

13-8



0001

OBSERVATIONS

ON

A L A T E

STATE OF THE NATION.

By Edmund Burke Esq^r.

“ O Tite, si quid ego adjuvero curamve levaffo,
“ Quæ nunc te coquit, et verfat sub pectore fixa,
“ Ecquid erit pretii ?”

ENN. ap. CIC.



L O N D O N,

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in PALL-MALL.

MDDCLXIX.

[Price Three Shillings and Six Pence.]

OBSERVATIONS

ON A LATE

STATE OF THE NATION.

PARTY divisions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inseparable from free government. This is a truth which, I believe, admits little dispute, having been established by the uniform experience of all ages. The part a good citizen ought to take in these divisions, has been a matter of much deeper controversy. But God forbid, that any controversy relating to our essential morals should admit of no decision. It appears to me, that this question, like most of the others which regard our duties in life, is to be determined by our station in it. Private men may be wholly neutral, and entirely innocent: but they who are legally invested with public trust, or stand on the high ground of rank and dignity, which is trust implied, can hardly in any case remain indifferent, without the certainty of sinking into insignificance; and thereby in effect deserting that post in which with the fullest authority, and for the wisest purposes, the laws and institutions of their country had fixed them. However, if it be the office of those who are thus circumstanced, to take a decided part, it is no less their duty that it should be a sober one. It ought to be circumscribed by the same laws of decorum, and balanced by the same temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not absolutely enervate that vigour and quench that
B fervency

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

fervency of spirit without which the best wishes for the public good must evaporate in empty speculation.

It is probably from some such motives that the friends of a very respectable party in this kingdom have been hitherto silent. For these two years past, from one and the same quarter of politicks, a continual fire has been kept upon them; sometimes from the unweildy column of quartos and octavos; sometimes from the light squadrons of occasional pamphlets and flying sheets. Every month has brought on its periodical calumny. The abuse has taken every shape which the ability of the writers could give it; plain invective, clumsy raillery, misrepresented anecdote*. No method of vilifying the measures, the abilities, the intentions, or the persons which compose that body, has been omitted.

On their part nothing was opposed but patience and character. It was a matter of the most serious and indignant affliction to persons, who thought themselves in conscience bound to oppose a ministry, dangerous from its very constitution, as well as its measures, to find themselves, whenever they faced their adversaries, continually attacked on the rear by a set of men, who pretended to be actuated by motives similar to theirs. They saw that the plan long pursued with but too fatal a success, was to break the strength of this kingdom; by frittering down the bodies which compose it; by fomenting bitter and sanguinary animosities, and by dissolving every tie of social affection and public trust. These virtuous men, such I am warranted by public opinion to call them, were resolved rather to endure every thing, than cooperate in that design. A diversity of opinion upon almost every principle of politics, had indeed drawn a strong line of separation between them and some others. However, they were desirous not to extend the misfortune by unnecessary bitterness; they wished to prevent a difference of opinion on the commonwealth from festering into rancorous and incurable hostility. Accordingly they endeavoured that all past controversies should be forgotten; and that enough for the day should be the evil thereof. There is however a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. Men may tolerate injuries, whilst they are only personal to themselves. But it is not the first of virtues to bear with moderation the indignities that are offered to our country. A piece has at length appeared, from the quarter of all the former attacks, which upon every public consideration demands an answer. Whilst persons more equal to this business may be engaged in affairs of greater moment, I hope I shall be excused, if, in a few hours of a time not very important, and from such materials as I have by me (more

* History of the Minority. History of the Repeal of the Stamp-act. Considerations on Trade and Finances. Political Register, &c. &c.

than

STATE OF THE NATION.

3

than enough however for this purpose) I undertake to set the facts and arguments of this wonderful performance in a proper light. I will endeavour to state what this piece is; the purpose for which I take it to have been written; and the effects (supposing it should have any effect at all) it must necessarily produce.

This piece is called, *The present State of the Nation*. It may be considered as a sort of digest of the avowed maxims of a certain political school, the effects of whose doctrines and practices this country will feel long and severely. It is made up of a farrago of almost every topic which has been agitated in parliamentary debate, or private conversation, on national affairs, for these seven last years. The oldest controversies are hawled out of the dust with which time and neglect had covered them. Arguments ten times repeated, a thousand times answered before, are here repeated again. Public accounts formerly printed and reprinted revolve once more, and find their old station in this sober meridian. All the common-place lamentations upon the decay of trade, the encrease of taxes, and the high price of labour and provisions, are here retailed again and again in the same tone with which they have drawled through columns of Gazetteers and Advertisers for a century together. Paradoxes which affront common sense, and uninteresting barren truths which generate no conclusion, are thrown in to augment unweildy bulk, without adding any thing to weight. Because two accusations are better than one, contradictions are set staring one another in the face, without even an attempt to reconcile them. And to give the whole a sort of portentous air of labour and information, the table of the House of Commons is swept into this grand reservoir of politicks.

As to the composition, it bears a striking and whimsical resemblance to a funeral sermon, not only in the pathetic prayer with which it concludes, but in the style and tenour of the whole performance. It is piteously doleful, nodding every now and then towards dulness; well stored with pious frauds, and, like most discourses of the sort, much better calculated for the private advantage of the preacher than the edification of the hearers.

The author has indeed so involved his subject that it is frequently far from being easy to comprehend his meaning. It is happy for the public that it is never difficult to fathom his design. The apparent intention of this author is to draw the most aggravated, hideous and deformed picture of the state of this country, which his querulous eloquence, aided by the arbitrary dominion he assumes over fact, is capable of exhibiting. Had he attributed our misfortunes to their true cause, the injudicious tampering

B 2

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

tampering of bold, improvident, and visionary ministers at one period, or to their supine negligence and traitorous dissentions at another, the complaint had been just, and might have been useful. But far the greater and much the worst part of the state which he exhibits is owing, according to his representation, not to accidental and extrinsic mischiefs attendant on the nation, but to its radical weakness, and constitutional distempers. All this however is not without purpose. The author is in hopes that when we are fallen into a fanatical terror for the national salvation, we shall then be ready to throw ourselves, in a sort of precipitate trust, some strange disposition of the mind jumbled up of presumption and despair, into the hands of the most pretending and forward undertaker. One such undertaker at least he has in readiness for our service. But let me assure this generous person, that, however he may succeed in exciting our fears for the public danger, he will find it hard indeed to engage us to place any confidence in the system he proposes for its security.

His undertaking is great. The purpose of this pamphlet, and at which it aims directly or obliquely in every page, is to persuade the public of three or four of the most difficult points in the world— that all the advantages of the late war were on the part of the Bourbon alliance; that the peace of Paris perfectly consulted the dignity and interest of this country; and that the American Stamp-act was a master piece of policy and finance; that the only good minister this nation has enjoyed since his majesty's accession, is the earl of Bute; and the only good managers of revenue we have seen are lord Despenfer and Mr. George Grenville; and under the description of men of virtue and ability, he holds them out to us as the only persons fit to put our affairs in order. Let not the reader mistake me; he does not actually name these persons; but having highly applauded their conduct in all its parts, and heavily censured every other set of men in the kingdom, he then recommends us to his men of virtue and ability.

Such is the author's scheme. Whether it will answer his purpose, I know not. But surely that purpose ought to be a wonderfully good one to warrant the methods he has taken to compass it. If the facts and reasonings in this piece are admitted, it is all over with us. The continuance of our tranquillity depends upon the compassion of our rivals. Unable to secure to ourselves the advantages of peace, we are at the same time utterly unfit for war. It is impossible, if this state of things be credited abroad, that we can have any alliance; all nations will fly from so dangerous a connection, lest, instead of being partakers of our strength, they should only become sharers in our ruin. If it is believed at home, all that firmness of mind, and dignified national courage, which used to

STATE OF THE NATION.

be the great support of this isle against the powers of the world, must melt away, and fail within us.

In such a state of things can it be amiss, if I aim at holding out some comfort to the nation; another sort of comfort indeed, than that which this writer provides for it; a comfort, not from its physician, but from its constitution; if I attempt to shew that all the arguments upon which he founds the decay of that constitution, and the necessity of that physician, are vain and frivolous? I will follow the author closely in his own long career, through the war, the peace, the finances, our trade, and our foreign politicks: not for the sake of the particular measures, which he discusses; that can be of no use; they are all decided; their good is all enjoyed, or their evil incurred: but for the sake of the principles of war, peace, trade, and finances. These principles are of infinite moment. They must come again and again under consideration; and it imports the public, of all things, that those of its minister be enlarged, and just, and well confirmed upon all these subjects. What notions this author entertains, we shall see presently; notions in my opinion very irrational, and extremely dangerous; and which, if they should crawl from pamphlets into counsels, and be realized from private speculation into national measures, cannot fail of hastening and completing our ruin.

This author, after having paid his compliment to the shewy appearances of the late war in our favour, is in the utmost haste to tell you that these appearances were *fallacious*, that they were no more than an *imposition*. — I fear I must trouble the reader with a pretty long quotation, in order to set before him the more clearly this author's peculiar way of conceiving and reasoning:

“ Happily (the K.) was then advised by ministers, who did not suffer themselves to be dazzled by the glare of brilliant appearances; but, knowing them to be *fallacious*, they wisely resolved to profit of their splendour before our enemies should also *discover the imposition*. — The increase in the exports was found to have been occasioned chiefly by the demands of *our own fleets and armies*, and, instead of bringing wealth to the nation, were to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England. While the British seamen were consuming on board our men of war and privateers, foreign ships and foreign seamen were employed in the transportation of our merchandize; and the carrying trade, so great a source of wealth and marine, *was intirely engrossed by the neutral nations*. The number of British ships annually arriving in our ports was reduced to 1756 sail, containing 92,559 tons, on a medium of the six years war, compared with the six years of peace preceding it. — The conquest of the Havannah had, indeed, stopped the remittance of specie from Mexico to Spain; but it had not enabled

“ England

“ England to seize it: on the contrary, our merchants suffered by the
 “ detention of the galleons, as their *correspondents in Spain were disabled*
 “ *from paying them for their goods sent to America. The loss of the trade*
 “ *to Old Spain was a farther bar to an influx of specie; and the attempt*
 “ upon Portugal had not only deprived us of an import of bullion from
 “ thence, but the payment of our troops employed in its defence was a
 “ fresh drain opened for the diminution of our circulating specie. --- The
 “ high premiums given for new loans had sunk the price of the old stock
 “ near a third of its original value, so that the purchasers had an obliga-
 “ tion from the state to repay them with an addition of 33 per cent. to
 “ their capital. Every new loan required new taxes to be imposed;
 “ new taxes must add to the price of our manufactures, and lessen their
 “ consumption among foreigners. The decay of our trade must necessarily
 “ occasion a decrease of the public revenue; and a deficiency of our funds
 “ must either be made up by fresh taxes, which would only add to the
 “ calamity, or our national credit must be destroyed, by shewing the
 “ public creditors the inability of the nation to repay them their
 “ principal money. --- Bounties had already been given for recruits which
 “ exceeded the year's wages of the plowman and reaper; and as these
 “ were exhausted, and husbandry stood still for want of hands, the manu-
 “ facturers were next to be tempted to quit the anvil and the loom by
 “ higher offers. --- France, bankrupt France, had no such calamities impend-
 “ ing over her; her distresses were great, but they were immediate and tem-
 “ porary; her want of credit preserved her from a great increase of debt,
 “ and the loss of her ultra-marine dominions lessened her expences. Her
 “ colonies had, indeed, put themselves into the hands of the English; but the
 “ property of her subjects had been preserved by capitulations, and a way opened
 “ for making her those remittances, which the war had before suspended, with
 “ as much security as in time of peace. --- Her armies in Germany had been
 “ hitherto prevented from seizing upon Hanover; but they continued
 “ to encamp on the same ground on which the first battle was fought;
 “ and, as it must ever happen from the policy of that government, the
 “ last troops she sent into the field were always found to be the best, and her
 “ frequent losses only served to fill her regiments with better soldiers. The
 “ conquest of Hanover became therefore every campaign more probable. It
 “ is to be noted, that the French troops received subsistence only, for the
 “ last three years of the war; and that although large arrears were due
 “ to them at its conclusion, the charge was the less during its con-
 “ tinuance ^b.”

^b P. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

If

If any one be willing to see to how much greater lengths the author carries these ideas, he will recur to the book. This is sufficient for a specimen of his manner of thinking. I believe one reflection uniformly obtrudes itself upon every reader of these paragraphs. For what purpose in any cause shall we hereafter contend with France? can we ever flatter ourselves that we shall wage a more successful war? If, on our part, in a war the most prosperous we ever carried on, by sea and by land, and in every part of the globe, attended with the unparalleled circumstance of an immense increase of trade and augmentation of revenue; if a continued series of disappointments, disgraces, and defeats, followed by public bankruptcy on the part of France, if all these still leave her a gainer on the whole balance, will it not be downright phrenzy in us ever to look her in the face again, or to contend with her any, even the most essential points, since victory and defeat, though by different ways equally conduct us to our ruin? Subjection to France without a struggle will indeed be less for our honour, but on every principle of our author it must be more for our advantage. According to his representation of things, the question is only concerning the most easy fall. France had not discovered, our statesman tells us, at the end of that war the triumphs of defeat, and the resources which are derived from bankruptcy. For my poor part, I do not altogether wonder at their blindness. But the English ministers saw further. Our author has at length let foreigners also into the secret, and made them altogether as wise as ourselves. It is their own fault if (*vulgato imperii arcano*) they are imposed upon any longer. They now are apprized of the sentiments which the great candidate for the government of this great empire entertains; and they will act accordingly. They are taught our weakness and their own advantages.

He tells the world, that if France carries on the war against us in Germany, every loss she sustains contributes to the achievement of her conquest. If her armies are three years unpaid, she is the less exhausted by expence. If her credit is destroyed, she is the less oppressed with debt. If her troops are cut to pieces, they will by her policy (and a wonderful policy it is) be improved, and will be supplied with much better men. If the war is carried on in the colonies, he tells them that the loss of her ultramarine dominions lessens her expences, and encreases her remittances: P. 9, 10.

*Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
 Ducit opes animumque ferro.*

If so, what is it we can do to hurt her? --- It will be all an imposition, all fallacious. Why the result must be --- *Occidit, occidit spes omnis & fortuna nostri nominis.* P. 1.

The only way which the author's principles leave for our escape, is to reverse our condition into that of France, and to take her losing cards into our hands. But, though his principles drive him to it, his politicks will not suffer him to walk on this ground. Talking at our ease and of other countries, we may bear to be diverted with such speculations; but in England we shall never be taught to look upon the annihilation of our trade, the ruin of our credit, the defeat of our armies, and the loss of our ultramarine dominions (whatever the author may think of them), to be the high road to prosperity and greatness.

The reader does not, I hope, imagine that I mean seriously to set about the refutation of these uningenious paradoxes and reveries without imagination. I state them only that we may discern a little in the questions of war and peace, the most weighty of all questions, what is the wisdom of those men, who are held out to us as the only hope of an expiring nation. The present ministry is indeed of a strange character: at once indolent and distracted. But if a ministerial system should be formed actuated by such maxims as are avowed in this piece, the vices of the present ministry would become their virtues; their indolence would be the greatest of all public benefits, and a distraction that entirely defeated every one of their schemes would be our only security from destruction.

To have stated these reasonings is enough, I presume, to do their business. But they are accompanied with facts and records, which may seem of a little more weight. I trust however that the facts of this author will be as far from bearing the touchstone, as his arguments. On a little inquiry, they will be found as great an imposition as the successes they are meant to depreciate; for they are all either false or fallaciously applied; or not in the least to the purpose for which they are produced.

First the author, in order to support his favourite paradox, that our possession of the French colonies was of no detriment to France, has thought proper to inform us that "they put themselves into the hands of the English." He uses the same assertion, in nearly the same words, in another place; "Her colonies had put themselves into our hands." Now, in justice not only to fact and common sense, but to the incomparable valour and perseverance of our military and naval forces thus unhandisomely traduced, I must tell this author, that the French colonies did not "put themselves into the hands of the English." They were compelled to submit; they were subdued by dint of English valour. Will the five years war carried on in Canada, in which fell one of the principal hopes of this nation; and all the battles lost and gained during that anxious period, convince this author of his mistake. Let him inquire of Sir Jeffery Amherst, under whose conduct that war was carried

carried on; of Sir Charles Saunders, whose steadiness and presence of mind saved our fleet, and were so eminently serviceable in the whole course of the siege of Quebec; of General Monkton, who was shot through the body there, whether France "put her colonies into the hands of the English?"

Though he has made no exception, yet I would be liberal to him; perhaps he means to confine himself to her colonies in the West Indies. But surely it will fare as ill with him there as in North America, whilst we remember that in our first attempt on Martinico we were actually defeated; that it was three months before we reduced Guadaloupe; and that the conquest of the Havannah was achieved by the highest conduct, aided by circumstances of the greatest good fortune. He knows the expence both of men and treasure at which we bought that place. However, if it had so pleased the peace-makers, it was no dear purchase; for it was decisive of the fortune of the war and the terms of the treaty: the duke of Nivernois thought so; France, England, Europe, considered it in that light; all the world except the then friends of the then ministry, who wept for our victories, and were in haste to get rid of the burthen of our conquests. This author knows that France did not put those colonies into the hands of England; but he well knows who did put the most valuable of them into the hands of France.

In the next place our author is pleased to consider the conquest of these colonies in no other light than as a convenience for the remittances to France, which he asserts that the war had before suspended, but for which a way was opened (by our conquest) as secure as in time of peace. I charitably hope he knows nothing of the subject. I referred him lately to our commanders for the resistance of the French colonies; I now wish he would apply to our custom-house entries, and our merchants, for the advantages which we derived from them.

In 1761, there was no entry of goods from any of the conquered places but Guadaloupe; in that year, it stood thus:

Imports from Guadaloupe,	£. value, 482.179
In 1762, when we had not yet delivered up our conquests,	-----
the account was,	
Guadaloupe,	513.244
Martinico,	288.425
Total imports,	£. 801.669

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

In 1763, after we had delivered up the sovereignty of these islands, but kept open a communication with them, the imports were,

Guadaloupe,	£.
Martinico,	412.303
Havannah,	334.161
	249.386
Total imports in 1763,	value, £. 1.005.850

Besides, I find in the account of bullion imported and brought to the Bank, that, during the period in which the intercourse with the Havannah was open, we received at that one shop, in treasure, from that one place, £. 559.810; in the year 1763, £. 389.450; so that the import from these places in that year amounted to £. 1.395.300.

On this state the reader will observe, that I take the imports from, and not the exports to, these conquests, as the measure of the advantages which we derived from them. I do so for reasons which will be somewhat worthy the attention of such readers as are fond of this species of inquiry. I say therefore I choose the import article, as the best, and indeed the only standard we can have, of the value of the West India trade. Our export entry does not comprehend the greatest trade we carry on with any of the West India islands, the sale of negroes; nor does it give any idea of two other advantages we draw from them; the remittances for money spent here, and the payment of part of the balance of the North American trade. It is therefore quite ridiculous, to strike a balance merely on the face of an excess of imports and exports, in that commerce; though, in most foreign branches, it is, on the whole, the best method. If we should take that standard, it would appear, that the balance with our own islands is, annually, several hundred thousand pounds against this country*. Such is its aspect on the custom-house entries; but we know the direct contrary to be the fact. We know that the West Indians are always

* Total imports from the West Indies in 1764,	£.
Exports to ditto in ditto,	2.909.411
	896.511
Excess of imports,	£. 2.012.900

In this, which is the common way of stating the balance, it will appear upwards of two millions against us; which is ridiculous.

indebted

STATE OF THE NATION.

indebted to our merchants, and that the value of every shilling of West India produce is English property. So that our import from them, and not our export, ought always to be considered as their true value; and this corrective ought to be applied to all general balances of our trade, which are formed on the ordinary principles.

If possible, this was more emphatically true of the French West India islands, whilst they continued in our hands. That none, or only a very contemptible part, of the value of this produce, could be remitted to France, the author will see, perhaps with unwillingness, but with the clearest conviction, if he considers, that in the year 1763, after we had ceased to export to the isles of Guadaloupe and Martinico, and to the Havannah, and after the colonies were free, to send all their produce to Old France and Spain, if they had any remittance to make; he will see, that we imported from these places, in that year, to the amount of £. 1.395.300. So far was the whole annual produce of these islands from being adequate to the payments of their annual call upon us, that this mighty additional importation was necessary, though not quite sufficient, to discharge the debts contracted in the few years we held them. The property, therefore, of their whole produce, was ours, not only during the war, but even for more than a year after the peace. The author, I hope, will not again venture upon so rash and discouraging a proposition, concerning the nature and effect of these conquests, as to call them a convenience to the remittances of France; he sees by this account, that what he asserts, is not only without foundation, but even impossible to be true.

As to our trade at that time, he labours with all his might to represent it as absolutely ruined, or on the very edge of ruin. Indeed, as usual with him, he is often as equivocal in his expression, as he is clear in his design. Sometimes he more than insinuates a decay of our commerce in that war; sometimes he admits an increase of exports; but it is in order to depreciate the advantages we might appear to derive from that increase, whenever it should come to be proved against him. He tells you, P. 6. "that it was chiefly occasioned by the demands of our own fleets and armies, and instead of bringing wealth to the nation, were to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England." Never was any thing more destitute of foundation. It might be proved with the greatest ease, from the nature and quality of the goods exported, as well as from the situation of the places to which our merchandise was sent, and which the war could no ways affect, that the supply of our fleets and armies could not have been the cause of this wonderful increase of trade: its cause was evident to the whole world; the ruin of the trade of France, and our possession of her colonies. What wonderful effects this cause produced,

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

produced, the reader will see below^d; and he will form on that account some judgment of the authors candour or information.

Admit however that a great part of our export, which is the remotest in the world from fact, was owing to our supply of our fleets and armies; was it not something? — was it not peculiarly fortunate for a nation, that she was able from her own bosom to contribute largely to the supply of her armies militating in so many distant countries? The author allows that France did not enjoy the same advantages. But it is remarkable throughout his whole book, that those circumstances which have ever been considered as great benefits, and decisive proofs of national superiority, are, when in our hands, taken either in diminution of some other apparent advantage, or even sometimes as positive misfortunes. The optics of that politician must be of a strange conformation, who beholds every thing in this distorted light.

