shall willingly attend to them." In a separate Note his Lordship informs M. Chauvelin, that his Majesty will not receive his new letters of credence from the French Republic. M. Chauvelin then requested a personal interview with his Lordship, which was also refused.

At length this extraordinary business was brought to a crisis, by a letter from Lord Grenville, dated January 24, 1793, in which his Lordship says, " I am charged to notify to you, Sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this Court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his Most Christian Majesty, you have no longer any public character here; and his Majesty has thought fit to order that you should retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days."—At this very time M. Maret, a confidential agent of M. Le Brun, was on his way to England with fresh dispatches from the Executive Council, and, as there is good ground to believe, fresh concessions of the highest importance. But on his arrival in London, being informed of the compulsive dismissal of M. Chauvelin, he did not think himself authorized to open his commission. He therefore

therefore merely announced his arrival to Lord Grenville, but no advances were made to him on the part of the English Court.

The death of the French Monarch was indeed a disastrous and mournful event. It is well known that the Executive Council, and a great majority of the Conventional Assembly, were eagerly desirous to have averted this fatal catastrophe; but the violence of the Jacobin faction, and the savage rage of the populace, rendered it impossible. "We may," said M. Le Brun to a confidential friend, "sacrifice ourselves, without being able to save the life of the King." It was not that the moderate party entertained any doubt of the veracity of the leading charges brought against the King; for, on this point, there was never any difference of opinion in France; but they discerned innumerable circumstances of palliation, which formed an irresistible claim to compassion and mercy. In England no one attempted to justify the deed; "nor," says an animated writer of that time, "is it the season for *extenuation*, now that the stream of prejudice flows strong, and the phantasm of a murdered King stalks before our affrightened imagination."

As, by an express provision of the treaty of 1786, the dismissal of an Ambassador was in future to be regarded as a virtual declaration of war, it is almost

almost superfluous to mention the inferior causes of offence given to France immediately prior to that event, 1. by the ALIEN BILL, empowering the King, in direct contravention of the treaty of 1786, which stipulates the peaceful and undisturbed residence of the subjects of each power in the dominions of the other, to order, at his discretion, all foreigners to depart the kingdom : 2. by the Bill prohibiting the circulation of assignats, or other paper securities issued under the authority of the French government ; a measure rather of insult than of injury : 3. by a bill of a more serious nature, restraining the exportation of naval stores, arms and ammunition, including by a specific mention the article of salt-petre, of which it was well known that the French were in great need.

Immediately on the departure of M. Chauvelin, a Memorial was presented by Lord Auckland, Ambassador at the Hague, to the States General ; in which his Lordship affirms to their High Mightinesses, in language which sets all ideas of decorum at defiance, that “ not four years ago, some WRETCHES, assuming the title of Philosophers, had the presumption to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize that dream of their vanity, they found it necessary to overthrow and destroy all received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which
have

have hitherto formed all the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects of the new system which they endeavored to introduce, served only to shew the imbecility and villany of its authors. The events which so rapidly followed each other since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which had ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed playthings in the hands of infamous men, who are the slaves of the most licentious passions of rapine, enmity, and ambition.”

SUCH were the terms in which the wisdom of the English Court thought it becoming to speak of the existing Government of France! If any thing could add to the astonishment excited by this conduct, it would be, that a Commission was at the same time sent over to the same Ambassador to set on foot a negotiation with M. Dumourier, Commander of the Armies of the Government thus publicly vilified, in order to effect an accommodation of differences.

Whether this overture was really serious, or whether, according to the declared opinion of M. Dumourier himself, it was merely amusive and insidious, such a *prelude* must be equally the subject of admiration. In either case, it came too late to answer

swer the purpose. The Convention had taken their ultimate resolution; and on the 1st of February 1793 a decree unanimously passed that Assembly, declaring the REPUBLIC of FRANCE at WAR with the KING of GREAT BRITAIN, and the STADTHOLDER of HOLLAND.

F I N I S.