So far as to our trade. With regard to our navigation, he is still more uneasy at our situation, and still more fallacious in his state of it. In his text, he affirms it “to have been *entirely* engrossed by the neutral nations.” This he asserts roundly and boldly, and without the least concern; although it cost no more than a single glance of the eye upon his own margin to see the full refutation of this assertion. His own account proves against him, that in the year 1761 the British shipping amounted to 527,557 tons—the foreign to no more than 180,102. The medium

	1754			1761		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
^d Total export of British goods, value,	*8.317.506	15	3	*10.649.581	12	6
Ditto of foreign goods in time,	2.910.836	14	9	3.553.692	7	1
Ditto of ditto out of time,	559.485	2	10	355.015	0	2
Total exports of all kinds,	11.787.828	12	10	14.558.288	19	9
Total imports,	8.093.472	15	0	9.294.915	1	6
Balance in favour of England,	£. 3.694.355	17	10	£. 5.263.373	18	3

Here is the state of our trade in 1761, compared with a very good year of profound peace: both are taken from the authentic entries of the custom-house. How the author can contrive to make this encrease of the export of English produce agree with his account of the dreadful want of hands in England, p. 9, unless he supposes manufactures to be made without hands, I really do not see. It is painful to be so frequently obliged to set this author right in matters of fact. This state will fully refute all that he has said or insinuated upon the difficulties and decay of our trade, p. 6, 7, and 9.

^d P. 7. See also p. 13.

of

STATE OF THE NATION.

of his six years British, 2,449,555 tons — foreign only, 906,600. This state (his own) demonstrates that the neutral nations did not *entirely* engross our navigation.

I am willing from a strain of candour to admit that this author speaks at random; that he is only slovenly and inaccurate, and not fallacious. In matters of account, however, this want of care is not excusable: and the difference between neutral nations entirely engrossing our navigation, and being only subsidiary to a vastly augmented trade, makes a most material difference to his argument. From that principle of fairness, though the author speaks otherwise, I am willing to suppose he means no more than that our navigation had so declined as to alarm us with the probable loss of this valuable object. I shall however shew, that his whole proposition, whatever modifications he may please to give it, is without foundation; that our navigation was not decreased; that on the contrary it was greatly encreased in the war; that it was encreased by the war; and that it was probable the same cause would continue to augment it to a still greater height; to what an height it is hard to say, had our success continued.

But first I must observe, I am much less solicitous whether his fact be true or no, than whether his principle is well established. Cases are dead things, principles are living and productive. I then affirm that, if in time of war our trade had the good fortune to encrease, and at the same time a large, nay the largest, proportion of carriage had been engrossed by neutral nations, it ought not in itself to have been considered as a circumstance of distress. War is a time of inconvenience to trade; in general it must be straitened, and must find its way as it can. It is often happy for nations that they are able to call in neutral navigation. They all aim at it. France endeavoured at it, but could not compass it. Will this author say, that, in a war with Spain, such a convenience would not be of absolute necessity, that it would not be the most gross of all follies to refuse it?

In the next place, his method of stating a medium of six years of war, and six years of peace, to decide this question, is altogether unfair. To say, in derogation of the advantages of a war, that navigation is not equal to what it was in time of peace, is what hitherto has never been heard of. No war ever bore that test but the war which he so bitterly laments. One may lay it down as a maxim, that an average estimate of an object in a steady course of rising or of falling, must in its nature be an unfair one; more particularly if the cause of the rise or fall be visible, and its continuance in any degree probable. Average estimates are never just but when the object fluctuates; and no reason can be assigned why it should not continue still to fluctuate. The author chuses to allow nothing

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

at all for this: he has taken an average of six years of the war. He knew, for every body knows, that the first three years were on the whole rather unsuccessful; and that, in consequence of this ill success, trade funk, and navigation declined with it; but *that grand delusion* of the three last years turned the scale in our favour. At the beginning of that war (as in the commencement of every war), traders were struck with a sort of panic. Many went out of the freighting business. But by degrees, as the war continued, the terror wore off; the danger came to be better appreciated, and better provided against; our trade was carried on in large fleets, under regular conduct, and with great safety. The freighting business revived. The ships were fewer, but much larger; and though the number decreased, the tonnage was vastly augmented; inasmuch that in 1761 the *British* shipping had risen by the author's own account to 527,557 tons. — In the last year he has given us of the peace it amounted to no more than 494,772; that is, in the last year of the war it was 32,785 tons more than in the correspondent year of his peace average. No year of the peace exceeded it except one, and that but little.

The fair account of the matter is this. Our trade had, as we have just seen, increased to so astonishing a degree in 1761, as to employ British and foreign ships to the amount of 707,659 tons, which is 139,500 more than we employed in the last year of the peace. — Thus our trade increased nearly a fifth; our British navigation had increased likewise with this astonishing increase of trade, but was not able to keep pace with it; and we added about 60,000 ton more of foreign shipping than had been employed in the last year of peace. — Whatever happened to our shipping in the former years of the war, this would be no true state of the case at the time of the treaty. If we had lost something in the beginning, we had then recovered, and more than recovered, all our losses. Here is the subject of the doleful complaints of the author, that *the carrying trade was wholly engrossed by the neutral nations*.

I have done fairly, and even very moderately, in taking this year, and not his average, as the standard of what might be expected in future, had the war continued. The author will be compelled to allow it, unless he undertakes to shew; first, that the possession of Canada, Martinico, Guadaloupe, Granada, the Havannah, the Philippines, the whole African trade, the whole East India trade, and the whole Newfoundland fishery, had no certain inevitable tendency to increase the British shipping; unless, in the second place, he can prove that those trades were, or might by law or indulgence, be carried on in foreign vessels: and unless, thirdly, he can demonstrate that the premium of insurance on British ships was rising as the war continued. He can prove not one of these points.

I will

STATE OF THE NATION.

I will shew him a fact more, that is mortal to his assertions. It is the state of our shipping in 1762. The author had his reasons for stopping short at the preceding year. It would have appeared, had he proceeded farther, that our tonnage was in a course of uniform augmentation, owing to the freights derived from our foreign conquests, and to the perfect security of our navigation from our clear and decided superiority at sea. This, I say, would have appeared from the state of the two years:

1761. British, 527.557 tons.		Foreign, 180.102 tons.
1762. D°, 559.537 tons.		D°, 129.502 tons.

The two best years of the peace were in no degree equal to these. Much of the navigation of 1763 was also owing to the war; this is manifest from the large part of it employed in the carriage from the ceded islands, with which the communication still continued open. No such circumstances of glory and advantage ever attended upon a war. Too happy will be our lot, if we should again be forced into a war, to behold any thing that shall resemble them; and if we were not then the better for them, it is not in the ordinary course of God's providence to mend our condition.

In vain does the author declaim on the high premiums given for the loans during that war. His long note swelled with calculations (even P. 82. supposing the most inaccurate of all calculations to be just) on that subject would be entirely thrown away, did it not serve to raise a wonderful opinion of his financial skill in those who are not less surprised than edified, when, with a solemn face and mysterious air, they are told that two and two make four. For what else do we learn from this note? That the more expence that is incurred by a nation, the more money will be required to defray it; that, in proportion to the continuance of that expence, will be the continuance of borrowing; that the increase of borrowing and the increase of debt will go hand in hand; and lastly, that the more money you want, the harder it will be to get it; and that the scarcity of the commodity will enhance the price. Who ever doubted the truth, or the insignificance, of these propositions? what do they prove? that war is expensive, and peace desirable. They contain nothing more than a common-place against war; the easiest of all topics. To bring them home to his purpose, he ought to have shewn, that our enemies had money upon better terms; which he has not shewn, neither can he. I shall speak more fully to this point in another place. He ought to have shewn, that the money they raised, upon whatever terms, had procured them a more lucrative return. He knows that our expenditure purchased commerce and conquest; theirs acquired nothing but defeat and bankruptcy.

3

Thus

Thus the author has laid down his ideas on the subject of war. Next follow those he entertains on that of peace. The treaty of Paris upon the whole has his approbation. Indeed, if his account of the war be just, he might have spared himself all further trouble. The rest is drawn on as an inevitable conclusion. If the House of Bourbon had the advantage, she must give the law; and the peace, though it were much worse than it is, had still been a good one. But as the world is yet *deluded* on the state of that war, other arguments are necessary; and the author has in my opinion very ill supplied them. He tells of many things we have got, and of which he has made out a kind of bill. This matter may be brought within a very narrow compass, if we come to consider the requisites of a good peace under some plain distinct heads. I apprehend they may be reduced to these: 1. stability; 2. indemnification; 3. alliance.

As to the first, the author more than obscurely hints in several places; that he thinks the peace not likely to last. However, he does furnish a security; a security, in any light, I fear, but insufficient; on his hypothesis surely a very odd one. "By stipulating for the entire possession of the continent, (says he) the restored French islands are become in some measure dependent on the British empire, and the good faith of France in observing the treaty is guaranteed by the value at which she estimates their possession." This author soon grows weary of his principles. They seldom last him for two pages together. When the advantages of the war were to be depreciated, then the loss of the ultramarine colonies lightened the expences of France, facilitated her remittances, and therefore *her colonists put them into our hands*. According to this author's system, the actual possession of those colonies ought to give us little or no advantage in the negotiation for peace; and yet the chance of possessing them on a future occasion gives a perfect security for the preservation of that peace. The conquest of the Havannah, if it did not serve Spain, rather distressed England, says our author. But the molestation which her galleons may suffer from our station in Pensacola gives us advantages, for which we were not allowed to credit the nation for the Havannah itself; a place surely full as well situated for every external purpose as Pensacola, and of a little more internal benefit than ten thousand Pensacolas.

^f "Our merchants suffered by the detention of the galleons, as their correspondents in Spain were disabled from paying them for their goods sent to America." State of the Nation, p. 7.

The

The author sets very little by conquests; I suppose it is because he makes them so very lightly. On this subject he speaks with the greatest certainty imaginable. We have, according to him, nothing to do, but to go and take possession, whenever we think proper, of the French and Spanish settlements. It were better that he had examined a little what advantage the peace gave us towards the invasion of these colonies, which we did not possess before the peace. It would not have been amiss if he had consulted the public experience, and our commanders, concerning the absolute certainty of those conquests on which he is pleased to found our security. And if, after all, he should have discovered them to be so very sure, and so very easy, he might, at least, to preserve consistency, have looked a few pages back, and (no unpleasing thing to him) listened to himself, where he says, "that the most successful enterprise could not compensate to the nation for the waste of its people, by carrying on war in unhealthy climates." A position which he repeats again, p. 9. So that, according to himself, his security is not worth the suit. According to fact, he has only a chance, God knows what a chance, of getting at it. And therefore, according to reason, the giving up the most valuable of all possessions, in hopes to conquer them back, under any advantage of situation, is the most ridiculous security that ever was imagined for the peace of a nation. It is true his friends did not give up Canada; they could not give up every thing; let us make the most of it. We have Canada, we know its value. We have not the French any longer to fight in North America; and, from this circumstance, we derive considerable advantages. But here let me rest a little. The author touches upon a string, which sounds under his fingers but a tremulous and melancholy note. — North America was once indeed a great strength to this nation, in opportunity of ports, in ships, in provisions, in men. We found her a sound, an active, a vigorous member of the empire. I hope, by wise management, she will again become so. But one of our capital present misfortunes is, her discontent and disobedience. To which of the author's favourites this discontent is owing, we all know but too sufficiently. — It would be a dismal event, if this foundation of his security, and indeed of all our public strength, should, in reality, become our weakness: and if all the powers of this empire, which ought to fall with a compacted weight upon the head of our enemies, should be dissipated and distracted by a jealous vigilance, or by hostile attempts upon one another. Ten Canadas cannot restore that security for the peace, and for every thing valuable to this country, which we have lost along with the affection and the obedience of our colonies. He is the wise minister, he is the true friend to Britain, who shall be able to restore it.

D

To

P. 12. To return to the security for the peace. The author tells us, that the original great purposes of the war were more than accomplished by the treaty. Surely he has experience and reading enough to know that, in the course of a war, events may happen, that render its original very far from being its principal purpose. This original may dwindle by circumstances so as to become not a purpose of the second or even the third magnitude. I trust this is so obvious, that it will not be necessary to put cases for its illustration. In that war, as soon as Spain entered into the quarrel, the security of North-America was no longer the sole nor the foremost object. The *Family compact* had been I know not how long before in agitation. But then it was that we saw produced into daylight and action the most odious and most formidable of all the conspiracies against the liberties of Europe, that ever has been framed. The war with Spain was the first fruits of that league; and a security against that league ought to have been the fundamental point of a pacification with the powers who compose it. We had materials in our hands to have constructed that security in such a manner as never to be shaken. But how did the virtuous and able men of our author labour for this great end? They took no one step towards it. On the contrary they countenanced, and indeed, as far as it depended on them, recognized it in all its parts; for our plenipotentiary treated with those who acted for the two crowns, as if they had been different ministers of the same monarch. The Spanish minister received his instructions, not from Madrid, but from Versailles.

This was not hid from our ministers at home, and the discovery ought to have alarmed them, if the good of their country had been the object of their anxiety. They could not but have seen that the whole Spanish monarchy was melted down into the cabinet of Versailles. But they thought this circumstance an advantage; as it enabled them to go through with their work the more expeditiously. Expedition was every thing to them; because France might happen during a protracted negotiation to discover the great imposition of our victories.

In the same spirit they negotiated the terms of the peace. If it were thought advisable not to take any positive security from Spain, the most obvious principles of policy dictated that the burthen of the cessions ought to fall upon France; and that every thing which was of grace and favour should be given to Spain. Spain could not, on her part, have executed a capital article in the family compact, which obliged her to compensate the losses of France. At least she could not do it in America; for she was expressly precluded by the treaty of Utrecht from ceding any territory or giving any advantage in trade to that power. What did our ministers? They took from Spain the territory of Florida, an object of no value except to shew

our

our dispositions to be quite equal at least towards both powers; and they enabled France to compensate Spain by the gift of Louisiana; loading us with all the harshness, leaving the act of kindness with France, and opening thereby a door to the fulfilling of this the most consolidating article of the family compact. Accordingly that dangerous league, thus abetted and authorized by the English ministry without an attempt to invalidate it in any way, or in any of its parts, exists to this hour; and has grown stronger and stronger, every hour of its existence.

As to the second component of a good peace, *compensation*, I have but little trouble; the author has said nothing upon that head. He has nothing to say. After a war of such expence, this ought to have been a capital consideration. But on what he has been so prudently silent, I think it is right to speak plainly. All our new acquisitions together, at this time, scarce afford matter of revenue either at home or abroad, sufficient to defray the expence of their establishments; not one shilling towards the reduction of our debt. Guadeloupe or Martinico alone would have given us material aid; much in the way of duties, much in the way of trade and navigation. A good ministry would have considered how a renewal of the *Assiento* might have been obtained. We had as much right to ask it at the treaty of Paris as at the treaty of Utrecht. We had incomparably more in our hands to purchase it. Floods of treasure would have poured into this kingdom from such a source; and, under proper management, no small part of it would have taken a public direction, and have fructified an exhausted exchequer.

If this gentleman's hero of finance, instead of flying from a treaty, which though he now defends, he could not approve, and would not oppose, if he, instead of shifting into an office, which removed him from the manufacture of the treaty, had, by his credit with the then great director, acquired for us these, or any of these objects, the possession of Guadeloupe or Martinique, or of the renewal of the *Assiento*, he might have held his head high in his country; because he would have performed real service; ten thousand times more real service, than all the oeconomy of which this writer is perpetually talking, or all the little tricks of finance, which the expertest juggler of the treasury can practise, could amount to in a thousand years. But the occasion is lost; the time is gone, perhaps, for ever.

As to the third requisite, *alliance*, there too the author is silent. What strength of that kind did they acquire? They got no one new ally; they stript the enemy of not a single old one. They disgusted (how justly, or unjustly, matters not) every ally we had; and, from that time to this, we stand friendless in Europe. But of this naked condition of their country, I

D 2

know

know some people are not ashamed. They have their system of politics; our ancestors grew great by another. In this manner these virtuous men concluded the peace; and their practice is only consonant to their theory.

Many things more might be observed on this curious head of our author's speculations. But, taking leave of what the writer says in his serious part, if he be serious in any part, I shall only just point out a piece of his pleasantry. No man, I believe, ever denied that the time for making peace is that in which the best terms may be obtained. But what that time is, together with the use that has been made of it, we are to judge by seeing whether terms, adequate to our advantages, and to our necessities, have been actually obtained. — Here is the pinch of the question, and to which the author ought to have set his shoulders in earnest. Instead of doing this, he slips out of the harness by a jest; and sneeringly tells us, that, to determine this point, we must know the secrets of the French and Spanish cabinets^g, and that parliament was pleased to approve the treaty of peace without calling for the correspondence concerning it. How just this sarcasm on that parliament may be, I say not; but how becoming in the author, I leave it to his friends to determine.

Having thus gone through the questions of war and peace, the author proceeds to state our debt, and the interest which it carried, at the time of the treaty, with the unfairness and inaccuracy, however, which distinguish all his assertions, and all his calculations. To detect every fallacy, and rectify every mistake, would be endless. It will be enough to point out a few of them, in order to shew how unsafe it is to place any thing like an implicit trust in such a writer.

The interest of debt contracted during the war, is stated by the author at £. 2,614,892. The particulars appear in pages 14 and 15. Among them is stated the unfunded debt, £. 9,975,017 supposed to carry interest on a medium at 3 per cent. which amounts to £. 299,250. We are referred to the *Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom*, p. 22, for the particulars of that unfunded debt. Turn to the work, and to the place referred to by the author himself, if you have a mind to see a clear detection of a capital fallacy of this article in his account. You will there see that this unfunded debt consists of the nine following articles; the remaining subsidy to the duke of Brunswick; the remaining

^g Something however has transpired in the quarrels among those concerned in that transaction. It seems the *good Genius* of Britain, so much vaunted by our author, did his duty nobly. Whilst we were gaining such advantages, the court of France was astonished at our concessions. "J'ai apporté à Versailles, il est vrai, les ratifications du Roi d'Angleterre à votre grand étonnement, et à celui de bien d'autres. Je dois cela au bontés du Roi d'Angleterre, à celles de Milord Bute, à Monf. le Comte de Viry, à Monf. le Duc de Nivernois, et à fin à mon sçavoir faire." Lettres, &c. du Chev. D'Eon, p. 51.

dedommagement

dedommagement to the landgrave of Hesse; the German demands; the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the deficiencies of grants and funds; Mr. Touchit's claim; the debts due to Nova Scotia and Barbadoes; Exchequer bills; and Navy debt. The extreme fallacy of this state cannot escape any reader who will be at the pains to compare the interest money, with which he affirms us to have been loaded, in his *State of the Nation*, with the items of the principal debt to which he refers in his *Considerations*. The reader must observe, that of this long list of nine articles, only two, the Exchequer bills, and part of the Navy debt, carried any interest at all. The first amounted to £. 1,800,000; and this undoubtedly carried interest. The whole navy debt indeed amounted to £. 4,576,915; but of this only a *part* carried interest. The author of the *Considerations*, &c. labours to prove this very point in p. 18; and Mr. G. has always defended himself upon the same ground, for the insufficient provision he made for the discharge of that debt. The reader may see their own authority for it^h.

Mr. G. did in fact provide no more than £. 2,150,000 for the discharge of these bills in two years. It is much to be wished that these gentlemen would lay their heads together, that they would consider well this matter, and agree upon something. For when the scanty provision made for the unfunded debt is to be vindicated, then we are told it is a very *small part* of that debt which carries interest. But when the public state is to be represented in a miserable condition, and the consequences of the late war to be laid before us in dreadful colours, then we are to be told that the unfunded debt is within a trifle of ten millions, and so large a portion of it carries interest that we must not compute less than 3 per cent. upon the *whole*.

In the year 1764, parliament voted £. 650,000 towards the discharge of the navy debt. This sum could not be applied solely to the discharge of bills carrying interest: because part of the debt due on seamens wages must have been paid, and some bills carried no interest at all. Notwith-

^h "The navy bills are not due till six months after they have been issued; six months also of the seamens wages by act of parliament must be, and, in consequence of the rules prescribed by that act, twelve months wages generally, and often much more, are retained; and there has been besides at all times a large arrear of pay, which, though kept in the account, could never be claimed, the persons to whom it was due having left neither assignees nor representatives. The precise amount of such sums cannot be ascertained; but they can hardly be reckoned less than 13 or 14 hundred thousand pounds. On 31st Dec. 1754, when the navy debt was reduced nearly as low as it could be, it still amounted to 1,296,567 l. 18 s. 11 d. consisting chiefly of articles which could not then be discharged; such articles will be larger now, in proportion to the increase of the establishment; and an allowance must always be made for them in judging of the state of the navy debt, though they are not distinguishable in the account. In providing for that which is payable, the principal object of the legislature is always to discharge the bills for they are the greatest article; they bear an interest of 4 per Cent.; and, when the quantity of them is large, they are a heavy incumbrance upon all money transactions."

standing

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

standing this, we find by an account in the Journals of the H. of C. in the following session, that the navy debt carrying interest was on the 31st of December 1764 no more than £. 1.687.442. I am sure therefore that I admit too much when I admit the navy debt carrying interest, after the creation of the navy annuities in the year 1763 to have been £. 2.200.000. Add the exchequer bills, and the whole unfunded debt carrying interest will be four millions instead of ten; and the annual interest paid for it at 4 per cent. will be £. 160.000 instead of £. 299.250. An error of no small magnitude, and which could not have been owing to inadvertency.

The misrepresentation of the encrease of the peace establishment is still more extraordinary than that of the interest on the unfunded debt. The encrease is great undoubtedly. However, the author finds no fault with it, and urges it only as a matter of argument to support the strange chimerical proposals he is to make us in the close of his work for the encrease of revenue. The greater he made that establishment, the stronger he expected to stand in argument: but, whatever he expected or proposed, he should have stated the matter fairly. He tells us that this establishment is near £. 1.500.000 more than it was in 1752, 1753, and other years of peace. This he has done in his usual manner, by assertion, without troubling himself either with proof or probability. For he has not given us any state of the peace establishment in the years 1753 and 1754, the time which he means to compare with the present. As I am obliged to force him to that precision, from which he always flies as from his most dangerous enemy, I have been at the trouble to search the Journals in the period between the two last wars: and I find that the peace establishment, consisting of the navy, the ordnance, and the several incidental expences, amounted to £. 2.346.594. Now is this writer wild enough to imagine, that the peace establishment of 1764 and the subsequent years, made up from the same articles, is £. 3.800.000 and upwards? His assertion however goes to this. But I must take the liberty of correcting him in this gross mistake, and from an authority he cannot refuse, from his favourite work, and standing authority, the Considerations. We find there, in p. 43ⁱ,

Navy,	£.
Army,	1.450.900
Ordnance,	1.268.500
The Four American Governments,	174.600
General Surveys in America,	19.200
Foundling Hospital,	1.600
To the African Committee,	38.000
For the Civil Establishment on the Coast of Africa,	13.000
Militia,	5.500
Deficiency of Land and Malt,	100.000
Deficiency of Funds,	300.000
Extraordinaries of the Army and Navy,	202.400
	35.000
Total, £.	3.609.700
	the

STATE OF THE NATION.

the peace establishment of 1764 and 1765 stated at £. 3.609.700. This is near two hundred thousand pounds less than that given in the State of the Nation. But even from this, in order to render the articles which compose the peace establishment in the two periods correspondent (for otherwise they cannot be compared), we must deduct first, his articles of the deficiency of land and malt, which amount to £. 300.000. They certainly are no part of the establishment, nor are they included in that sum, which I have stated above for the establishment in the time of the former peace. If they were proper to be stated at all, they ought to be stated in both accounts. We must also deduct the deficiencies of funds £. 202.400. These deficiencies are the difference between the interest charged on the public for monies borrowed, and the produce of the taxes laid for the discharge of that interest. Annual provision is indeed to be made for them by parliament: but in the enquiry before us, which is only what charge is brought on the public by interest paid or to be paid for money borrowed, the utmost that the author should do is to bring into the account the full interest for all that money. This he has done in p. 15, and he repeats it in p. 18, the very page I am now examining, £. 2.614.892. To comprehend afterwards in the peace establishment the deficiency of the fund created for payment of that interest, would be laying twice to the account of the war part of the same sum. Suppose ten millions, borrowed at 4 per cent. and the fund for payment of the interest to produce no more than £. 200.000. The whole annual charge on the public is £. 400.000. It can be no more. But to charge the interest in one part of the account, and then the deficiency in the other, would be charging £. 600.000. The deficiency of funds must therefore be also deducted from the peace establishment in the Considerations; and then the peace establishment in that author will be reduced to the same articles with those included in the sum I have already mentioned for the peace establishment before the last war, in the year 1753, and 1754.

Peace establishment in the Considerations,	£.	3.609.700
Deduct deficiency of land and malt,	300.000	
D ^o . of funds,	202.400	
	<hr/>	502.400
		3.107.300
Peace establishment before the late war, in which		
no deficiencies of land and malt, or funds, are		
included.		2.346.594
	Difference, £.	760.709

Being about half the sum which our author has been pleased to suppose it.
2
Let

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

Let us put the whole together. The author states,	£
Difference of peace establishment before and since the war,	1.500.000
Interest of debt contracted by the war,	2.614.892
	<hr/>
	4.114.892
The <i>real</i> difference in the peace establishment is,	760.706
The actual interest of the funded debt, including that charged on the sinking fund, is,	} 2.315.642
The actual interest of unfunded debt at most,	
	<hr/>
	160.000
Total interest of debt contracted by the war,	2.475.642
Increase of peace establishment, and interest of the new debt,	3.236.348
	<hr/>
	Error of the author, £. 878.546

It is true, the extraordinaries of the army have been found considerably greater than the author of the Considerations was pleased to foretell they would be. The author of the Present State avails himself of that increase, and, finding it suit his purpose, sets the whole down in the peace-establishment of the present times. If this is allowed him, his error perhaps may be reduced to £. 700.000. But I doubt the author of the Considerations will not thank him for admitting £. 200.000. and upwards, as the peace-establishment for extraordinaries, when that author has so much laboured to confine them within £. 35.000.

These are some of the capital fallacies of the author. To break the thread of my discourse as little as possible, I have thrown into the margin many instances, though God knows far from the whole, of his inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and want of common care. I think myself obliged to take some notice of them, in order to take off from any authority this writer may have; and to put an end to the deference which careless men are apt to pay to one who boldly arrays his accounts, and marshals his figures, in perfect confidence that their correctness will never be examined*.

* Upon the money borrowed in 1760, the premium of 1 per cent. was for 21 years, not for 20; this annuity has been paid 8 years instead of 7; the sum paid is therefore £. 640 000 instead of £. 560.000; the remaining term is worth 10 years and a quarter instead of 11 years*; its value is £. 820.000 instead of £. 880.000; and the whole value of that premium is £. 1.460.000 instead of 1.440.000. The like errors are observable in his computation on the additional capital of 3 per cent. on the loan of that year. In like manner, on the loan of 1762, the author computes on 5 years payments instead of 6; and says in express terms, that take 5 from 19, and there remains 13. These are not errors of the pen or the press; the several computations pursued in this part of the work with great diligence and earnestness

* See Smart and Demoyre.

I am

STATE OF THE NATION.

However, for argument, I am content to take his state of it. The debt was and is enormous. The war was expensive. The best oeconomy had not perhaps been used. But I must observe, that war and oeconomy are things not easily reconciled; and that the attempt of leaning towards parsimony in such a state may be the worst management, and in the end the worst oeconomy in the world, hazarding the total loss of all the charge incurred, and of every thing else along with it.

But *cui bono* all this detail of our debt? Has the author given a single light towards any material reduction of it? Not a glimmering. We shall see in its place what sort of thing he proposes. But before he commences his operations, in order to scare the public imagination, he raises by art magic a thick mist before our eyes, through which glare the most ghastly and horrible phantoms:

*Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est,
Non radii solis, neque lucida tela diei
Discutiant, sed naturæ species ratioque.*

Let us therefore calmly, if we can for the fright into which he has put us, appreciate those dreadful and deformed gorgons and hydras, which inhabit the joyless regions of an imagination, fruitful in nothing but the production of monsters.

His whole representation is founded on the supposed operation of our debt, upon our manufactures, and our trade. To this cause he attributes a certain supposed dearth of the necessaries of life, which must compel our manufacturers to emigrate to cheaper countries, particularly to France, and with them the manufacture. Thence consumption declining, and with it revenue. He will not permit the real balance of our trade to be estimated so high as £. 2,500,000, and the interest of the debt to foreigners carries off £. 1,500,000 of that balance. That

prove them errors upon much deliberation. Thus the premiums in 1759 are cast up £. 90,000 too little, an error in the first rule of arithmetic. "The annuities borrowed in 1756 and 1758 are," says he, "to continue till redeemed by parliament." He does not take notice that the first are irredeemable till February 1771, the other till July 1782. In this the amount of the premiums is computed on the time which they have run. Weakly and ignorantly; for he might have added to this and strengthened his argument, such as it is, by charging also the value of the additional 1 per cent. from the day on which he wrote to at least that day on which these annuities become redeemable. To make ample amends, however, he has added to the premiums of 15 per cent. in 1759, and 3 per cent. in 1760, the annuity paid for them since their commencement; the fallacy of which is manifest: for the premiums in these cases can be neither more or less than the additional capital for which the public stands engaged, and is just the same whether 5 or 500 years annuity has been paid for it. In private life, no man persuades himself that he has borrowed £. 200, because he happens to have paid 20 years interest on loan of £. 100.

E

France

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

France is not in the same condition. Then follow his wailings and lamentings, which he renews over and over, according to his custom — a declining trade, and decreasing specie — on the point of becoming tributary to France — of losing Ireland — of having the colonies torn away from us.

P. 30, 31, 32.

The first thing upon which I shall observe is, what he takes for granted as the clearest of all propositions, the emigration of our manufacturers to France. I undertake to say that this assertion is totally groundless, and I challenge the author to bring any sort of proof of it. If living is cheaper in France, that is, to be had for less specie, wages are proportionably lower. No manufacturer, let the living be what it will, was ever known to fly for refuge, to low wages. Money is the first thing which attracts him. Accordingly our wages attract artificers from all parts of the world. From two shillings to one shilling, is a fall, in all mens imaginations, which no calculation upon a difference in the price of the necessaries of life can compensate. But it will be hard to prove, that a French artificer is better fed, clothed, lodged, and warmed, than one in England; for that is the sense, and the only sense, of living cheaper. If, in truth and fact, our artificer fares as well in all these respects, as one in the same state in France — how stands the matter in point of opinion and prejudice, the springs by which people in that class of life are chiefly actuated? The idea of our common people, concerning French living, is dreadful; altogether as dreadful as our author's can possibly be of the state of his own country; a way of thinking that will hardly ever prevail on them to desert to France^a.

But, leaving the author's speculations, the fact is, they have not deserted; and of course the manufacture cannot be departed, or departing, with them. I am not indeed able to get at all the details of all our manufacture; though, I think, I have taken full as much pains for that purpose as our author. Some I have by me; and they do not hitherto, thank God, support the author's complaint, unless a vast increase of the quantity of goods manufactured, be a proof of losing the manufacture. On a view of the registers in the West-riding of Yorkshire, for three years before the war, and for the three last, it appears, that the quantities of cloths entered were as follow:

^a In a course of years a few manufacturers have been tempted abroad, not by cheap living, but by immense premiums, to set up as masters, and to introduce the manufacture. This must happen in every country eminent for the skill of its artificers, and has nothing to do with taxes and the price of provision.

1752.

STATE OF THE NATION.

	Pieces broad.	Pieces narrow.
1752.	60.724	72.442
1753.	55.358	71.618
1754.	56.070	72.394
	<u>172.152</u>	<u>216.454</u>
	Pieces broad.	Pieces narrow.
1765.	54.660	77.419
1766.	72.575	78.893
1767.	102.428	78.819
3 years, ending 1767,	229.663	235.131
3 years, ending 1754,	<u>172.152</u>	<u>216.454</u>
Encrease,	<u>57.511</u>	Encrease, <u>18.677</u>

In this manner this capital branch of manufacture has increased, under the encrease of taxes; and this not from a declining, but from a greatly flourishing period of commerce. I may say the same on the best authority of the fabrick of thin goods at Halifax; of the bays at Rochdale; and of that infinite variety of admirable manufactures that grow and extend every year among the spirited, inventive, and enterprising traders of Manchester.

A trade sometimes seems to perish when it only assumes a different form. Thus the coarsest woollens were formerly exported in great quantities to Russia. The Russians now supply themselves with these goods. But the export thither of finer cloths has increased in proportion, as the other has declined. Possibly some parts of the kingdom may have felt something like a languor in business. Objects like trade and manufacture, which the very attempt to confine would certainly destroy, frequently change their place; and thereby, far from being lost, are often highly improved. Thus some manufactures have decayed in the west and south, which have made new and more vigorous shoots when transplanted into the north. And here it is impossible to pass by, though the author has said nothing upon it, the vast addition to the mass of British trade, which has been made by the improvement of Scotland. What does he think of the commerce of the city of Glasgow, and of the manufactures of Paisley and all the adjacent county? Has this any thing like the deadly aspect and *facies Hippocratica* which the false diagnostic of our state physician has given to our trade in general? Has he not heard of the iron works of such magnitude even in their cradle which are set up on the

the Carron, which at the same time have drawn nothing from Sheffield, Birmingham, or Wolverhampton?

This might perhaps be enough to shew the entire falsity of the complaint concerning the decline of our manufactures. But every step we advance, this matter clears up more and more; and the false terrors of the author are dissipated, and fade away as the light appears. "The trade and manufactures of this country (says he) going to ruin, and a diminution of our *revenue from consumption* must attend the loss of so many seamen, and artificers." Nothing more true than the general observation: nothing more false than its application to our circumstances. Let the revenue on consumption speak for itself:

Average of net excise, since the new duties, 3 years ending 1767,	£. 4.590.734
Ditto for 3 years before the new duties, 3 years ending 1759,	3.261.694
Average encrease,	£. 1.329.040

Here is no diminution. Here is, on the contrary, an immense encrease. This is owing, I shall be told, to the new duties, which may encrease the total bulk; but at the same time may make some diminution of the produce of the old. Were this the fact, it would be far from supporting the author's complaint. It might have proved that the burthen lay rather too heavy; but it would never prove that the *revenue from consumption* was impaired, which was his business to do. But what is the real fact? Let us take, as the best instance for the purpose, the produce of the old hereditary and temporary excise granted in the reign of Charles the Second, whose object is that of most of the new impositions, from two averages, each of 8 years:

Average, first period, 8 years, ending 1754,	£. 525.317
Ditto, second period, 8 years, ending in 1767,	538.542
Encrease,	£. 13.225

I have taken these averages as including in each, a war and a peace period; the first before the imposition of the new duties, the other since those impositions; and such is the state of the oldest branch of the revenue from consumption. Besides the acquisition of so much new, this article, to speak of no other, has rather encreased under the pressure of all those additional taxes to which the author is pleased to attribute its destruction. But as the author has made his grand effort against those moderate, judicious, and necessary levies, which support all the dignity, the credit, and the power of his country, the reader will excuse a little

0016

little further detail on this subject; that we may see how little oppressive those taxes are on the shoulders of the publick, with which he labours so earnestly to load its imagination. For this purpose we take the state of that specific article upon which the two capital burthens of the war leaned the most immediately, by the additional duties on malt, and upon beer:

Average of strong beer, brewed in 8 years before the } additional malt and beer duties	3.895.059 Bar.
Average of strong beer, 8 years since the duties,	4.060.726 Bar.
Encrease in the last period,	165.667 Bar.

Here is the effect of two such daring taxes as 3*d.* by the bushel additional on malt, and 3*s.* by the barrel additional on beer. Two impositions laid without remission one upon the neck of the other; and laid upon an object which before had been immensely loaded. They did not in the least impair the consumption: it has grown under them. It appears that, upon the whole, the people did not feel so much inconvenience from the new duties as to oblige them to take refuge in the private brewery. Quite the contrary happened in both these respects in the reign of king William; and it happened from much flighter impositions¹. No people can long consume a commodity for which they are not well able to pay. An enlightened reader laughs at the inconsistent chimera of our author, of a people universally luxurious, and at the same time oppressed with taxes and declining in trade. For my part, I cannot look on these duties as the author does. He sees nothing but the burthen. I can perceive the burthen as well as he; but I cannot avoid contemplating also the strength that supports it. From thence I draw the most comfortable assurances of the future vigour, and the ample resources, of this great misrepresented country; and can never prevail on myself to make complaints which have no cause, in order to raise hopes which have no foundation.

When a representation is built on truth and nature, one member supports the other, and mutual lights are given and received from every part. Thus, as our manufacturers have not deserted, nor the manufacture left us, nor the consumption declined, nor the revenue sunk, so neither has trade,

¹ Although the public brewery has considerably encreased in this latter period, the produce of the malt tax has been something less than in the former; this cannot be attributed to the new malt tax. Had this been the cause of the lessened consumption, the public brewery, so much more burthened, must have felt it more. The cause of this diminution of the malt tax, I take to have been principally owing to the greater dearth of corn in the second period than the first, which, in all its consequences, affected the people in the country much more than those in the towns. But the revenue from consumption was not on the whole impaired, as we have seen in the foregoing page.

which is at once the result, measure, and cause of the whole, in the least decayed, as our author has thought proper sometimes to affirm, constantly to suppose, as if it were the most indisputable of all propositions. The reader will see below the comparative state of our trade in three of the best years before our encrease of debt and taxes, and with it the three last years since the author's date of our ruin^m.

In the last three years the whole of our exports was between 44 and 45 millions. In the three years preceding the war, it was no more than from 35 to 36 millions. The average balance of the former period was £. 3,706,000; of the latter, something above four millions. It is true, that whilst the impressions of the author's destructive war continued, our trade was greater than it is at present. One of the necessary consequences of the peace was, that France must gradually recover a part of those markets of which she had been originally in possession. However, after all these deductions, still the gross trade in the worst year of the present is better than in the best year of any former period of peace. A very great part of our taxes, if not the greatest, has been imposed since the beginning of this century. On the author's principles, this continual encrease of taxes must have ruined our trade, or at least entirely checked its growth. But I have a manuscript of Davenant, which contains an abstract of our trade for the years 1703 and 1704; by which it appears,

^m Total imports, value,	£.	Exports, ditto.	£.
1752.	7,889,369	11,694,912	
1753.	8,625,029	12,243,604	
1754.	8,093,472	11,787,828	
Total,	£. 24,607,870	35,726,344	24,607,870
Exports exceed imports,		11,118,474	
Medium balance,		£. 3,706,158	
	£.	£.	
1764.	10,319,946	16,164,532	
1765.	10,889,742	14,550,507	
1766.	11,475,825	14,024,964	
Total,	£. 32,685,513	44,740,003	32,685,513
Exports exceed,		12,054,490	
Medium balance for 3 last years,		£. 4,018,163	

that

that the whole export from England did not then exceed £. 6,552,019. It is now considerably more than double that amount. Yet England was then a rich and flourishing nation.

The author endeavours to derogate from the balance in our favour as it stands on the Entries, and reduces it from 4 millions as it there appears to no more than £. 2,500,000. His observation on the looseness and inaccuracy of the export entries is just; and that the error is always an error of excess, I readily admit. But because, as usual, he has wholly omitted some very material facts, his conclusion is as erroneous as the entries he complains of.

On this point of the custom-house entries I shall make a few observations. 1st, The inaccuracy of these entries can extend only to FREE GOODS, that is, to such British products and manufactures, as are exported without drawback and without bounty; which do not in general amount to more than two thirds at the very utmost of the whole export even of *our home products*. The valuable articles of corn, malt, leather, hops, beer, and many others, do not come under this objection of inaccuracy. The article of CERTIFICATE GOODS re-exported, a vast branch of our commerce, admits of no error (except some smaller frauds which cannot be estimated), as they have all a drawback of duty, and the exporter must therefore correctly specify their quantity and kind. The author therefore is not warranted from the known error in some of the entries, to make a general defalcation from the whole balance in our favour. This error cannot affect more than half, if so much, of the export article. 2dly, In the account made up at the inspector general's office, they estimate only the original cost of British products as they are here purchased; and on foreign goods, only the prices in the country from whence they are sent. This was the method established by Mr. Davenant; and, as far as it goes, it certainly is a good one. But the profits of the merchant at home, and of our factories abroad, are not taken into the account: which profit on such an immense quantity of goods exported and re-exported cannot fail of being very great; five *per cent.* upon the whole, I should think a very moderate allowance. 3dly, It does not comprehend the advantage arising from the employment of 600,000 tons of shipping, which must be paid by the foreign consumer, and which, in many bulky articles of commerce, is equal to the value of the commodity. This can scarcely be rated at less than a million annually. 4thly, The whole import from Ireland and America, and from the West Indies, is set against us in the ordinary way of striking a balance of imports and exports; whereas the import and export are both our own. This is just as ridiculous, as to put against the general balance of the nation, how much more goods Cheshire receives from London, than London from Cheshire. The whole revolves and circulates through this kingdom, and is, so far as it regards our profit, in the nature

E 4

of

of home trade, as much as if the several countries of America and Ireland were all pieced to Cornwall. The course of exchange with all these places is fully sufficient to demonstrate that this kingdom has the whole advantage of their commerce. When the final profit upon a whole system of trade rests and centers in a certain place, a balance struck in that place merely on the mutual sale of commodities is quite fallacious. 5thly, The custom-house entries furnish a most defective, and indeed ridiculous idea, of the most valuable branch of trade we have in the world, that with Newfoundland. Observe what you export thither; a little spirits, provision, fishing lines, and fishing hooks. Is this *export* the true idea of the Newfoundland trade in the light of a beneficial branch of commerce? nothing less. Examine our *imports* from thence; it seems, upon this vulgar idea of exports and imports, to turn the balance against you. But your exports to Newfoundland are your own goods. Your import is your own food; as much your own, as that you raise with your ploughs out of your own soil; and not your loss, but your gain; your riches, not your poverty. But so fallacious is this way of judging, that neither the export nor import, nor both together, supply any idea approaching to adequate of that branch of business. The vessels in that trade go strait from Newfoundland to the foreign market; and the sale there, not the import here, is the measure of its value. That trade which is one of your greatest and best is hardly so much as seen in the custom-house entries; and it is not of less annual value to this nation than £. 400,000. 6thly, The quality of your imports must be considered as well as the quantity. To state the whole of the foreign import *as loss*, is exceedingly absurd. All the iron, hemp, flax, cotton, Spanish wool, raw silk, woolen and linen yarn, which we import, are by no means to be considered, as the matter of a merely luxurious consumption; which is the idea too generally and loosely annexed to our import article. These above-mentioned are materials of industry, not of luxury, which are wrought up here, in many instances, to ten times, and more, of their original value. Even where they are not subservient to our exports, they still add to our internal wealth, which consists in the stock of useful commodities, as much as in gold and silver. In looking over the specific articles of our export and import, I have often been astonished for how small a part of the supply of our consumption, either luxurious or convenient, we are indebted to nations properly foreign to us.

These considerations are entirely passed over by the author; they have been but too much neglected by most who have speculated on this subject. But they ought never to be omitted by those who mean to come to any thing like the true state of the British trade. They compensate, and they more than compensate, every thing which the author can cut off with any appearance of reason for the over-entry of British goods; and they restore

to

to us that balance of four millions, which the author has thought proper on such a very poor and limited comprehension of the object to reduce to £. 2,500,000.

In general this author is so circumstanced, that to support his theory he is obliged to assume his facts; and then, if you allow his facts, they will not support his conclusions. What if all he says of the state of this balance were true? did not the same objections always lie to custom-house entries? do they defalcate more from the entries of 1766 than from those of 1754? If they prove us ruined, we were always ruined. Some ravens have always indeed croaked out this kind of song. They have a malignant delight in presaging mischief when they are not employed in doing it: they are miserable and disappointed at every instance of the public prosperity. They overlook us like the malevolent being of the poet:

*Tritonida conspicit arcem
Ingeniis, opibusque, et festa pace virentem;
Vixque tenet lacrymas quia nil lacrymabile vidit.*
Cicero, de Nat. Deor. lib. 2. c. 28.

It is in this spirit that some have looked upon those accidents, that cast an occasional damp upon trade. Their imaginations entail these accidents upon us in perpetuity. We have had some bad harvests. This must very disadvantageously affect the balance of trade, and the navigation of a people, so large a part of whose commerce is in grain. But, in knowing the cause, we are morally certain, that, according to the course of events, it cannot long subsist. In the three last years we have exported scarcely any grain; in good years that export hath been worth twelve hundred thousand pounds and more; in the two last years, far from exporting, we have been obliged to import to the amount perhaps of our former exportation. So that in this article the balance must be £. 2,000,000 against us; that is, one million in the ceasing of gain, the other in the increase of expenditure. But none of the author's promises or projects could have prevented this misfortune; and, thank God, we do not want him or them to relieve us from it; although, if his friends should now come into power, I doubt not but they will be ready to take credit for any encrease of trade or excise, that may arise from the happy circumstance of a good harvest.

This connects with his loud laments and melancholy prognostications concerning the high price of the necessaries of life and the products of labour. With all his others I deny this fact; and I again call upon him to prove it. Take average and not accident, the grand and first necessary of life is cheap in this country; and that too as weighed, not against labour, which is its true counterpoise, but against money. Does he call the price of

F

wheat

wheat at this day, between 32 and 40 shillings *per* quarter in London, dearⁿ? He must know that fuel (an object of the highest order in the necessities of life, and of the first necessity in almost every kind of manufacture) is in many of our provinces cheaper than in any part of the globe. Meat is on the whole not excessively dear, whatever its price may be at particular times and from particular accidents. If it has had any thing like an uniform rise, this enhancement may easily be proved not to be owing to the encrease of taxes, but to uniform encrease of consumption and of money. Diminish the latter, and meat in your markets will be sufficiently cheap in account, but much dearer in effect; because fewer will be in a condition to buy. Thus your apparent plenty will be real indigence. At present, even under temporary disadvantages, the use of flesh is greater here than any where else; it is continued without any interruption of Lent or meagre days; it is sustained and growing even with the encrease of our taxes. But some have the art of converting even the signs of national prosperity into symptoms of decay and ruin. And our author, who so loudly disclaims popularity, never fails to lay hold of the most vulgar popular prejudices and humours, in hopes to captivate the crowd. Even those peevish dispositions, which grow out of some transitory suffering, those passing clouds which float in our changeable atmosphere, are by him industriously figured into frightful shapes, in order first to terrify and then to govern the populace.

It was not enough for the author's purpose to give this false and discouraging picture of the state of his own country. It did not fully answer his end, to exaggerate her burthens, to depreciate her successes and to vilify her character. Nothing had been done unless the situation of France were exalted in proportion as that of England had been abased. The reader will excuse the citation I make at length from his book; he outdoes himself upon this occasion. His confidence is indeed unparalleled, and altogether of the heroic cast.

"If our rival nations were in the same circumstances with ourselves, the augmentation of our Taxes would produce no ill consequences: if we were obliged to raise our prices, they must, from the same causes, do the like, and could take no advantage by under-selling and under-working us. But the alarming consideration to Great Britain is, that France is not in the same condition. Her distresses, during the war, were great, but they were immediate; her want of credit, as has been said, compelled her to impoverish her people by raising the greatest part of her supplies within the year; but the burdens she imposed on them were, in a great measure, temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a

ⁿ It is dearer in some places, and rather cheaper in others; but it must soon all come to a level.

"few

"few years of peace. She could procure no considerable loans, therefore she has mortgaged no such oppressive taxes as those of Great Britain has imposed in perpetuity for payment of interest. Peace must, therefore, soon re-establish her commerce and manufactures, especially as the comparative lightness of taxes, and the cheapness of living, in that country, must make France an asylum for British manufactures and artificers." On this the author rests the merits of his whole system. And on this point I will join issue with him. If France is not at least in the same condition, even in that very condition which the author falsely represents to be ours, if the very reverse of his proposition be not true, then I will admit his State of the Nation to be just; and all his inferences from that state to be logical and conclusive. It is not surprizing, that the author should hazard our opinion of his veracity. That is a virtue on which great statesmen do not perhaps pique themselves so much: but it is somewhat extraordinary, that he should stake on a very poor calculation of chances, all credit for care, for accuracy, and for knowledge of the subject of which he treats. He is rash and inaccurate, because he thinks he writes to a public ignorant and inattentive. But he may find himself in that respect, as in many others, greatly mistaken.

In order to contrast the light and vigorous condition of France with that of England, weak, and sinking under her burthens, he states in his 10th page, that France had raised £. 50,314,378 sterling by taxes within the several years from the year 1756 to 1762 both inclusive. An Englishman must stand aghast at such a representation: To find France able to raise within the year sums little inferior to all that we were able even to borrow on interest with all the resources of the greatest and most established credit in the world! Europe was filled with astonishment when they saw England borrow in one year twelve millions. It was thought, and very justly, no small proof of national strength and financial skill to find a fund for the payment of the interest upon this sum. The interest of this, computed with the one per cent. annuities, amounted only to £. 600,000 a year. This, I say, was thought a surprizing effort even of credit. But this author talks, as of a thing not worth proving, and but just worth observing, that France in one year raised sixteen times that sum without borrowing, and continued to raise sums not far from equal to it for several years together? Suppose some Jacob Henriques had proposed, in the year 1762, to prevent a perpetual charge on the nation by raising ten millions within the year. He would be considered not as a harsh financier who laid an heavy hand on the public; but as a poor visionary, who had run mad on supplies and taxes. They who know that the whole land tax of England at 4s. in the pound, raises but two millions; will not easily apprehend that any such sums as the author has conjured

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

up can be raised even in the most opulent nations. France owed a large debt, and was incumbered with heavy establishments, before that war. The author does not formally deny that she borrowed something in every year of its continuance; let him produce the funds for this astonishing annual addition to all her vast preceding taxes, an addition equal to the whole excise, customs, land and malt taxes of England taken together.

But what must be the reader's astonishment, perhaps his indignation, if he should find that this great financier has fallen into the most unaccountable of all errors, no less an error than that of mistaking the *identical sums borrowed by France upon interest, for supplies raised within the year.* Can it be conceived that any man only entered into the first rudiments of finance should make so egregious a blunder; should write it, should print it; should carry it to a second edition; should take it not collaterally and incidentally, but lay it down as the corner stone of his whole system in such an important point as the comparative states of France and England? But it will be said, that it was his misfortune to be ill informed. Not at all. A man of any loose general knowledge, and of the most ordinary sagacity, never could have been misinformed in so gross a manner; because he would have immediately rejected so wild and extravagant an account.

The fact is this: the credit of France, bad as it might have been, did enable her (not to raise within the year) but to *borrow* the very sums the author mentions; that is to say 1.106.916.261 livres, making in the author's computation £.50.314.378. The credit of France was low; but it was not annihilated. She did not derive, as our author chooses to assert, any advantages from the debility of her credit. Its consequence was the natural one: she borrowed; but she borrowed upon bad terms, indeed on the most exorbitant usury.

In speaking of a foreign revenue, the very pretence to accuracy would be the most inaccurate thing in the world. Neither the author nor I can with certainty authenticate the information we communicate to the public, nor in an affair of eternal fluctuation arrive at perfect exactness. All we can do, and this we may be expected to do, is to avoid gross errors and blunders of a capital nature. We cannot order the proper officer to lay the accounts before the house. But the reader must judge on the probability of the accounts we lay before him. The author speaks of France as raising her supplies for war by taxes within the year; and of her debt, as a thing scarcely worthy of notice. I affirm that she borrowed large sums in every year; and has thereby accumulated an immense debt. This debt continued after the war infinitely to embarrass her affairs; and to find some means for its reduction was then and has ever since been the first object of her policy. But she has so little succeeded in all her efforts, that

STATE OF THE NATION.

that the *perpetual* debt of France is at this hour little short of £.100.000.000 sterling; that she stands charged with at least 40.000.000 of English pounds on life-rents and tontines. The annuities paid at this day at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, which are by no means her sole payments of that nature, amount to 139.000.000 of livres, that is, to 6.318.000 pounds; besides *Billets au porteur*, and various detached and unfunded debts, to a great amount, and which bear an interest.

At the end of the war, the interest payable on her debt amounted to upwards of seven millions sterling. M. De la Verdy, the last hope of the French finances, was called in, to aid in the reduction of an interest, so light to our author, so intolerably heavy upon those who are to pay it. After many unsuccessful efforts towards reconciling arbitrary reduction with public credit, he was obliged to go the plain high road of power, and to impose a tax of 10 *per cent.* upon a very great part of the capital debt of that kingdom; and this measure of present ease, to the destruction of future credit, produced about £.500.000 a year, which was carried to their *Caisse d'amortissement*, or sinking fund. But so unfaithfully and unsteadily has this and all the other articles which compose that fund been applied to their purposes, that they have given the state but very little even of present relief, since it is known to the whole world that she is behind hand on every one of her establishments. Since the year 1763, there has been no operation of any consequence on the French finances: and in this envious condition is France at present with regard to her debt.

Every body knows that the principle of the debt is but a name; the interest is the only thing which can distress a nation. Take this idea, which will not be disputed, and compare the interest paid by England with that paid by France:

	£.
Interest paid by France, funded and unfunded, for perpetuity or on lives, after the tax of 10 <i>per cent.</i> }	6.500.000
Interest paid by England, as stated by the author, p. 27,	4.600.000
Interest paid by France exceeds that paid by England, .	£. 1.900.000

The author cannot complain, that I state the interest paid by England as too low. He takes it himself as the extreme term. Nobody who knows any thing of the French finances will affirm that I state the interest paid by that kingdom too high. It might be easily proved to amount to a great deal more: even this is near two millions above what is paid by England.

There are three standards to judge of the good condition of a nation with regard to its finances. 1st, The relief of the people. 2d, The equality of supplies to establishments. 3d, The state of public credit. Try France on all these standards.

Although our author very liberally administers relief to the people of France, its government has not been altogether so gracious. Since the peace, she has taken off but a single *Vingtieme*, or shilling in the pound, and some small matter in the capitation. But if the government has relieved them in one point, it has only burthened them the more heavily in another. The *Taille*, that grievous and destructive imposition, which all their financiers lament, without being able to remove or to replace, has been augmented no less than 6 millions of livres, or 270,000 pounds English. A further augmentation of this or other duties is now talked of; and it is certainly necessary to their affairs: so exceedingly remote from either truth or verisimilitude is the author's amazing assertion, *that the burthens of France in the war were in a great measure temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a few years of peace.*

In the next place, if the people of France are not lightened of taxes, so neither is the state disburthened of charges. I speak from very good information, that the annual income of that state is at this day 30 millions of livres, or £. 1,350,000 sterling, short of a provision for their ordinary peace establishment, so far are they from the attempt or even hope to discharge any part of the capital of their enormous debt. Indeed under such extreme straitness and distraction labours the whole body of their finances, so far does their charge outrun their supply in every particular, that no man, I believe, who has considered their affairs with any degree of attention or information, but must hourly look for some extraordinary convulsion in that whole system; the effect of which on France and even on all Europe it is difficult to conjecture.

In the third point of view, their credit. Let the reader cast his eye on a table of the price of French funds, as they stood a few weeks ago, compared with the state of some of our English stocks, even in their present low condition:

French.		British.	
5 per cents.	63.	Bank stock, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$.	159.
4 per cent. (not taxed)	57.	4 per cent. conf.	100.
3 per cent. ditto,	49.	3 per cent. conf.	88.

This state of the funds of France and England is sufficient to convince even prejudice and obstinacy, that if France and England are not in the same condition (as the author affirms they are not) the difference is

^o A tax rated by the intendant in each generality on the presumed fortune of every person below the degree of a gentleman.

infinitely

infinitely to the disadvantage of France. This depreciation of their funds has not much the air of a nation lightening burthens and discharging debts.

Such is the true comparative state of the two kingdoms in those capital points of view. Now as to the nature of the taxes which provide for this debt, as well as for their ordinary establishments, the author has thought proper to affirm that "they are comparatively light;" "that she "has mortgaged no such oppressive taxes as ours:" his effrontery on this head is intolerable. Does the author recollect a single tax in England to which something parallel in nature, and as heavy in burthen, does not exist in France? does he not know that the lands of the noblesse are still under the load of the greater part of the old feudal charges, from which the gentry of England have been relieved for upwards of 100 years, and which were in kind, as well as burthen, much worse than our modern land tax? Besides that all the gentry of France serve in the army on very slender pay, and to the utter ruin of their fortunes: All those who are not noble have their lands heavily taxed. Does he not know that wine, brandy, soap, candles, leather, salt-petre, gunpowder, are taxed in France? has he not heard that government in France has made a monopoly of that great article of *salt*? that they compel the people to take a certain quantity of it, and at a certain rate, both rate and quantity fixed at the arbitrary pleasure of the imposer? That they pay in France the *Taille*, an arbitrary imposition on presumed property? That a tax is laid in fact and name, on the same arbitrary standard, upon the acquisitions of their *industry*? and that in France a heavy *capitation-tax* is also paid, from the highest to the very poorest sort of people? have we taxes of such weight, or any thing at all of the compulsion, in the article of *salt*? do we pay any *tailage*, any *faculty-tax*, any *industry-tax*? do we pay any *capitation-tax* whatsoever. I believe the people of London would fall into an agony to hear of such taxes proposed upon them as are paid in Paris. There is not a single article of provision for man or beast, which enters that great city, and is not excised; corn, hay, meal, butchers meat, fish, fowls, every thing. I do not here mean to censure the policy of taxes laid on the consumption of great luxurious cities. I only state the fact. We should be with difficulty brought to hear of a tax of 50 s. upon every ox fold in Smithfield. Yet this tax is paid in Paris. Wine, the lower sort of wine, little better than English small beer, pays 2 d. a bottle. We indeed tax our beer: but the imposition on small beer is very far from heavy. In no part of

^p Before the war it was sold to, or rather forced on, the consumer at 11 sous, or about 5 d. the pound. What it is at present, I am not informed. Even this will appear no trivial imposition. In London, salt may be had at a penny farthing per pound from the last retailer.

England.

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

England are eatables of any kind the object of taxation. In almost every other country in Europe they are excised; more or less, in one place or in another. I have by me the state of the revenues of many of the principal nations on the continent; and on comparing them with ours, I think I am fairly warranted to assert, that England is the most lightly taxed of any of the great states of Europe. They whose unnatural and sullen joy arises from a contemplation of the distresses of their country will revolt at this position. But, if I am called upon, I will prove it beyond all possibility of dispute; even though this proof should deprive these gentlemen of the singular satisfaction of considering their country as undone; and though the best civil government, the best constituted, and the best managed revenue that ever the world beheld, should be thoroughly vindicated from their perpetual clamours and complaints. As to our neighbour and rival France, in addition to what I have here suggested, I say, and when the author chooses formally to deny, I shall formally prove it, that her subjects pay more than England, on a computation of the wealth of both countries; that her taxes are more injudiciously and more oppressively imposed; more vexatiously collected; come in a smaller proportion to the royal coffers, and are less applied by far to the public service. I am not one of those who choose to take the author's word for this happy and flourishing condition of the French finances, rather than attend to the changes, the violent pushes, and the despair, of all her own financiers. Does he choose to be referred for the easy and happy condition of the subject in France to the remonstrances of their own parliaments, written with such an eloquence, feeling, and energy, as I have not seen exceeded in any other writings? The author may say their complaints are exaggerated, and the effects of faction. I answer, that they are the representations of numerous, grave, and most respectable bodies of men, upon the affairs of their own country. But, allowing that discontent and faction may pervert the judgment of such venerable bodies in France, we have as good a right to suppose that the same causes may full as probably have produced from a private, however respectable person, that frightful, and, I trust I have shewn, groundless representation of our own affairs in England.

The author is so conscious of the dangerous effects of that representation, that he thinks it necessary, and very necessary it is, to guard against them. He assures us "that he has not made that display of the difficulties of his country, to expose her counsels to the ridicule of other states, or to provoke a vanquished enemy to insult her; nor to excite the peoples rage against their governors, or sink them into a dependency of the public welfare." I readily admit this apology for his intentions. God forbid I should think any man capable of entertaining so execrable and senseless

STATE OF THE NATION.

senseless a design. The true cause of his drawing so shocking a picture is no more than this; and it ought rather to claim our pity than excite our indignation. He finds himself out of power; and this condition is intolerable to him. The same sun which gilds all nature, and exhilarates the whole creation, does not shine upon disappointed ambition. It is something that rays out of darkness, and inspires nothing but gloom and melancholy. Men in this deplorable state of mind find a comfort in spreading the contagion of their spleen. They find an advantage too; for it is a general popular error to imagine the loudest complainers for the public, to be the most anxious for its welfare. If such persons can answer the ends of relief and profit to themselves, they are apt to be careless enough about either the means or the consequences.

Whatever this complainant's motives may be, the effects can by no possibility be other than those which he so strongly, and, I hope truly, disclaims all intention of producing. To verify this, the reader has only to consider how dreadful a picture he has drawn in his 32d page of the state of this kingdom; such a picture as, I believe, has hardly been applicable without some exaggeration to the most degenerate and undone commonwealth that ever existed. Let this view of things be compared with the prospect of a remedy which he proposes in the page directly opposite and the subsequent. I believe no man living could have imagined it possible, except for the sake of burlesquing a subject, to propose remedies so ridiculously disproportionate to the evil, so full of uncertainty in their operation, and depending for their success in every step upon the happy event of so many new, dangerous, and visionary projects. It is not amiss, that he has thought proper to give the publick some little notice of what they may expect from his friends when our affairs shall be committed to their management. Let us see how the accounts of disease and remedy are balanced in his State of the Nation. In the first place, on the side of evils, he states, "An empoverished and heavily-burthened public. A declining trade and decreasing specie. The power of the crown never so much extended over the great; but the great without influence over the lower sort. Parliament losing its reverence with the people. The voice of the multitude set up against the sense of the legislature; a people luxurious and licentious, impatient of rule, and despising all authority. Government relaxed in every sinew, and a corrupt selfish spirit pervading the whole. An opinion of many, that the form of government is not worth contending for. No attachment in the bulk of the people towards the constitution. No reverence for the customs of our ancestors. No attachment but to private interest, nor any zeal but for selfish gratifications. Trade and manufactures going to ruin. Great Britain in danger of becoming tributary to France,

G

and

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

“ and the descent of the crown dependent on her pleasure. Ireland in
 “ case of war to become a prey to France; and Great Britain, unable to
 “ recover Ireland, cede it by treaty (the author never can think of a
 “ treaty without making cessions), in order to purchase peace for herself.
 “ The colonies left exposed to the ravages of a domestic, or the conquest
 “ of a foreign enemy.” — Gloomy enough, God knows. The author
 well observes, *that a mind not totally devoid of feeling cannot look upon*
 P. 31. *such a prospect without horror; and an heart capable of humanity must be*
unable to bear its description. He ought to have added, that no man of
 common discretion ought to have exhibited it to the public, if it were
 true; or of common honesty, if it were false.

But now for the comfort; the day-star which is to arise in our hearts;
 the author's grand scheme for totally reversing this dismal state of things,
 P. 33. and making us “ happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war
 “ and flourishing in peace.”

In this great work he proceeds with a facility equally astonishing and
 pleasing. Never was financier less embarrassed by the burthen of esta-
 blishments, or with the difficulty of finding ways and means. If an esta-
 blishment is troublesome to him, he lops off at a stroke just as much of it
 as he chooses. He mows down, without giving quarter, or assigning rea-
 son, army, navy, ordnance, ordinary, extraordinaries; nothing can stand
 before him. Then, when he comes to provide, *Amalthea's* horn is in his
 hands; and he pours out with an inexhaustible bounty, taxes, duties,
 loans, and revenues, without uneasiness to himself, or burthen to the
 publick. Infomuch, that when we consider the abundance of his resour-
 ces, we cannot avoid being surprized at his extraordinary attention to sa-
 vings. But it is all the exuberance of his goodness.

This book has so much of a certain tone of power, that one would be
 almost tempted to think it written by some person who had been in high
 office. A man is generally rendered somewhat a worse reasoner for ha-
 ving been a minister. In private, the assent of listening and obsequious
 friends; in publick, the venal cry and prepared vote of a passive senate,
 confirm him in habits of begging the question with impunity, and as-
 serting without thinking himself obliged to prove. Had it not been for
 some such habits, the author could never have expected that we should
 take his estimate for a peace establishment solely on his word.

P. 33. This estimate which he gives, is the great ground-work of his plan
 for the national redemption; and it ought to be well and firmly laid,
 or what must become of the superstructure? One would have thought
 the natural method in a plan of reformation would be, to take the pre-
 sent existing estimates as they stand; and then to shew what may be prac-
 ticably and safely defalcated from them. This would, I say, be the
 natural

STATE OF THE NATION.

natural course; and what would be expected from a man of business.
 But this author takes a very different method. For the ground of his spe-
 culation of a present peace establishment, he resorts to a former specu-
 lation of the same kind, which was in the mind of the minister of the
 year 1764. Indeed it never existed any where else. “ The plan,” says P. 33.
 he, with his usual ease, “ has been already formed, and the outline
 “ drawn by the administration of 1764. I shall attempt to fill up the
 “ void and obliterated parts and trace its operation. The standing ex-
 “ pence of the present (his projected) peace establishment *improved by*
 “ *the experience of the two last years may be thus estimated;*” and he esti-
 mates it at £. 3.468.161.

Here too it would be natural to expect some reasons for condemning
 the subsequent actual establishments which have so much transgressed the
 limits of his plan of 1764, as well as some arguments in favour of his
 new project; which has in some articles exceeded, in others fallen short,
 but on the whole is much below his old one. Hardly a word on any of
 these points, the only points however that are in the least essential; for
 unless you assign reasons for the encrease or diminution of the several ar-
 ticles of public charge, the playing at establishments and estimates is an
 amusement of no higher order, and of much less ingenuity, than *Ques-*
tions and commands, or What is my thought like? To bring more distinctly
 under the reader's view this author's strange method of proceeding, I
 will lay before him the three schemes; *viz.* the idea of the ministers in
 1764, the actual estimates of the two last years as given by the author
 himself, and lastly the new project of his political millennium:

Plan of establishment for 1764, as by Considerations, p. 43,	£.	3.609.700
Medium of 1767 and 1768, as by State of the Nation,	}	3.919.375
p. 29 and 30,		
Present peace establishment, as by the project in State	}	3.468.161
of the Nation, p. 33,		

It is not from any thing our author has any where said, that you are
 enabled to find the ground, much less the justification, of the immense
 difference between these several systems; you must compare them your-
 self, article by article; no very pleasing employment, by the way, to
 compare the agreement or disagreement of two chimeras. I now only
 speak of the comparison of his own two projects. As to the latter of
 them, it differs from the former, by having some of the articles diminish-
 ed, and others encreased. I find the chief article of *reduction* arises from Confid.
 the smaller *deficiency of land and malt*, and of the *annuity funds*, which P. 43.
 St. of N.

The figures in the Considerations are wrong cast up; it should be £. 3.608.700. P. 33.

he brings down to £. 295,000 in his new estimate, from £. 502,400, which he had allowed for those articles in the Considerations. With this *reduction*, owing, as it must be, merely to a smaller deficiency of funds, he has nothing at all to do. It can be no work and no merit of his. But with regard to the *encrease*, the matter is very different. It is all his own; the publick is loaded (for any thing we can see to the contrary) entirely *gratis*. The chief articles of the *encrease* are on the *navy*, and on the *army* and *ordnance extraordinaries*; the *navy* being estimated in his *State of the Nation* £. 50,000 a year more, and the *army* and *ordnance extraordinaries* £. 40,000 more than he had thought proper to allow for them in that estimate in his *Considerations*, which he makes the foundation of his present project. He has given no sort of reason, stated no sort of necessity for this additional allowance either in the one article or the other. What is still stronger, he admits that his allowance for the army and ordnance extras is too great, and expressly refers you to the *Considerations*; where, far from giving £. 75,000 a year to that service, as the *State of the Nation* has done, the author apprehends his own scanty provision of £. 35,000 to be by far too considerable, and thinks it may well admit of further reductions^r. Thus, according to his own principles, this great oeconomist falls into a vicious prodigality; and is as far in his estimates from a consistency with his own principles as with the real nature of the services.

Confid.
P. 43.
St. of N.
P. 33.

P. 34.

Still, however, his present establishment differs from its archetype of 1764, by being, though raised in particular parts, upon the whole about £. 141,000 smaller. It is improved, he tells us, by the experience of the two last years. One would have concluded that the peace establishment of these two years had been less than that of 1764, in order to suggest to

^r The author of the *State of the Nation*, p. 34, informs us, that the sum of £. 75,000, allowed by him for the extras of the army and ordnance, is far less than was allowed for the same service in the years 1767 and 1768. It is so undoubtedly, and by at least £. 200,000. He sees that he cannot abide by the plan of the *Considerations* in this point, nor is he willing wholly to give it up. Such an enormous difference as that between £. 35,000 and £. 300,000 puts him to a stand. Should he adopt the latter plan of increased expence, he must then confess, that he had, on a former occasion, egregiously trifled with the publick; at the same time all his future promises of reduction must fall to the ground. If he stuck to the £. 35,000, he was sure that every one must expect from him some account how this monstrous charge came to continue ever since the war, when it was clearly unnecessary; how all those successions of ministers (his own included), came to pay it; and why his great friend in parliament, and his partizans without doors, came not to pursue to ruin, at least to utter shame, the authors of so groundless and scandalous a profusion. In this strait he took a middle way; and to come nearer the real state of the service, he outbid the *Considerations*, at one stroke, £. 40,000; at the same time he hints to you, that you may expect some benefit also from the original plan. But the author of the *Considerations* will not suffer him to escape so. He has pinned him down to his £. 35,000; for that is the sum he has chosen, not as what he thinks will probably be required, but as making the most ample allowance for every possible contingency. See that author, p. 42 and 43.

the

the author his improvements, which enabled him to reduce it. But how does that turn out?

Peace establishment ^s 1767 and 1768, medium,	£. 3,919,375
Ditto, estimate in the <i>Considerations</i> , for 1764,	3,609,700
Difference,	£. 309,675

A vast encrease instead of diminution. The experience then of the two last years ought naturally to have given the idea of an heavier establishment; but this writer is able to diminish by encreasing, and to draw the effects of subtraction from the operations of addition. By means of these new powers he may certainly do whatever he pleases. He is indeed moderate enough in the use of them, and condescends to settle his establishment at £. 3,468,161 a year.

However, he has not yet done with it; he has further ideas of saving, and new resources of revenue. These additional savings are principally two: 1st, *It is to be hoped*, says he, that the sum of £. 250,000 (which in P. 34. the estimate he allows for the deficiency of land and malt) will be less by £. 37,924^t.

2d, That the sum of £. 20,000 allowed for the Foundling Hospital, and £. 1,800 for American Surveys, will soon cease to be necessary, as the services will be compleated.

What follows with regard to the resources is very well worthy of the reader's attention. "Of this estimate, says he, upwards of £. 300,000 will be for the plantation service; and that sum, *I hope*, the people of Ireland and the colonies *might be induced* to take off Great Britain, and defray between them in the proportion of £. 200,000 by the colonies, and £. 100,000 by Ireland."

Such is the whole of this mighty scheme. Take his reduced estimate, and his further reductions, and his resources all together, and the result

^s He has done great injustice to the establishment of 1768; but I have not here time for this discussion, nor is it necessary to this argument.

^t In making up this account he falls into a surprizing error of arithmetic. "The deficiency of the land-tax in the year 1754 and 1755, when it was at 2s. amounted to no more, on a medium, than £. 49,372; to which, if we add *half the sum*, it will give us £. 79,058 as the peace deficiency at 3s."

Total,	£. 49,372
Add the half,	24,686
Result,	£. 74,058

Which he makes £. 79,058. This is indeed in disfavour of his argument; but we shall see that he has ways, by other errors, of reimbursing himself.

will

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

will be; He will certainly lower the provision made for the navy. He will cut off largely (God knows what or how) from the army and ordnance extraordinaries. He may be expected to cut off more. He hopes that the deficiencies on land and malt will be less than usual; and he hopes that America and Ireland might be induced to take off £. 300.000 of our annual charges.

If any one of these Hopes, Might, Insinuations, Expectations, and Inducements should fail him, there will be a formidable gaping breach in his whole project. If all of them should fail, he has left the nation without a glimmering of hope in this thick night of terrors which he has thought fit to spread about us. If every one of them, which attended with success, would signify any thing to our revenue, can have no effect but to add to our distractions and dangers, we shall be if possible in a still worse condition from his projects of cure than he represents us from our original disorders.

Before we examine into the consequence of these schemes, and the probability of these savings, let us suppose them all real and all safe, and then see what it is they amount to, and how he reasons on them:

Deficiency on land and malt, less by	£.
Foundling Hospital,	37.000
American Surveys,	20.000
	1.800
	£. 58.800

P. 43. This is the amount of the only articles of saving he specifies; and yet he chooses to assert "that we may venture on the credit of them to reduce the standing expences of the estimate (from £. 3.468.161) to £. 3.300.000;" that is, for a saving of £. 58.000, he is not ashamed to take credit for a defalcation from his own ideal establishment in a sum of no less than £. 168.161! Suppose even that we were to take up the estimate of the Considerations (which is however abandoned in the State of the Nation), and reduce his £. 75.000 extraordinaries to the original £. 35.000. Still all these savings joined together give us but £. 98.000; that is, near £. 70.000 short of the credit he calls for, and for which he has neither given any reason, or furnished any data whatsoever for others to reason upon.

Such are his savings, as operating on his own project of a peace establishment. Let us now consider them as they affect the existing establishment and our actual services. He tells us, the sum allowed in his estimate for the navy is "£. 69.321 less than the grant for that service in 1767; but in that grant £. 30.000 was included for the purchase of

"hemp,

STATE OF THE NATION.

"hemp, and a saving of about £. 25.000 was made in that year." The author has got some secret in arithmetick. These two sums put together amount, in the ordinary way of computing, to £. 55.000, and not to £. 69.321. On what principle has he chosen to take credit for £. 14.321 more? To what this strange inaccuracy is owing, I cannot possibly comprehend; nor is it very material, where the logic is so bad, and the policy so erroneous, whether the arithmetic be just or otherwise. But in a scheme for making this nation "happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war and flourishing in peace," it is surely a little unfortunate for us, that he has picked out the Navy, as the very first object of his oeconomical experiments. Of all the public services, that of the navy is the one in which tampering may be of the greatest danger, which can worst be supplied upon an emergency, and of which any failure draws after it the longest and heaviest train of consequences. I am far from saying, that this or any service ought not to be conducted with oeconomy. But I will never suffer the sacred name of oeconomy to be bestowed upon arbitrary defalcation of charge. The author tells us himself, "that to suffer the navy to rot in harbour for want of repairs and marines, would be to invite destruction." It would so. When the author talks therefore of savings on the navy estimate, it is incumbent on him to let us know, not what sums he will cut off, but what branch of that service he deems superfluous. Instead of putting us off with unmeaning generalities, he ought to have stated what naval force, what naval works, and what naval stores, with the lowest estimated expence, are necessary to keep our marine in a condition commensurate to its great ends. And this too not for the contracted and deceitful space of a single year, but for some reasonable term. Every body knows that many charges cannot be in their nature regular or annual. In the year 1767 a stock of hemp, &c. was to be laid in; that charge intermits, but it does not end. Other charges of other kinds take their place. Great works are now carrying on at Portsmouth, but not of greater magnitude than utility; and they must be provided for. A year's estimate is therefore no just idea at all of a permanent peace establishment. Had the author opened this matter upon these plain principles, a judgment might have been formed, how far he had contrived to reconcile national defence with public oeconomy. Till he has done it, those who had rather depend on any man's reason than the greatest man's authority, will not give him credit on this head for the saving of a single shilling. As to those savings which are already made, or in course of being made, whether right or wrong, he has nothing at all to do with them; they can be no part of his project, considered as a plan of reformation. I greatly fear that the error has not lately been on the side of profusion.

Another head is the saving on the Army and Ordnance extraordinaries, particularly in the American branch. What or how much reduction may be made, none of us, I believe, can with any fairness pretend to say; very little, I am convinced. The state of America is extremely unsettled; more troops have been sent thither; new dispositions have been made; and this augmentation of number, and change of disposition, has rarely, I believe, the effect of lessening the bill for extraordinaries, which, if not this year, yet in the next, we must certainly feel. Care has not been wanting to introduce oeconomy into that part of the service. The author's great friend has made, I admit, some regulations; his immediate successors have made more, and better. This part will be handled more ably and more minutely at another time; but none can cut down this bill of extraordinaries at his pleasure. The author has given us nothing, but his word, for any certain or considerable reduction; and this we ought to be the more cautious in taking, as he has promised great savings in his *Considerations*, which he has not chosen to abide by in his *State of the Nation*.

On this head also of the American extraordinaries, he can take credit for nothing. As to his next, the lessening of the deficiency of the land and malt-tax, particularly of the malt-tax; any person the least conversant in that subject cannot avoid a smile. This deficiency arises from charge of collection, from anticipation, and from defective produce. What has the author said on the reduction of any head of this deficiency upon the land tax? On these points he is absolutely silent. As to the deficiency on the malt tax, which is chiefly owing to a defective produce, he has, and can have, nothing to propose. If this deficiency should be lessened by the encrease of malting in any years more than others (as it is a greatly fluctuating object), how much of this obligation shall we owe to this author's ministry? will it not be the case under any administration? must it not go to the general service of the year, in some way or other, let the finances be in whose hands they will? But why take credit for so extremely reduced a deficiency at all? I can tell him he has no rational ground for it in the produce of the year 1767, and I suspect will have full as little reason from the produce of the year 1768. That produce may indeed become greater, and the deficiency of course will be less. It may too be far otherwise. A fair and judicious financier will not, as this writer has done, for the sake of making out a specious account, select a favourable year or two, at remote periods, and ground his calculations on those. In 1768 he will not take the deficiencies of 1753 and 1754 for his standard. Sober men have hitherto (and must continue this course to preserve this character) taken indifferently the mediums of the years immediately preceding. But a person who has a scheme from which he promises

misses much to the publick ought to be still more cautious; he would choose to ground his speculation rather on the lowest mediums; because all new schemes are known to be subject to some defect or failure not foreseen; and which therefore every prudent proposer will be ready to allow for, in order to lay his foundation as low and as solid as possible. Quite contrary is the practice of some politicians. They first propose savings, which they well know cannot be made, in order to get a reputation for oeconomy. In due time they assume another, but a different merit, by providing for the service they had before cut off or straitened, and which they can then very easily prove to be necessary. In the same spirit, they raise magnificent ideas of revenue on funds which they know to be insufficient. Afterwards, who can blame them, if they do not satisfy the publick desires? They are great artificers; but they cannot work without materials.

These are some of the little arts of great statesmen. To such we leave them, and follow where the author leads us, to his next resource, the Foundling-hospital. Whatever particular virtue there is in the mode of this saving, there seems to be nothing at all new, and indeed nothing wonderfully important in it. The sum annually voted for the support of the Foundling-hospital has been in a former parliament limited to the establishment of the children then in the hospital. When they are apprenticed, this provision will cease. It will therefore fall in more or less at different times; and will at length cease intirely. But, until it does, we cannot reckon upon it as the saving on the establishment of any given year: nor can any one conceive how the author comes to mention this, any more than some other articles, as a part of a *new* plan of oeconomy which is to retrieve our affairs. This charge will indeed cease in its own time. But will no other succeed to it? Has he ever known the publick free from some contingent charge, either for the just support of royal dignity, or for national magnificence, or for public charity, or for public service? does he choose to flatter his readers that no such will ever return? or does he in good earnest declare, that let the reason, or necessity, be what they will, he is resolved not to provide for such services?

Another resource of oeconomy yet remains, for he gleans the field very closely, £. 1.800 for the American surveys. Why what signifies a dispute about trifles? he shall have it. But while he is carrying it off, I shall just whisper in his ear, that neither the saving that is allowed, or that which is doubted of, can at all belong to that future proposed administration, whose touch is to cure all our evils. Both the one and the other belong equally (as indeed all the rest do) to the present administration, to any administration; because they are the gift of time, and not the bounty of the exchequer.

H

I have

I have now done with all the minor preparatory parts of the author's scheme, the several articles of saving which he proposes. At length comes the capital operation, his new resources. Three hundred thousand pounds a year from America and Ireland. — Alas! alas! if that too should fail us, what will become of this poor undone nation? The author, in a tone of great humility, *hopes* they may be *induced* to pay it. Well, if that be all, we may hope so too: and for any light he is pleased to give us into the ground of this hope, and the ways and means of this inducement, here is a speedy end both of the question and the revenue.

It is the constant custom of this author, in all his writings, to take it for granted, that he has given you a revenue, whenever he can point out to you where you may have money, if you can contrive how to get at it; and this seems to be the master-piece of his financial ability. I think however, in his way of proceeding, he has behaved rather like a harsh step-dame, than a kind nursing mother to his country. Why stop at £. 300,000? If his state of things be at all founded, America and Ireland are much better able to pay £. 600,000, than we are to satisfy ourselves with half that sum. However, let us forgive him this one instance of tenderness towards Ireland and the colonies.

P. 35. He spends a vast deal of time, in an endeavour to prove, that Ireland is able to bear greater impositions. He is of opinion, that the poverty of the lower class of people there is, in a great measure, owing to a want of judicious taxes; that a land tax will enrich her tenants; that taxes are paid in England which are not paid there; that the colony trade is increased above £. 100,000 since the peace; that she *ought* to have further indulgences in that trade; and *ought* to have further privileges in the woollen manufacture. From these premises, of what she has, what she has not, and what she ought to have, he infers that Ireland will contribute £. 100,000 towards the extraordinaries of the American establishment.

I shall make no objections whatsoever, logical or financial, to this reasoning: many occur; but they would lead me from my purpose, from which I do not intend to be diverted, because it seems to me of no small importance. It will be just enough to hint, what I dare say many readers have before observed, that when any man proposes new taxes in a country with which he is not personally conversant by residence or office, he ought to lay open its situation much more minutely and critically than this author has done, or than perhaps he is able to do. He ought not to content himself with saying that a single article of her trade is increased £. 100,000 a year; he ought, if he argues from the increase of trade to an increase of taxes, to state the whole trade, and not one branch of trade

trade only, he ought to enter fully into the state of its remittances, and the course of its exchange, he ought likewise to examine whether all its establishments are increased or diminished; and whether it incurs or discharges debt annually. But I pass over all this; and am content to ask a few plain questions.

Does the author then seriously mean to propose in parliament a land tax, or any tax for £. 100,000 a year upon Ireland? If he does, and that fatally, by his temerity and our weakness, he should succeed, then I say he will throw the whole empire from one end of it to the other into mortal convulsions. What is it that can satisfy the furious and perturbed mind of this man? is it not enough for him that such projects have alienated our colonies from the mother country, and not to propose violently to tear our sister kingdoms also from our side, and to convince every dependent part of the empire, that, when a little money is to be raised, we have no sort of regard to their antient customs, their opinions, their circumstances, or their affections? He has however a *douceur* for Ireland in his pocket; benefits in trade, by opening the woollen manufacture to that nation. A very right idea in my opinion; but not more strong in reason, than likely to be opposed by the most powerful and most violent of all local prejudices and popular passions. First, a fire is already kindled by his schemes of taxation in America; he then proposes one which will set all Ireland in a blaze; and his way of quenching both is by a plan which may kindle perhaps ten times a greater flame in Britain.

Will the author pledge himself, previous to his proposal of such a tax, to carry this enlargement of the Irish trade? if he does not, then the tax will be certain; the benefit will be less than problematical. In this view, his compensation to Ireland vanishes into smoke; the tax, to their prejudices, will appear stark naked in the light of an act of arbitrary power and oppression. But, if he should propose the benefit and tax together, then the people of Ireland, a very high and spirited people, would think it the worst bargain in the world. They would look upon the one as wholly vitiated and poisoned by the other; and, if they could not be separated, would infallibly resist them both together. Here would be taxes indeed, amounting to an handsome sum; £. 100,000 very effectually voted, and passed through the best and most authentic forms; but how to be collected?—This is his perpetual manner. One of his projects depends for success upon another project, and this upon a third, all of them equally visionary. His finance is like the Indian philosophy; his Earth is poised on the horns of a Bull, his Bull stands on an Elephant, his Elephant is supported by a Tortoise; and so on for ever.

As to his American £. 200,000 a year, he is satisfied to repeat gravely, as he has done an hundred times before, that the Americans are able to pay

P. 37.

pay it. Well, and what then? does he lay open any part of his plan how they may be compelled to pay it, without plunging ourselves into calamities that outweigh ten fold the proposed benefit? or does he shew how they may be induced to submit to it quietly? or does he give any thing like satisfaction concerning the mode of levying it, in commercial colonies one of the most important and difficult of all considerations? Nothing like it. To the stamp act, whatever its excellencies may be, I think he will not in reality recur, or even choose to assert that he means to do so, in case his minister should come again into power. If he does, I will predict that some of the fastest friends of that minister will desert him upon this point. As to port duties, he has damned them all in the lump, by declaring them "contrary to the first principles of colonization, and not less prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain than to those of the colonies." Surely this single observation of his, ought to have taught him a little caution; he ought to have begun to doubt, whether there is not something in the nature of commercial colonies, which renders them an unfit object of taxation; when port duties, so large a fund of revenue in almost all countries, are by himself found, in this case, not only improper, but destructive. However, he has here pretty well narrowed the field of taxation. Stamp act, hardly to be resumed. Port duties, mischievous. Excises, I believe he will scarcely think worth the collection (if any revenue should be so) in America. Land tax (notwithstanding his opinion of its immense use to agriculture), he will not directly propose, before he has thought again and again on the subject. Indeed he very readily recommends it for Ireland, and seems to think it not improper for America; because, he observes, they already raise most of their taxes internally, including this tax. A most curious reason truly! because their lands are already heavily burthened, he thinks it right to burthen them still further. But he will recollect, for surely he cannot be ignorant of it, that the lands of America are not, as in England, let at a rent certain in money, and therefore cannot, as here, be taxed at a certain pound rate. They value them in gross among themselves; and none but themselves in their several districts can value them. Without their hearty concurrence and cooperation, it is evident we cannot advance a step in the assessing or collecting any land tax. As to the taxes which in some places the Americans pay by the acre, they are merely duties of regulation; they are small; and to encrease them, notwithstanding the secret virtues of a land tax, would be the most effectual means of preventing that cultivation they are intended to promote. Besides, the whole country is heavily in arrear already for land taxes and quit rents. They have different methods of taxation in the different provinces, agreeable to their several local circumstances. In New England by far the greatest

greatest part of their revenue is raised by *faculty taxes* and *capitations*. Such is the method in many others. It is obvious that parliament, unassisted by the colonies themselves, cannot take so much as a single step in this mode of taxation. Then what tax is it he will impose? Why, after all the boasting speeches and writings of his faction for these four years, after all the vain expectations which they have held out to a deluded publick, this their great advocate, after twisting the subject every way, after writhing himself into every posture, after knocking at every door, is obliged fairly to abandon every mode of taxation whatsoever in America. He thinks it the best method for parliament to impose the sum, and reserve P. 37, 38. the account to itself, leaving the mode of taxation to the colonies. But how and in what proportions? what does the author say? O, not a single syllable on this the most material part of the whole question. Will he, in parliament, undertake to settle the proportions of such payments from Nova Scotia to Nevis, in no fewer than six and twenty different countries, varying in almost every possible circumstance one from another? if he does, I tell him, he adjourns his revenue to a very long day. If he leaves it to themselves to settle these proportions, he adjourns it to dooms-day.

Then what does he get by this method on the side of acquiescence? will the people of America relish this course, of giving and granting and applying their money, the better because their assemblies are made commissioners of the taxes? This is far worse than all his former projects; for here, if the assemblies shall refuse, or delay, or be negligent, or fraudulent, in this newly imposed duty, we are wholly without remedy; and neither our custom-house officers, nor our troops, nor our armed ships, can be of the least use in the collection. Nothing can be a more contemptible idea (I will not call it an oppressive one, the harshness is lost in the folly) than that of proposing to get any revenue from the Americans but by their freest and most chearful consent. Most monied men know their own interest right well; and are as able, as any financier, in the valuation of risques. Yet I think this financier will scarcely find that adventurer hardy enough, at any premium, to advance a shilling upon a vote of such taxes. Let him name the man, or set of men, that would do it. This is the only proof of the value of revenues; what would an interested man rate them at? His subscription would be at ninety nine *per cent.* discount the very first day of its opening. Here is our only national security from ruin; a security upon which no man in his senses would venture a shilling of his fortune. Yet he puts down those articles as gravely in his supply for his peace establishment, as if the money had been all fairly lodged in the exchequer.

American revenue,
Ireland;

£.
200.000 P. 42.
100.000
Very

Very handsome indeed! but if supply is to be got in such a manner, farewell the lucrative mystery of finance! If you are to be credited for savings, without shewing how, why, or with what safety, they are to be made; and for revenues, without specifying on what articles, or by what means, or at what expence, they are to be collected; there is not a clerk in a public office who may not outbid this author, or his friend, for the department of chancellor of the exchequer; not an apprentice in the city, that will not strike out, with the same advantages, the same, or a much larger, plan of supply.

Here is the whole of what belongs to the author's scheme for saving us from impending destruction. Take it even in its most favourable point of view, as a thing within possibility; and imagine what must be the wisdom of this gentleman, or his opinion of ours, who could first think of representing this nation in such a state, as no friend can look upon but with horror, and scarce an enemy without compassion, and afterwards of diverting himself with such inadequate, impracticable, puerile methods for our relief? If these had been the dreams of some unknown, unnamed, and nameless writer, they would excite no alarm; their weakness had been an antidote to their malignity. But as they are universally believed to be written by the hand, or, what amounts to the same thing, under the immediate direction, of a person who has been in the management of the highest affairs, and may soon be in the same situation, I think it is not to be reckoned amongst our greatest consolations, that the yet remaining power of this kingdom is to be employed in an attempt to realize notions, that are at once so frivolous, and so full of danger. That consideration will justify me in dwelling a little longer on the difficulties of the nation, and the solutions of our author.

I am then persuaded that he cannot be in the least alarmed about our situation, let his outcry be what he pleases. I will give him a reason for my opinion, which, I think, he cannot dispute. All that he bestows upon the nation, which it does not possess without him, and supposing it all sure money, amounts to no more than a sum of £. 300.000 a year. This, he thinks, will do the business compleatly, and render us flourishing at home, and respectable abroad. If the option between glory and shame, if our salvation or destruction, depended on this sum, it is impossible that he should have been active, and made a merit of that activity, in taking off a shilling in the pound of the land tax, which came up to his grand desideratum, and upwards of £. 100.000 more. By this manoeuvre he left our trade, navigation and manufactures on the verge of destruction, our finances in ruin, our credit expiring, Ireland on the point of being ceded to France, the colonies of being torn to pieces, the succession of the crown at the mercy of our great rival, and the

the kingdom itself on the very point of becoming tributary to that haughty power. All this for want of £. 300.000; for I defy the reader to point out any other revenue, or any other precise and defined scheme of politics, which he assigns for our redemption.

I know that two things may be said in his defence, as bad reasons are always at hand in an indifferent cause, that he was not sure the money would be applied as he thinks it ought to be, by the present ministers. I think as ill of them, as he does to the full. They have done very near as much mischief as they can do, to a constitution so robust as this. Nothing can make them more dangerous, but that as they are already in general composed of his disciples and instruments, they may add to the public calamity of their own measures, the adoption of his projects. But be the ministers what they may, the author knows that they could not avoid applying this £. 450.000 to the service of the establishment, as faithfully as he, or any other minister, could do. I say they could not avoid it, and have no merit at all for the application. But supposing that they should greatly mismanage this revenue. Here is a good deal of room for mistake and prodigality before you come to the edge of ruin. The difference between the amount of that real, and his imaginary revenue is, £. 150.000 a year, at least; a tolerable sum for them to play with: and this, in one article, might compensate the difference between the author's oeconomy, and their profusion; and still, notwithstanding their vices and ignorance, the nation might be saved. The author ought also to recollect, that a good man would hardly deny, even to the worst of ministers, the means of doing their duty; especially in a crisis when our being depended on supplying them with some means or other. In such a case their penury of mind, in discovering resources, would make it rather the more necessary, not to strip such poor providers of the little stock they had in hand.

Besides, here is another subject of distress, and a very serious one, which puts us again to a stand. The author may possibly not come into power (I only state the possibility); he may not always continue in it: and if the contrary to all this should fortunately for us happen, what insurance on his life can be made for a sum adequate to his loss? Then we are thus unluckily situated, that the *chance* of an American and Irish revenue of £. 300.000 to be managed by him, is to save us from ruin two or three years hence at best, to make us happy at home and glorious abroad; and the actual possession of £. 450.000 English taxes cannot so much as protract our ruin without him. *Propria hæc si dona fuissent!* So we are staked on four chances; his power, its permanence, the success of his projects, and the duration of his life. Any one of these failing,

we are gone. This is no unfair representation; ultimately all hangs on his life, because, in his account of every set of men that have held or supported administration, he finds neither virtue or ability in any but himself. Indeed he pays (through their measures) some compliments to Lord Bute and Lord Despenfer. But to the latter, this is, I suppose, but a civility to old acquaintance; to the former, a little stroke of politicks. We may therefore fairly say, that our only hope is his life; and he has, to make it the more so, taken care to cut off any resource which we possessed independent of him.

In the next place it may be said, to excuse any appearance of inconsistency between the author's actions and his declarations, that he thought it right to relieve the landed interest, and lay the burthen, where it ought to lie, on the colonies. What to take off a revenue so necessary to our being, before any thing whatsoever was acquired in the place of it? In prudence he ought to have waited at least for the first quarter's receipt of the new anonymous American revenue, and Irish land tax. Is there something so specific for our disorders in American, and something so poisonous in English money, that one is to heal, the other to destroy us? To say that the landed interest *could* not continue to pay it for a year or two longer, is more than the author will attempt to prove. To say that they *would* pay it no longer, is to treat the landed interest, in my opinion, very scurvily. To suppose that the gentry, clergy, and freeholders of England do not rate the commerce, the credit, the religion, the liberty, the independency of their country, and the succession of their crown, at a shilling in the pound land tax! They never gave him reason to think so meanly of them. And if I am rightly informed, when that measure was debated in parliament, a very different reason was assigned by the author's great friend, as well as by others, for that reduction: one very different from the critical and almost desperate state of our finances. Some people then endeavoured to prove, that the reduction might be made without detriment to the national credit, or the due support of a proper peace establishment; otherwise it is obvious that the reduction could not be defended in argument. So that this author cannot despair so much of the commonwealth without this American and Irish revenue, as he pretends to do. If he does, the reader sees how handsomely he has provided for us, by voting away one revenue, and by giving us a pamphlet on the other.

I do not mean to blame the relief which was then given by parliament to the land. It was grounded on very weighty reasons. The administration contended only for its continuance for a year, in order to have the merit of taking off the shilling in the pound immediately before the elections; and thus to bribe the freeholders of England with their own money.

It

It is true the author, in his estimate of ways and means, takes credit for £. 400,000 a year, *Indian revenue*. But he will not very positively insist, that we should put this revenue to the account of his plans or his power; and for a pretty plain reason: we are already near two years in possession of it. By what means we came to that possession, is a pretty long story; however, I shall give nothing more than a short abstract of the proceeding, in order to see whether the author will take to himself any part in that measure.

The fact is this; the East India company had for a good while solicited the ministry for a negotiation, by which they proposed to pay largely for some advantages in their trade, and for the renewal of their charter. This had been the former method of transacting with that body. Government having only leased the monopoly for short terms, the company has been obliged to resort to it frequently for renewals. These two parties had always negotiated (on the true principle of credit) not as government and subject, but as equal dealers, on the footing of mutual advantage. The public had derived great benefit from such dealing. But at that time new ideas prevailed. The ministry, instead of listening to the proposals of that company, chose to set up a claim of the crown to their possessions. The original plan seems to have been, to get the house of commons to compliment the crown with a sort of juridical declaration of a title to the company's acquisitions in India; which the crown, on its part, with the best air in the world, was to bestow upon the public. Then it would come to the turn of the house of commons again to be liberal and grateful to the crown. The civil list debts were to be paid off; with perhaps a pretty augmentation of income. All this was to be done on the most public-spirited principles, and with a politeness and mutual interchange of good offices, that could not but have charmed. But, what was best of all, these civilities were to be without a farthing of charge to either of the kind and obliging parties.—The East India company was to be covered with infamy and disgrace, and at the same time was to pay the whole bill.

In consequence of this scheme, the terrors of a parliamentary enquiry were hung over them. A judicature was asserted in parliament to try this question. But, lest this judicial character should chance to inspire certain stubborn ideas of law and right, it was argued, that the judicature was arbitrary, and ought not to determine by the rules of law, but by their opinion of policy and expediency. Nothing exceeded the violence of some of the managers, except their impotence. They were bewildered by their passions, and by their want of knowledge or want of consideration of the subject. The more they advanced, the further they found themselves from their object.—All things ran into confusion. The ministers quarrelled among themselves. They disclaimed one another. They suspended violence, and shrunk from treaty. The inquiry was almost at its last gasp; when

when some active persons of the company were given to understand, that this hostile proceeding was only set up in *in terrorem*; that government was far from an intention of seizing upon the possessions of the company. Administration, they said, was sensible, that the idea was in every light full of absurdity; and that such a seizure was not more out of their power, than remote from their wishes; and therefore, if the company would come in a liberal manner to the house, they certainly could not fail of putting a speedy end to this disagreeable business, and of opening the way to an advantageous treaty.

On this hint the company acted: they came at once to a resolution of getting rid of the difficulties which arose from the complication of their trade with their revenue; a step which despoiled them of their best defensive armour, and put them at once into the power of administration. They threw their whole stock of every kind, the revenues, the trade, and even their debt from government, into one fund, which they computed on the surest grounds would amount to £. 800.000, with a large probable surplus for the payment of debt. Then they agreed to divide this sum in equal portions between themselves and the public, £. 400.000 to each. This gave to the proprietors of that fund an annual augmentation of no more than £. 80.000 dividend. They ought to receive from government £. 120.000 for the loan of their capital. So that in fact the whole, which on this plan they reserved to themselves, from their vast revenues, from their extensive trade, and in consideration of the great risks and mighty expences which purchased these advantages, amounted to no more than £. 280.000, whilst government was to receive, as I said, £. 400.000.

This proposal was thought by themselves liberal indeed; and they expected the highest applauses for it. However, their reception was very different from their expectations. When they brought up their plan to the house of commons, the offer, as it was natural, of £. 400.000, was very well relished. But nothing could be more disgusting than the £. 80.000 which the company had divided amongst themselves. A violent tempest of public indignation and fury rose against them. The heads of people turned. The company was held well able to pay £. 400.000 a year to government; but bankrupts, if they attempted to divide the fifth part of it among themselves. An *ex post facto* law was brought in with great precipitation, for annulling this dividend. In the bill was inserted a clause, which suspended for about a year the right, which, under the public faith, the company enjoyed, of making their own dividends. Such was the disposition and temper of the house, that, although the plain face of facts, reason, arithmetic, all the authority, parts, and eloquence in the kingdom, were against this bill; though all the chancellors of the exchequer, who had held that office from the beginning of this reign, opposed it, yet, a few placemen
of

of the subordinate departments sprung out of their ranks, took the lead, and, by an opinion of *some sort of secret support*, carried the bill with an high hand, leaving the then secretary of state, and the chancellor of the exchequer, in a very moderate minority. In this distracted situation, the managers of the bill, notwithstanding their triumph, did not venture to propose the payment of the civil list debt. The chancellor of the exchequer was not in good humour enough, after his late defeat by his own troops, to cooperate in such a design; so they made an act, to lock up the money in the exchequer until they should have time to look about them, and settle among themselves what they are to do with it.

Thus ended this unparalleled transaction. The author, I believe, will not claim any part of the glory of it: he will leave it whole and entire to the authors of the measure. The money was the voluntary free gift of the company; the rescinding bill was the act of legislature, to which they and we owe submission: the author has nothing to do with the one or with the other. However, he cannot avoid rubbing himself against this subject, merely for the pleasure of stirring controversies, and gratifying a certain pruriency of taxation that seems to infect his blood. It is merely to indulge himself in speculations of taxing, that he chooses to harangue on this subject. For he takes credit for no greater sum than the public is already in possession of. He does not hint, that the company means, or has ever shewn any disposition, if managed with common prudence, to pay less in future; and he cannot doubt that the present ministry are as well inclined to drive them, by their mock enquiries, and real rescinding bills, as he can possibly be with his taxes. Besides, it is obvious, that as great a sum might have been drawn from that company, without affecting property, or shaking the constitution, or endangering the principle of public credit, or running into his golden dreams of cockets on the Ganges, or visions of stamp duties on *Perwanna's*, *Dustucks*, *Kistbundeas*, and *Husbulbookums*. For once, I will disappoint him in this part of the dispute, and only in a very few words recommend to his consideration, how he is to get off the dangerous idea of taxing a public fund, if he levies those duties in England; and if he is to levy them in India, what provision he has made for a revenue establishment there; supposing that he undertakes this new scheme of finance independently of the company, and against its inclinations.

So much for the revenues, which are nothing but his visions, or already the national possessions without any act of his. It is easy to parade with an high talk of parliamentary rights, of the universality of legislative powers, and of uniform taxation. Men of sense, when new projects come before them, always think, a discourse proving the mere right or mere power of acting in the manner proposed, to be no more than a very unpleasant way of mispending time. They must see the object to be of proper
I 2 magnitude

magnitude to engage them; they must see the means of compassing it to be next to certain; the mischiefs not to counterbalance the profit; they will examine how a proposed imposition or regulation agrees with the opinions of those who are likely to be affected by it; they will not despise the consideration even of their habitudes and prejudices. They wish to know how it accords or disagrees with the true spirit of prior establishments, whether of government or of finance; because they well know, that in the complicated oeconomy of great kingdoms, and immense revenues, which, in a length of time, and by a variety of accidents, have coalesced into a sort of body, an attempt towards a compulsory equality in all circumstances, and an exact practical definition of the supreme rights in every case, is the most dangerous and chimerical of all enterprizes. The old building stands well enough, though part Gothic, part Grecian, and part Chinese, until an attempt is made to square it into uniformity. Then it may come down upon our heads all together in much uniformity of ruin; and great will be the fall thereof. Some people, instead of inclining to debate the matter, only feel a sort of nausea, when they are told, that "protection calls for supply," and that "all the parts ought to contribute to the support of the whole." Strange argument for great and grave deliberation! As if the same end may not, and must not be compassed according to its circumstances, by a great diversity of ways. Thus in Great Britain some of our establishments are apt for the support of credit. They stand therefore upon a principle of their own, distinct from, and in some respects contrary to, the relation between prince and subject. It is a new species of contract superinduced upon the old contract of the state. The idea of power must as much as possible be banished from it; for power and credit are things adverse, incompatible, *Non bene conveniunt, nec in una sede morantur*. Such establishments are our great *monied* companies. To tax them would be critical and dangerous, and contradictory to the very purpose of their institution; which is credit, and cannot therefore be taxation. But the nation, when it gave up that power, did not give up the advantage; but supposed, and with reason, that government was overpaid in credit for what it seemed to lose in authority. In such a case, to talk of the rights of sovereignty, is quite idle. Other establishments supply other modes of public contribution. Our *trading* companies, as well as individual importers, are a fit subject of a revenue by customs. Some establishments pay us by a *monopoly* of their consumption and their produce. This, nominally no tax, in reality comprehends all taxes. Such establishments are our colonies. To tax them, would be as erroneous in policy, as rigorous in equity. Ireland supplies us by furnishing troops in war; and by bearing part of our foreign establishment in peace. She aids us at all times by the money that her absentees spend amongst us; which is no small part

of the rental of that kingdom. Thus Ireland contributes her part. Some objects bear port duties. Some are fitter for an inland excise. The mode varies, the object is the same. To strain these from their old and inveterate leanings might impair the old benefit, and not answer the end of the new project. Among all the great men of antiquity, *Procrustes* shall never be my hero of legislation; with his iron bed, the allegory of his government, and the type of some modern policy, by which the long limb was to be cut short, and the short tortured into length. Such was this state bed of uniformity! He would, I conceive, be a very indifferent farmer, who complained that his sheep did not plough, or his horses yield him wool; though it would be an idea full of equality. They may think this right in rustic oeconomy, who think it available in the politic;

Qui Bavianum non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi!

Atque idem jungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.

As the author has stated this Indian taxation for no visible purpose relative to his plan of supply; so he has stated many other projects with as little, if any distinct end; unless perhaps to shew you how full he is of projects for the public good; and what vast expectations may be formed of him or his friends, if they should be translated into administration. It is always from some opinion that these speculations may one day become our public measures, that I think it worth while to trouble the reader at all about them.

Two of them stand out in high relievio beyond the rest. The first is a change in the internal representation of this country, by enlarging our number of constituents. The second is an addition to our representatives, by new American members of parliament. I pass over here all considerations how far such a system will be an improvement of our constitution according to any sound theory. Not that I mean to condemn such speculative enquiries concerning this great object of the national attention. They may tend to clear doubtful points, and possibly may lead, as they have often done, to real improvements. What I object to, is their introduction into a discourse relating to the immediate state of our affairs, and recommending plans of practical government. In this view, I see nothing in them but what is usual with the author; an attempt to raise discontent in the people of England, to balance those discontents the measures of his friends had already raised in America. What other reason can he have for suggesting, that we are not happy enough to enjoy a sufficient number of voters in England? I believe that most sober thinkers on this subject are rather of opinion, that our fault is on the other side; and that it would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the pattern of our best laws, by lessening the number, to add to the weight and independency of our voters. And truly, considering the

immense and dangerous charge of elections; the prostitute and daring venality, the corruption of manners, the idleness and profligacy of the lower sort of voters, no prudent man would propose to encrease such an evil, if it be, as I fear it is, out of our power to administer to it any remedy. The author proposes nothing further. If he has any improvements that may balance or may lessen this inconvenience, he has thought proper to keep them as usual in his own breast. Since he has been so reserved, I should have wished he had been as cautious with regard to the project itself. First, because he observes justly, that his scheme, however it might improve the platform, can add nothing to the authority of the legislature; much I fear it will have a contrary operation. For, authority depending on opinion at least as much as on duty, an idea circulated among the people that our constitution is not so perfect as it ought to be, before you are sure of mending it, is a certain method of lessening it in the public opinion. Of this irreverent opinion of parliament, the author himself complains in one part of his book; and he endeavours to encrease it in the other. Has he well considered what an immense operation any change in our constitution is? how many discussions, parties, and passions, it will necessarily excite; and when you open it to enquiry in one part, where the enquiry will stop? Experience shews us, that no time can be fit for such changes but a time of general confusion; when good men, finding every thing already broke up, think it right to take advantage of the opportunity of such derangement in favour of an useful alteration. Perhaps a time of the greatest security and tranquillity both at home and abroad may likewise be fit; but will the author affirm this to be just such a time? Transferring an idea of military to civil prudence, he ought to know how dangerous it is to make an alteration of your disposition in the face of an enemy.

Now comes his American representation. Here too, as usual, he takes no notice of any difficulty, or proposes any sort of solution. He throws you his politics, as he does his revenue; do you make something of them if you can. Is not the reader a little astonished at the proposal of an American representation from that quarter? It is proposed merely as a project of speculative improvement; not from the necessity in the case, not to add any thing to the authority of parliament: but

P. 40.
P. 39. 40.

that we may afford a greater attention to the concerns of the Americans, and give them a better opportunity of stating their grievances, and of obtaining redress. I am glad to find the author has at length discovered, that we have not given a sufficient attention to their concerns, or a proper redress to their grievances. His great friend would once have been exceedingly displeas'd with any person, who should tell him, that he did not attend sufficiently to those concerns. He thought he did so, when

when he regulated the colonies over and over again: he thought he did so, when he formed two general systems of revenue; one of port-duties, and the other of internal taxation. These systems suppos'd, or ought to suppose, the greatest attention to, and the most detailed information of, all their affairs. However, by contending for the American representation, he seems at last driven virtually to admit, that great caution ought to be used in the exercise of *all* our legislative rights over an object so remote from our eye, and so little connected with our immediate feelings; that in prudence we ought not to be quite so ready with our taxes, until we can secure the desired representation in parliament. Perhaps it may be some time before this hopeful scheme can be brought to perfect maturity; although the author seems to be no wise aware of any obstructions that lie in the way of it. He talks of his union, just as he does of his taxes and his savings, with as much *sang froid* and ease, as if his wish and the enjoyment were exactly the same thing. He appears not to have troubled his head with the infinite difficulty of settling that representation on a fair balance of wealth and numbers throughout the several provinces of America and the West-Indies, under such an infinite variety of circumstances. It costs him nothing to fight with nature, and to conquer the order of Providence, which manifestly opposes itself to the possibility of such a parliamentary union.

But let us, to indulge his passion for projects and power, suppose the happy time arrived, when the author comes into the ministry, and is to realise his speculations. The writs are issued for electing members for America and the West-Indies. Some provinces receive them in six weeks, some in ten, some in twenty. A vessel may be lost, and then some provinces may not receive them at all. But let it be, that they all receive them at once, and in the shortest time. A proper space must be given for proclamation and for the election; some weeks at least. But the members are chosen, and if ships are ready to sail, in about six more they arrive in London. In the mean time the parliament has sat, and business far advanced without American representatives. Nay, by this time, it may happen, that the parliament is dissolved; and then the members ship themselves again, to be again elected. The writs may arrive in America, before the poor members of a parliament in which they never sat, can arrive at their several provinces. A new interest is formed, and they find other members are chosen whilst they are on the high seas. But if the writs and members arrive together, here is at best a new trial of skill amongst the candidates, after one set of them have well aired themselves with their two voyages of 6000 miles.

However, in order to facilitate every thing to the author, we will suppose them all once more elected, and steering again to old England with a good heart, and a fair westerly wind in their stern. On their arrival, they

they find all in a hurry and bustle; in and out; condolence and congratulation; the crown is demised. Another parliament is to be called. Away back to America again on a fourth voyage, and to a third election. Does the author mean to make our kings as immortal in their personal as in their politick character? Or, whilst he bountifully adds to their life, will he take from them their prerogative of dissolving parliaments, in favour of the American union? Or are the American representatives to be perpetual, and to feel neither demises of the crown, nor dissolutions of parliament?

But these things may be granted to him without bringing him much nearer to his point. What does he think of re-election? is the American member the only one who is not to take a place, or the only one to be exempted from the ceremony of re-election? How will this great politician preserve the rights of electors, the fairness of returns, and the privilege of the house of commons, as the sole judge of such contests? It would undoubtedly be a glorious sight to have eight or ten petitions or double returns, from Boston and Barbadoes, from Philadelphia and Jamaica, the members returned, and the petitioners with all their train of attorneys, solicitors, mayors, select-men, provost marshals, and about five hundred or a thousand witnesses, come to the bar of the house of commons. Possibly we might be interrupted in the enjoyment of this pleasing spectacle, if a war should break out, and our constitutional fleet, loaded with members of parliament, returning officers, petitioners, and witnesses, the electors and elected, should become a prize to the French, or Spaniards, and be conveyed to Carthage, or to La vera Cruz, and from thence perhaps to Mexico or Lima, there to remain until a cartel for members of parliament can be settled, or until the war is ended.

In truth, the author has little studied this business, or he might have known, that some of the most considerable provinces of America, such for instance as Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay, have not in each of them, two men who can afford, at a distance from their estates, to spend a thousand pounds a year. How can these provinces be represented at Westminster? If their province pays them, they are American agents, with salaries, and not independent members of parliament. It is true, that formerly in England members had salaries from their constituents; but they all had salaries, and were all, in this way, upon a par. If these American representatives have no salaries, then they must add to the list of our pensioners and dependants at court, or they must starve. There is no alternative.

Enough of this visionary union; in which much extravagance appears without any fancy, and the judgement is shocked without any thing to refresh the imagination. It looks as if the author had dropped down from the

the moon, without any knowledge of the general nature of this globe, of the general nature of its inhabitants, without the least acquaintance with the affairs of this country. Governor Pownall has handled the same subject. To do him justice, he treats it upon far more rational principles of speculation; and much more like a man of business. He thinks (erroneously, I conceive) but he does think, that our legislative rights are incomplete without such a representation. It is no wonder therefore, that he endeavours by every means to obtain it. Not like our author, who is always on velvet, he is aware of some difficulties; and he proposes some solutions. But nature is too hard for both these authors; and America is, and ever will be, without actual representation in the house of commons: nor will any minister be wild enough even to propose such a representation in parliament; however he may choose to throw out that project, together with others equally far from his real opinions, and remote from his designs, merely to fall in with the different views, and captivate the affections, of different sorts of men.

Whether these projects arise from the author's real political principles, or are only brought out in subservience to his political views, they compose the whole of any thing that is like precise and definite, which the author has given us to expect from that administration which is so much the subject of his praises and prayers. As to his general propositions, that "there is a deal of difference between impossibilities and great difficulties;" "that a great scheme cannot be carried unless made the business of successive administrations;" that "virtuous and able men are the fittest to serve their country;" all this I look on no more than so much rubble to fill up the spaces between the regular masonry. Pretty much in the same light, I cannot forbear considering his detached observations on commerce; such as, that "the system for colony regulations would be very simple, and mutually beneficial to Great Britain and her colonies, if the old navigation laws were adhered to." That "the transportation should be in all cases in ships belonging to British subjects." That "even British ships should not be generally received into the colonies from any part of Europe, except the dominions of Great Britain."—That "it is unreasonable that corn and such like products should be restrained to come first to a British port." What do all these fine observations signify? some of them condemn as ill practices, things that never were practised at all. Some recommend to be done, things that always have been done. Others indeed convey, though obliquely and loosely, some insinuations highly dangerous to our commerce. If I could prevail on myself to think the author meant to ground any practice upon these general propositions, I should think it very necessary to ask a few questions about some of them. For instance, what does he mean by talking of an adherence to the old navigation laws? Does he mean, that

K

that

that the particular law, 12 Car. II, c. 19, commonly called the act of navigation, is to be adhered to, and that the several subsequent additions, amendments, and exceptions, ought to be all repealed? If so, he will make a strange havock in the whole system of our trade laws, which have been universally acknowledged to be full as well founded in the alterations and exceptions, as the act of Charles the Second, in the original provisions; and to pursue full as wisely, the great end of that very politic law, the increase of the British navigation. I fancy the writer could hardly propose any thing more alarming to those immediately interested in that navigation than such a repeal. If he does not mean this, he has got no farther than a nugatory proposition, which nobody can contradict, and for which no man is the wiser.

That "the regulations for the colony trade would be few and simple if the old navigation laws were adhered to," I utterly deny as a fact. That they ought to be so, sounds well enough; but this proposition is of the same nugatory nature with some of the former. The regulations for the colony trade ought not to be more nor fewer, nor more or less complex, than the occasion requires. And, as that trade is in a great measure a system of art and restriction, they can be neither few nor simple. It is true, that the very principle may be destroyed by multiplying to excess the means of securing it. Never did a minister depart more from the author's ideas of simplicity, or more embarrass the trade of America with the multiplicity and intricacy of regulations and ordinances, than his boasted minister of 1764. That minister seemed to be possessed with something, hardly short of a rage, for regulation and restriction. He had so multiplied bonds, certificates, affidavits, warrants, sufferances, and cockets; had supported them with such severe penalties, and extended them without the least consideration of circumstances to so many objects, that, had they all continued in their original force, commerce must speedily have expired under them. Some of them, the ministry which gave them birth, was obliged to destroy: with their own hand they signed the condemnation of their own regulations; confessing in so many words, in the preamble of their act of the 5th Geo. III. that some of these regulations had laid *an unnecessary restraint on the trade and correspondence of his Majesty's American subjects*. This, in that ministry, was a candid confession of a mistake; but every alteration made in those regulations by their successors, is to be the effect of envy, and American misrepresentation. So much for the author's simplicity in regulation.

I have now gone through all which I think immediately essential in the author's ideas of war, of peace, of the comparative states of England and France, of our actual situation; of his projects of oeconomy, of finance, of commerce, and of constitutional improvement. There remains nothing

now

now to be considered, except his heavy censures upon the administration which was formed in 1765; which is commonly known by the name of the Marquis of Rockingham's administration, as the administration which preceded it is by that of Mr. Grenville. These censures relate chiefly to three heads: 1. To the repeal of the American stamp act. 2. To the commercial regulations then made. 3. To the course of foreign negotiations during that short period.

A person who knew nothing of public affairs but from the writings of this author, would be led to conclude, that, at the time of the change in June 1765, some well-digested system of administration, founded in national strength, and in the affections of the people, proceeding in all points with the most reverential and tender regard to the laws, and pursuing with equal wisdom and success every thing which could tend to the internal prosperity, and to the external honour and dignity of this country, had been all at once subverted by an irruption of a sort of wild, licentious, unprincipled invaders, who wantonly, and with a barbarous rage, had defaced a thousand fair monuments of the constitutional and political skill of their predecessors. It is natural indeed that this author should have some dislike to the administration which was formed in 1765. Its views in most things were different from those of his friends; in some, altogether opposite to them. It is impossible that both of these administrations should be the objects of public esteem. Their different principles compose some of the strongest political lines which discriminate the parties even now subsisting amongst us. The ministers of 1764 are not indeed followed by very many in their opposition; yet a large part of the people now in office entertain, or pretend to entertain, sentiments entirely conformable to theirs; whilst some of the former colleagues of the ministry which was formed in 1765, however they may have abandoned the connexion, and contradicted by their conduct the principles of their former friends, pretend, on their parts, still to adhere to the same maxims. All the lesser divisions, which are indeed rather names of personal attachment than of party distinction, fall in with the one or the other of these leading parties.

I intend to state as shortly as I am able, the general condition of public affairs, and the disposition of the minds of men, at the time of the remarkable change of system in 1765. The reader will have thereby a more distinct view of the comparative merits of these several plans, and will receive more satisfaction concerning the ground and reason of the measures which were then pursued, than, I believe, can be derived from the perusal of those partial representations contained in the State of the Nation, and the other writings of those who have continued, for now near three years,

K 2

in

in the undisturbed possession of the press. This will, I hope, be some apology for my dwelling a little on this part of the subject.

On the resignation of the Earl of Bute, in 1763, our affairs had been delivered into the hands of three ministers of his recommendation; Mr. Grenville, the Earl of Egremont, and the Earl of Halifax. This arrangement, notwithstanding the retirement of Lord Bute, announced to the publick a continuance of the same measures; nor was there more reason to expect a change from the death of the Earl of Egremont. The Earl of Sandwich supplied his place. The Duke of Bedford, and the gentlemen who act in that connexion, and whose general character and politics were sufficiently understood, added to the strength of the ministry, without making any alteration in their plan of conduct. Such was the constitution of the ministry which was changed in 1765.

As to their politics, the principles of the peace of Paris governed in foreign affairs. In domestic, the same scheme prevailed, of contradicting the opinions, and disgracing most of the persons, who had been countenanced and employed in the late reign. The inclinations of the people were little attended to; and a disposition to the use of forcible methods ran through the whole tenour of administration. The nation in general was uneasy and dissatisfied. Sober men saw causes for it in the constitution of the ministry, and the conduct of the ministers. The ministers, who have usually a short method on such occasions, attributed their unpopularity wholly to the efforts of faction. However this might be, the licentiousness and tumults of the common people, and the contempt of government, of which our author so often and so bitterly complains, as owing to the mismanagement of the subsequent administrations, had at no time risen to a greater or a more dangerous height. The measures taken to suppress that spirit, were as violent and licentious as the spirit itself; injudicious, precipitate, and some of them illegal. Instead of allaying, they tended infinitely to inflame the distemper; and whoever will be at the least pains to examine, will find those measures, not only the causes of the tumults which then prevailed, but the real sources of almost all the disorders which have arisen since that time: more intent on making a victim to party, than an example of justice, they blundered in the method of pursuing their vengeance. By this means a discovery was made of many practices, common indeed in the office of secretary of state, but wholly repugnant to our laws, and the genius of the English constitution. One of the worst of these was, the wanton and indiscriminate seizure of papers, even in cases where the safety of the state was not pretended in justification of so harsh a proceeding. The temper of the ministry had excited a jealousy, which made the people more than commonly vigilant, concerning every power which was exercised by

government. The abuse, however sanctioned by custom, was evident; but the ministry, instead of resting in a prudent inactivity, or (what would have been still more prudent) taking the lead, in quieting the minds of the people, and ascertaining the law upon those delicate points, made use of the whole influence of government to prevent a parliamentary resolution against the practices of office. And lest the colourable reasons, offered in argument against this parliamentary procedure, should be mistaken for the real motives of their conduct, all the advantage of privilege, all the arts and finesses of pleading, and great sums of public money, were lavished, to prevent any decision upon those practices in the courts of justice. In the mean time, in order to weaken, since they could not immediately destroy, the liberty of the press, the privilege of parliament was voted away in all accusations for a seditious libel. The freedom of debate in parliament itself was no less menaced. Officers of the army, of long and meritorious service, and of small fortunes, were chosen as victims for a single vote; by an exertion of ministerial power, which had been very rarely used, and which is extremely unjust, as depriving men not only of a place, but a profession, and is indeed of the most pernicious example both in a civil and a military light.

Whilst all things were managed at home with such a spirit of disorderly despotism; abroad there was a proportionable abatement of all spirit. Some of our most just and valuable claims were in a manner abandoned. This indeed seemed not very inconsistent conduct in the ministers who had made the treaty of Paris. With regard to our domestic affairs, there was no want of industry; but there was a great deficiency of temper, and judgment, and manly comprehension of the public interest. The nation certainly wanted relief, and government attempted to administer it. Two ways were principally chosen for this great purpose. The first by regulation; the second by new funds of revenue. Agreeably to this plan, a new naval establishment was formed at a good deal of expence, and to little effect, to aid in the collection of the customs. Regulation was added to regulation; and the strictest and most unreserved orders were given, for a prevention of all contraband trade here, and in every part of America. A teasing custom-house, and a multiplicity of perplexing regulations, ever have, and ever will appear, the master-piece of finance to people of narrow views; as a paper against smuggling, and the importation of French finery, never fails of furnishing a very popular column in a news-paper.

The greatest part of these regulations were made for America; and they fell so indiscriminately on all sorts of contraband, or supposed contraband, that some of the most valuable branches of trade were driven violently from our ports; which caused an universal consternation throughout the colonies.

colonies. Every part of the trade was infinitely distressed by them. Men of war now for the first time, armed with regular commissions of custom-house officers, invested the coasts, and gave to the collection of revenue the air of hostile contribution. About the same time that these regulations seemed to threaten the destruction of the only trade from whence the plantations derived any specie, an act was made, putting a stop to the future emission of paper currency, which used to supply its place among them. Hand in hand with this went another act for obliging the colonies to provide quarters for soldiers. Instantly followed another law, for levying throughout all America new port duties, upon a vast variety of commodities of their consumption, and some of which lay heavy upon objects necessary for their trade and fishery. Immediately upon heels of these, and amidst the uneasiness and confusion produced by a crowd of new impositions and regulations, some good, some evil, some doubtful, all crude and ill-considered, came another act, for imposing an universal stamp-duty on the colonies; and this was declared to be little more than an experiment, and a foundation of future revenue. To render these proceedings the more irritating to the colonies, the principal argument used in favour of their ability to pay such duties, was the liberality of the grants of their assemblies during the late war. Never could any argument be more insulting and mortifying to a people habituated to the granting of their own money.

Taxes for the purpose of raising revenue had hitherto been sparingly attempted in America. Without ever doubting the extent of its lawful power, parliament always doubted the propriety of such impositions. And the Americans on their part never thought of contesting a right by which they were so little affected. Their assemblies in the main answered all the purposes necessary to the internal oeconomy of a free people, and provided for all the exigences of government which arose amongst themselves. In the midst of that happy enjoyment, they never thought of critically settling the exact limits of a power which was necessary to their union, their safety, their equality, and even their liberty. Thus the two very difficult points, superiority in the presiding state, and freedom in the subordinate, were on the whole sufficiently, that is, practically, reconciled; without agitating those vexatious questions, which in truth, rather belong to metaphysics than politics, and which can never be moved without shaking the foundations of the best governments that have ever been constituted by human wisdom. By this measure was let loose that dangerous spirit of disquisition, not in the coolness of philosophical enquiry, but enflamed with all the passions of an haughty resentful people, who thought themselves deeply injured, and that they were contending for every thing that was valuable in the world.

In

In England, our ministers went on without the least attention to these alarming dispositions; just as if they were doing the most common things, in the most usual way, and among a people not only passive, but pleased. They took no one step to divert the dangerous spirit, which began even then to appear in the colonies, to compromise with it, to mollify it, or to subdue it. No new arrangements were made in civil government; no new powers or instructions were given to governors; no augmentation was made, or new disposition, of forces. Never was so critical a measure pursued with so little provision against its necessary consequences. As if all common prudence had abandoned the ministers, and as if they meant to plunge themselves and us headlong into that gulph which stood gaping before them, by giving a year's notice of the project of their stamp act, they allowed time for all the discontents of that country to fester and come to a head, and for all the arrangements which factious men could make towards an opposition to the law. At the same time they carefully concealed from the eye of parliament, those remonstrances which they had actually received; and which in the strongest manner indicated the discontent of some of the colonies, and the consequences which might be expected; they concealed them, even in defiance of an order of council, that they should be laid before parliament. Thus, by concealing the true state of the case, they rendered the wisdom of the nation as improvident as their own temerity, either in preventing or guarding against the mischief. It has indeed, from the beginning to this hour, been the uniform policy of this set of men, in order at any hazard to obtain a present credit, to propose whatever might be pleasing, as attended with no difficulty; and afterwards to throw all the disappointment of the wild expectations they had raised, upon those who have the hard task of freeing the publick from the consequences of their pernicious projects.

Whilst the commerce, and tranquillity, of the whole empire were shaken in this manner, our affairs grew still more distracted by the internal dissensions of our ministers. Treachery and ingratitude was charged from one side; despotism and tyranny from the other; the vertigo of the regency bill; the awkward reception of the silk bill in the house of commons, and the inconsiderate and abrupt rejection of it in the house of lords; the strange and violent tumults which arose in consequence, and which were rendered more serious, by being charged by the ministers upon one another; the report of a gross and brutal treatment of the —, by a ministry at the same time odious to the people; all conspired to leave the publick, at the close of the session of 1765, in as critical and perilous a situation, as ever the nation was, or could be, in a time when she was not immediately threatened by her neighbours.

Is

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

It was at this time, and in these circumstances, that a new administration was formed. Professing even industriously, in this public matter, to avoid anecdotes; I say nothing of those famous reconciliations and quarrels, which weakened the body that should have been the natural support of this administration. I run no risk in affirming, that, surrounded as they were with difficulties of every species, nothing but the strongest and most uncorrupt sense of their duty to the publick could have prevailed upon some of the persons who composed it to undertake the king's business at such a time. Their preceding character, their measures while in power, and the subsequent conduct of many of them, I think, leave no room to charge this assertion to flattery. Having undertaken the commonwealth, what remained for them to do? to piece their conduct upon the broken chain of former measures? If they had been so inclined, the ruinous nature of those measures which began instantly to appear, would not have permitted it. Scarcely had they entered into office, when letters arrived from all parts of America, making loud complaints backed by strong reasons, against several of the principal regulations of the late ministry, as threatening destruction to many valuable branches of commerce. These were attended with representations from many merchants, and capital manufacturers at home, who had all their interests involved in the support of lawful trade, and in the suppression of every sort of contraband. Whilst these things were under consideration, that conflagration blazed out at once in North America, an universal disobedience, and open resistance to the stamp act; and, in consequence, an universal stop to the course of justice, and to trade and navigation, throughout that great important country; an interval during which the trading interest of England lay under the most dreadful anxiety which it ever felt.

The repeal of that act was proposed. It was much too serious a measure, and attended with too many difficulties upon every side, for the then ministry to have undertaken it, as some paltry writers have asserted, from envy and dislike to their predecessors in office. As little could it be owing to personal cowardice, and dread of consequences to themselves. Ministers, timorous from their attachment to place and power, will fear more from the consequences of one court intrigue, than from a thousand difficulties to the commerce and credit of their country, by disturbances at three thousand miles distance. From which of these the ministers had most to apprehend at that time, is known, I presume, universally. Nor did they take that resolution from a want of the fullest sense of the inconveniencies which must necessarily attend a measure of concession from the sovereign to the subject. That it must encrease the insolence of the mutinous spirits in America, was but too obvious. No great measure indeed, at a very difficult crisis, can be pursued, which is not attended with some mischief;

STATE OF THE NATION.

mischief; none but conceited pretenders in public business will hold any other language; and none but weak and unexperienced men will believe them, if they should. If we were found in such a crisis, let those whose bold designs, and whose defective arrangements, brought us into it, answer for the consequences. The business of the then ministry evidently was, to take such steps, not as the wishes of our author, or as their own wishes dictated, but as the bad situation in which their predecessors had left them absolutely required.

The disobedience to this act was universal throughout America; nothing, it was evident, but the sending a very strong military, backed by a very strong naval force, would reduce the seditious to obedience. To send it to one town, would not be sufficient; every province of America must be traversed, and must be subdued. I do not entertain the least doubt but this could be done. We might, I think, without much difficulty have destroyed our colonies. This destruction might be effected, probably in a year, or in two at the utmost. If the question was upon a foreign nation, where every successful stroke adds to your own power, and takes from that of a rival, a just war with such a certain superiority would be undoubtedly an advisable measure. But *four million* of debt due to our merchants, the total cessation of a trade annually worth *four million* more, a large foreign traffick, much home manufacture, a very capital immediate revenue arising from colony imports, indeed the produce of every one of our revenues greatly depending on this trade, all these were very weighty accumulated considerations, at least well to be weighed, before that sword was drawn, which even by its victories must produce all the evil effects of the greatest national defeat. How public credit must have suffered, I need not say. If the condition of the nation, at the close of our foreign war, was what this author represents it, such a civil war would have been a bad couch on which to repose our wearied virtue. Far from being able to have entered into new plans of oeconomy, we must have launched into a new sea, I fear a boundless sea, of expence. Such an addition of debt, with such a diminution of revenue and trade, would have left us in no want of a *State of the Nation* to aggravate the picture of our distresses.

Our trade felt this to its vitals; and our then ministers were not ashamed to say, that they sympathized with the feelings of our merchants. The universal alarm of the whole trading body of England will never be laughed at by them as an ill-grounded or a pretended panick. The universal desire of that body will always have great weight with them in every consideration connected with commerce; neither ought the opinion of that body to be slighted (notwithstanding the contemptuous and indecent language of this author, and his associates), in any consideration whatsoever, of revenue. Nothing amongst us is more quickly or deeply affected

affected by taxes of any kind, than trade; and if an American tax was a real relief to England, no part of the community would be sooner, or more materially, relieved by it than our merchants. But they well know that the trade of England must be more burthened by one penny raised in America, than by three in England; and if that penny be raised with the uneasiness, the discontent, and the confusion of America, more than by ten.

If the opinion and wish of the landed interest is a motive, and it is a fair and just one, for taking away a real and a large revenue, the desire of the trading interest of England ought to be a just ground for taking away a tax, of little better than speculation, which was to be collected by a war, which was to be kept up with the perpetual discontent of those who were to be affected by it, and the value of whose produce, even after the ordinary charges of collection, was very uncertain; after the extraordinary, the dearest purchased revenue that ever was made by any nation.

These were some of the motives drawn from principles of convenience for that repeal. When the object came to be more narrowly inspected, every motive concurred. These colonies were evidently founded in subservience to the commerce of Great Britain. From this principle, the whole system of our laws concerning them became a system of restriction. A double monopoly was established on the part of the parent country; 1. a monopoly of their whole import, which is to be altogether from Great Britain; 2. a monopoly of all their export, which is to be no where but to Great Britain, as far as it can serve any purpose here. On the same idea it was contrived that they should send all their products to us raw, and in their first state; and that they should take every thing from us in the last stage of manufacture.

Were ever a people under such circumstances, that is, a people who were to export raw, and to receive manufactured, and this, not a few luxurious articles, but all articles, even to those of the grossest, most vulgar, and necessary consumption, a people who were in the hands of a general monopolist, were ever such a people suspected of a possibility of becoming a just object of revenue? All the ends of their foundation must be supposed utterly contradicted before they could become such an object. Every trade-law we have made must have been eluded, and become useless, before they could be in such a condition.

The partizans of the new system, who, on most occasions, take credit for full as much knowledge as they possess, think proper on this occasion

^u It is observable, that the partizans of American taxation, when they have a mind to represent this tax as wonderfully beneficial to England, state it as worth £. 100,000 a year; when they are to represent it as very light on the Americans, it dwindles to £. 60,000. Indeed it is very difficult to compute what its produce might have been.

to

to counterfeit an extraordinary degree of ignorance, and in consequence of it to assert "that the balance (between the colonies and Great Britain), Confid. "is unknown, and that no important conclusion can be drawn from pre- P. 74. "mises so very uncertain." Now to what can this ignorance be owing? were the navigation laws made, that this balance should be unknown? is it from the course of exchange that it is unknown, which all the world knows to be greatly and perpetually against the colonies? is it from the doubtful nature of the trade we carry on with the colonies? are not these schemists well apprized, that the colonists, particularly those of the northern provinces, import more from Great Britain, ten times more, than they send in return to us? That a great part of their foreign balance is, and must be, remitted to London? I shall be ready to admit that the colonies ought to be taxed to the revenues of this country, when I know that they are out of debt to its commerce. This author will furnish some ground to his theories, and communicate a discovery to the publick, if he can shew this, by any medium. But he tells us, "that their seas are covered Confid. "with ships, and their rivers floating with commerce." This is P. 79. still true. But it is with our ships that they are covered; and they float with British commerce. The American merchants are our factors; all in reality, most even in name. They trade, they navigate, they cultivate with English capitals; to their own advantage, to be sure; for without these capitals their ploughs would be stopped, and their ships wind-bound. But he who employs the capital must, on the whole, be the person principally benefited; the person who works upon it, profits on his part too; but he profits in a subordinate way, as our colonies do; that is, as the servant of a wise and indulgent master, and no otherwise. We have all, except the *peculium*, without which even slaves will not labour.

If the author's principles, which are the common notions, be right, that the price of our manufactures is so greatly enhanced by our taxes; then the Americans already pay in that way a share of our impositions. He is not ashamed to assert, "that France and China may be said, on the Confid. "same principle, to bear a part of our charges, for they consume our com- P. 74. "modities." Was ever such a method of reasoning heard of? Do not the laws absolutely confine the colonies to buy from us, whether foreign nations sell cheaper or not? On what other idea are all our prohibitions, regulations, guards, penalties, and forfeitures, framed? To secure to us, not a commercial preference, which stands in need of no penalties to enforce it; it finds its own way; but to secure to us a trade, which is a creature of law and institution. What has this to do with the principles of a foreign trade, which is under no monopoly, and in which we cannot raise the price of our goods, without hazarding the demand for them? None but the authors of such measures could ever think of making use of such arguments.

L 2

Whoever

Whoever goes about to reason on any part of the policy of this country with regard to America, upon the mere abstract principles of government, or even upon those of our own antient constitution, will be often misled. Those who resort for arguments to the most respectable authorities, antient or modern, or rest upon the clearest maxims, drawn from the experience of other states and empires, will be liable to the greatest errors imaginable. The object is wholly new in the world. It is singular: it is grown up to this magnitude and importance within the memory of man; nothing in history is parallel to it. All the reasonings about it, that are likely to be at all solid, must be drawn from its actual circumstances. In this new system, a principle of commerce, of artificial commerce, must predominate. This commerce must be secured by a multitude of restraints very alien from the spirit of liberty; and a powerful authority must reside in the principal state, in order to enforce them. But the people who are to be the objects of these restraints are descendants of Englishmen; and of an high and free spirit. To hold over them a government made up of nothing but restraints, and penalties, and taxes in the granting of which they can have no share, will neither be wise, nor long practicable. People must be governed in a manner agreeable to their temper and disposition; and men of free character and spirit must be ruled with, at least, some condescension to this spirit and this character. The British colonist must see something which will distinguish him from the colonists of other nations. Those reasonings, which infer from the many restraints under which we have already laid America, to our right to lay it under still more, and indeed under all manner of restraints, are conclusive; conclusive as to right; but the very reverse as to policy and practice. We ought rather to infer from our having laid the colonies under many restraints, that it is reasonable to compensate them by every indulgence that can by any means be reconciled to our interest. We have a great empire to rule, composed of a vast mass of heterogeneous governments, all more or less free and popular in their forms, all to be kept in peace, and kept out of conspiracy, with one another, all to be held in subordination to this country; while the spirit of an extensive and intricate trading interest pervades the whole, always qualifying, and often controlling, every general idea of constitution and government. It is a great and difficult object; and I wish we may possess wisdom and temper enough to govern it as we ought. Its importance is infinite. I believe the reader will be struck, as I have been, with one singular fact. In the year 1704, but sixty-five years ago, the whole trade with our plantations was but a few thousand pounds more in the export article, and a third less in the import, than that which we now carry on with the single island of Jamaica:

Total

	Exports.	Imports.
Total English plantations in 1704,	483,265	814,491
Jamaica, 1767,	467,681	1,243,742

From the same information I find that our dealing with most of the European nations is but little encreased; these nations have been pretty much at a stand since that time; and we have rivals in their trade. This colony intercourse is a new world of commerce in a manner created; it stands upon principles of its own; principles hardly worth endangering for any little consideration of extorted revenue.

The reader sees, that I do not enter so fully into this matter, as obviously I might. I have already been led into greater lengths than I intended. It is enough to say, that, before the ministers of 1765 had determined to propose the repeal of the stamp act in parliament, they had the whole of the American constitution and commerce very fully before them. They considered maturely; they decided with wisdom: let me add, with firmness. For they resolved, as a preliminary to that repeal, to assert in the fullest and least equivocal terms the unlimited legislative right of this country over its colonies; and, having done this, to propose the repeal, on principles, not of constitutional right, but on those of expediency, of equity, of lenity, and of the true interests present and future of that great object, for which alone the colonies were founded, navigation and commerce. This plan, I say, required an uncommon degree of firmness; when we consider that some of those persons who might be of the greatest use in promoting the repeal, violently withstood the declaratory act; and they who agreed with administration in the principles of that law, equally made, as well the reasons on which the declaratory act itself stood, as those on which it was opposed, grounds for an opposition to the repeal.

If the then ministry resolved first to declare the right, it was not from any opinion they entertained of its future use in regular taxation. Their opinions were full and declared against the ordinary use of such a power. But it was plain, that the general reasonings which were employed against that power, went directly to our whole legislative right; and one part of it could not be yielded to such arguments, without a virtual surrender of all the rest. Besides, if that very specific power of levying money in the colonies were not retained as a sacred trust in the hands of Great Britain (to be used, not in the first instance for supply, but in the last exigence for controul) it is obvious, that the presiding authority of Great Britain, as the head, the arbiter and director of the whole empire, would vanish into an empty name, without operation or energy. With the habitual exercise of such a power in the ordinary course of supply, no trace

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

trace of freedom could remain to America*. If Great Britain were stripped of this right, every principle of unity and subordination in the empire was gone for ever. Whether all this can be reconciled in legal speculation, is a matter of no consequence. It is reconciled in policy; and politics ought to be adjusted, not to human reasonings, but to human nature; of which the reason is but a part; and by no means the greatest part.

Founding the repeal on this basis, it was judged proper to lay before parliament the whole detail of the American affairs, as fully as it had been laid before the ministry themselves. Ignorance of those affairs had misled parliament. Knowledge alone could bring it into the right road. Every paper of office was laid upon the table of the two houses; every denomination of men, either of America, or connected with it by office, by residence, by commerce, by interest, even by injury; men of civil and military capacity, officers of the revenue, merchants, manufacturers of every species, and from every town in England, attended at the bar. Such evidence never was laid before parliament. If an emulation arose among the ministers, and members of parliament, as the author rightly observes, for the repeal of this act, as well as for the other regulations, it was not on the confident assertions, the airy speculations, or the vain promises of ministers, that it arose. It was the sense of parliament on the evidence before them. No one so much as suspects, that ministerial allurements or terrors had any share in it.

P. 21.

Our author is very much displeas'd, that so much credit was given to the testimony of merchants. He has an habit of railing at them; and he may, if he pleases, indulge himself in it. It will not do great mischief to that respectable set of men. The substance of their testimony was, that their debts in America were very great: That the Americans declined to pay them, or to renew their orders, whilst this act continued: That, under these circumstances, they despaired of the recovery of their debts, or the renewal of their trade in that country: That they apprehended a general failure of mercantile credit. The manufacturers deposed to the same general purpose, with this addition, that many of them had discharged several of their artificers; and, if the law, and the resistance to it should continue, must dismiss them all.

*I do not here enter into the unsatisfactory disquisition concerning representation real or presumed. I only say, that a great people, who have their property, without any reserve, in all cases, disposed of by another people at an immense distance from them, will not think themselves in the enjoyment of freedom. It will be hard to shew to those who are in such a state, which of the usual parts of the definition or description of a free people are applicable to them; and it is neither pleasant nor wise to attempt to prove that they have no right to be comprehended in such a description.

This

STATE OF THE NATION.

This testimony is treated with great contempt by our author. It must be, I suppose, because it was contradicted by the plain nature of things. Suppose then, that the merchants had, to gratify this author, given a contrary evidence; and had deposed, that while America remained in a state of resistance, whilst four million of debt remained unpaid, whilst the course of justice was suspended for want of stamped paper, so that no debt could be recovered, whilst there was a total stop to trade, because every ship was subject to seizure for want of stamped clearances, and while the colonies were to be declared in rebellion, and subdued by armed force, that in these circumstances they would still continue to trade chearfully and fearlessly as before; would not such witnesses provoke universal indignation for their folly or their wickedness, and be deservedly hooted from the bar? would

Here the author has a note altogether in his usual strain of reasoning; he finds out that somebody, in the course of this multifarious evidence, had said, "that a very considerable part of the orders of 1765 transmitted from America had been afterwards suspended; but that, in case the stamp act was repealed, those orders were to be executed in the present year 1766;" and that, on the repeal of the stamp act, "the exports to the colonies would be at least double the value of the exports of the past year." He then triumphs exceedingly on their having fallen short of it, on the state of the custom-house entries. I do not know well what conclusion he draws applicable to his purpose, from these facts. He does not deny that all the orders which came from America subsequent to the disturbances of the stamp act were on the condition of that act being repealed; and he does not assert that, notwithstanding that act should be enforced by a strong hand, still the orders would be executed. Neither does he quite venture to say that this decline of the trade in 1766 was owing to the repeal. What does he therefore infer from it, favourable to the enforcement of that law? It only comes to this, and no more; those merchants, who thought our trade would be doubled in the subsequent year, were mistaken in their speculations. So that the stamp act was not to be repealed unless this speculation of theirs was a probable event. But it was not repealed in order to double our trade in that year, as every body knows (whatever some merchants might have said), but left in that year we should have no trade at all. The fact is, that, during the greatest part of the year 1765, that is, until about the month of October, when the accounts of the disturbances came thick upon us, the American trade went on as usual. Before this time the stamp act could not affect it. Afterwards, the merchants fell into a great consternation; a general stagnation in trade ensued. But as soon as it was known that the ministry favoured the repeal of the stamp act, several of the bolder merchants ventured to execute their orders; others more timid hung back; in this manner the trade continued in a state of dreadful fluctuation between the fears of those who had ventured, for the event of their boldness, and the anxiety of those whose trade was suspended, until the royal assent was finally given to the bill of repeal. That the trade of 1766 was not equal to that of 1765, could not be owing to the repeal; it arose from quite different causes, of which the author seems not to be aware: 1st, Our conquests during the war had laid open the trade of the French and Spanish West Indies to North America much more largely than she had ever enjoyed it; this continued for some time after the peace; but at length it was extremely contracted, and in some places reduced to nothing. Such in particular was the state of Jamaica. On the taking the Havannah, all their stores were emptied into that place, which produced unusual orders for goods, for supplying their own consumption, as well as for further speculations of trade. These ceasing, the trade stood on its own bottom. This is one cause of the diminished

4

any

any human faith have given credit to such assertions? The testimony of the merchants was necessary for the detail, and to bring the matter home to the feeling of the house; as to the general reasons, they spoke abundantly for themselves.

Upon these principles was the act repealed, and it produced all the good effect which was expected from it: quiet was restored; trade generally returned to its antient channels; time and means were furnished for the better strengthening of government there, as well as for recovering, by judicious measures, the affections of the people, had that ministry continued, or had a ministry succeeded with dispositions to improve that opportunity.

Such an administration did not succeed. Instead of profiting of that season of tranquillity, in the very next year they chose to return to measures of the very same nature with those which had been so solemnly condemned; though upon a smaller scale. The effects have been correspondent. America is again in disorder; not indeed in the same degree as formerly, nor any thing like it. Such good effects have attended the repeal of the stamp act, that the colonies have actually paid the taxes; and they have sought their redress (upon however improper principles), not in their own violence, as formerly²; but in the experienced benignity of parliament. They are not easy indeed, nor ever will be so, under this author's schemes of taxation; but we see no longer the same general fury and confusion, which attended their resistance to the stamp act. The author may rail at the repeal, and those who proposed it, as he pleases. Those honest men suffer all his obloquy with pleasure, in the midst of the quiet which they have been the means of giving to their country; and would think his praises for their perseverance in a pernicious scheme, a very bad compensation for the disturbance of our peace, and the ruin of our commerce. Whether the return to the system of 1764, for raising a revenue in America, the discontents which have ensued in consequence of it, the general suspension of the assemblies in consequence of these discontents,

export to Jamaica; and not the childish idea of the author, of an impossible contraband from the opening of the ports. 2d, The war had brought a great influx of cash into America, for the pay and provision of the troops; and this an unnatural encrease of trade; which, as its cause failed, must in some degree return to its antient and natural bounds. 3d, When the merchants met from all parts, and compared their accounts, they were alarmed at the immensity of the debt due to them from America. They found that the Americans had over-traded their abilities. And, as they found too that several of them were capable of making the state of political events an excuse for their failure in commercial punctuality, many of our merchants in some degree contracted their trade from that moment. However it is idle, in such an immense mass of trade so liable to fluctuation, to infer any thing from such a deficiency, as one, or even as two hundred thousand pounds. In 1767, when the disturbances subsided, this deficiency was made up again.

² The disturbances have been in Boston only; and were not in consequence of the late duties.

the

the use of the military power, and the new and dangerous commissions which now hang over them, will produce equally good effects, is greatly to be doubted. Never, I fear, will this nation and the colonies fall back upon their true centre of gravity, and natural point of repose, until the ideas of 1766 are resumed, and steadily pursued.

As to the regulations, a great subject of the author's accusation, they are of two sorts; one of a mixed nature, of revenue and trade; the other simply relative to trade. With regard to the former I shall observe, that, in all deliberations concerning America, the ideas of that administration were principally these; to take trade as the primary object, and revenue but as a very subordinate consideration; where the trade was likely to suffer, they did not hesitate for an instant to prefer it to taxes, whose produce at best was contemptible, in comparison of the object which they might endanger. The other of their principles was, to suit the revenue to the object. Where the difficulty of collection, from the nature of the country, and of the revenue establishment, is so very notorious, it was their policy to hold out as few temptations to smuggling as possible, by keeping the duties as nearly as they could on a balance with the risk. On these principles, they made many alterations in the port duties of 1764, both in the mode, and in the quantity. The author has not attempted to prove them erroneous. He complains enough to shew that he is in an ill humour, not that his adversaries have done amiss.

As to the regulations which were merely relative to commerce, many were then made; and they were all made upon this principle; that many of the colonies, and those some of the most abounding in people, were so situated as to have very few means of traffick with this country. It became therefore our object to let them into as much foreign trade as could be given them without interfering with our own; and to secure by every method the returns to the mother country. Without some such scheme of enlargement, it was obvious, that any benefit we could expect from these colonies must be extremely limited. Accordingly many facilities were given to their trade with the foreign plantations, and with the Southern parts of Europe. As to the confining the returns to this country, administration saw the mischief and folly of a plan of indiscriminate restraint. They applied their remedy to that part where the disease existed, and to that only; on this idea they established regulations, far more likely to check the dangerous clandestine trade with Hamburgh and Holland, than this author's friends, or any of their predecessors, had ever done.

The friends of the author have a method surely a little whimsical in all this sort of discussions. They have made an innumerable multitude of commercial regulations, at which the trade of England exclaimed with one voice, and many of which have been altered on the

M

unanimous

unanimous opinion of that trade. Still they go on, just as before, in a sort of droning panegyric on themselves, talking of these regulations as prodigies of wisdom; and, instead of appealing to those who are most affected and the best judges, they turn round in a perpetual circle of their own reasonings and pretences; they hand you over from one of their own pamphlets to another; "see," say they, "this demonstrated in 'The Regulations of the Colonies.'" "See this satisfactorily proved in 'The Considerations.'" By and by we shall have another; "see for this 'The State of the Nation.'" I wish to take another method in vindicating the opposite system. I refer to the petitions of merchants for these regulations; to their thanks when they were obtained; and to the strong and grateful sense they have ever since expressed of the benefits received under that administration.

All administrations have in their commercial regulations been generally aided by the opinion of some merchants; too frequently by that of a few, and those a sort of favourites: they have been directed by the opinion of one or two merchants, who were to merit in flatteries, and to be paid in contracts; who frequently advised, not for the general good of trade, but for their private advantage. During the administration of which this author complains, the meeting of merchants upon the business of trade were numerous and public; sometimes at the house of the Marquis of Rockingham, sometimes at Mr. Dowdeswell's; sometimes at Sir George Savile's, an house always open to every deliberation favourable to the liberty or the commerce of his country. Nor were these meetings confined to the merchants of London. Merchants and manufacturers were invited from all the considerable towns of England. They conferred with the ministers and active members of parliament. No private views, no local interests prevailed. Never were points in trade settled upon a larger scale of information. They who attended these meetings well know, what ministers they were who heard the most patiently, who comprehended the most clearly, and who provided the most wisely. Let then this author and his friends still continue in possession of the practice of exalting their own abilities in their pamphlets, and in the news-papers. They never will persuade the publick, that the merchants of England were in a general confederacy to sacrifice their own interests to those of North America, and to destroy the vent of their own goods in favour of the manufactures of France and Holland.

Had the friends of this author taken these means of information, his extreme terrors of contraband in the West India Islands would have been greatly quieted, and his objections to the opening of the ports would have ceased. He would have learned, from the most satisfactory analysis of the West India trade, that we have the advantage in every essential article of it; and, that almost every restriction on our communication with our neighbours there, is a restriction unfavourable to ourselves.

Such

Such were the principles that guided, and the authority which functioned, these regulations. No man ever said, that, in the multiplicity of regulations made in the administration of their predecessors, none were useful: some certainly were so; and I defy the author to shew a commercial regulation of that period, which he can prove, from any authority except his own, to have a tendency beneficial to commerce, that has been repealed. So far were that ministry from being guided by a spirit of contradiction or of innovation.

The author's attack on that administration, for their neglect of our claims on foreign powers, is by much the most astonishing instance he has given, or that, I believe, any man ever did give, of an intrepid effrontery. It relates to the Manilla ransom; to the Canada bills; and to the Russian treaty. Could one imagine, that these very things, which he thus chooses to object to others, have been the principal subjects of charge against his favourite ministry; instead of clearing them of these charges, he appears not so much as to have heard of them, but throws them directly upon the administration which succeeded to that of his friends.

It is not always very pleasant to be obliged to produce the detail of this kind of transactions to the public view. I will content myself therefore with giving a short state of facts, which, when the author chooses to contradict, he shall see proved, more, perhaps, to his conviction, than to his liking. The first fact then is, that the demand for the Manilla ransom had been, in the author's favourite administration, so neglected, as to appear to have been little less than tacitly abandoned. At home, no countenance was given to the claimants; and when it was mentioned in parliament, the then leader did not seem, at least, a *very sanguine advocate in favour of the claim*. These things made it a matter of no small difficulty to resume and press that negotiation with Spain. However, so clear was our right, that the then ministers resolved to revive it; and so little time was lost, that, though that administration was not completed until the ninth of July, 1765; on the 20th of the following August, General Conway transmitted a strong and full remonstrance on that subject, to the Earl of Rochfort. The argument, on which the court of Madrid most relied, was the dereliction of that claim by the preceding ministers. However, it was still pushed with so much vigour, that the Spaniards, from a positive denial to pay, offered to refer the demand to arbitration. That proposition was rejected; and the demand being still pressed, there was all the reason in the world to expect its being brought to a favourable issue; when it was thought proper to change the administration. Whether, under their circumstances, and in the time they continued in power, more could be done, the reader will judge; who will hear with astonishment a charge of remissness from those very men,

M 2

whose

whose inactivity, to call it by no worse a name, laid the chief difficulties in the way of the revived negotiation.

P. 24.

As to the Canada bills, this author thinks proper to assert, "that the proprietors found themselves under a necessity of compounding their demands upon the French court, and accepting terms which they had often rejected, and which the Earl of Halifax had declared he would sooner forfeit his hand than sign." When I know that the Earl of Halifax says this, the Earl of Halifax shall have an answer; but I persuade myself that his Lordship has given no authority for this ridiculous rant. In the mean time, I shall only speak of it as a common concern of that ministry.

In the first place then I observe, that a convention, for the liquidation of the Canada bills, was concluded under the administration of 1766; when nothing was concluded under that of the favourites of this author.

2. This transaction was, in every step of it, carried on in concert with the persons interested, and was terminated to their entire satisfaction. They would have acquiesced perhaps in terms somewhat lower than those which were obtained. The author is indeed too kind to them. He will, however, let them speak for themselves, and shew what their own opinion was of the measures pursued in their favour^a. In what manner the execution of the convention has been since provided for, it is not my present business to examine.

3. The proprietors had absolutely despaired of being paid, at any time, any proportion of their demand, until the change of that ministry. The merchants were checked and discountenanced; they had often been told, by some in authority, of the cheap rate at which these Canada bills had been procured; yet the author can talk of the composition of them as a necessity induced by the change in administration. They found themselves indeed, before that change, under a necessity of hinting somewhat of bringing the matter into parliament; but they were soon silenced, and put in mind of the fate which the Newfoundland business had there met with. Nothing struck them more than the strong contrast between the spirit, and method of proceeding, of the two administrations.

^a "They are happy in having found, in your zeal for the dignity of this nation, the means of liquidating their claims, and of concluding with the court of France, a convention for the final satisfaction of their demands; and have given us commission, in their names, and on their behalf, most earnestly to entreat your acceptance of their grateful acknowledgments.—Whether they consider themselves as Britons, or as men more particularly profiting by your generous and spirited interposition; they see great reasons to be thankful, for having been supported by a minister, in whose public affections, in whose wisdom and activity, both the national honour, and the interests of individuals, have been at once so well supported and secured." Thanks of the Canada merchants to General Conway, London, April 28, 1766.

4. The

4. The Earl of Halifax never did, nor could, refuse to sign this convention; because this convention, as it stands, never was before him^b.

The author's last charge on that ministry, with regard to foreign affairs, is the Russian treaty of commerce, which the author thinks fit to assert, was concluded "on terms the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused to P. 23. accept of, and which had been deemed by former ministers disadvantageous to the nation, and by the merchants unsafe and unprofitable."

Both the assertions in this paragraph are equally groundless. The treaty then concluded by Sir George Macartney, was not on the terms which the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused. The Earl of Buckinghamshire never did refuse terms, because the business never came to the point of refusal, or acceptance; all that he did was, to receive the Russian project for a treaty of commerce, and to transmit it to England. This was in November 1764; and he left Petersburg the January following, before he could even receive an answer from his own court. The conclusion of the treaty fell to his successor. Whoever will be at the trouble to compare it with the treaty of 1734, will, I believe, confess, that, if the former ministers could have obtained such terms, they were criminal in not accepting them.

But the merchants "deemed them unsafe and unprofitable." What merchants? As no treaty ever was more maturely considered, so the opinion of the Russian merchants in London was all along taken; and all the instructions sent over were in exact conformity to that opinion. Our minister there made no step without having previously consulted our merchants resident in Petersburg, who, before the signing the treaty, gave the most full and unanimous testimony in its favour. In their address to our minister at that court, among other things, they say, "It may afford some additional satisfaction to your excellency, to receive a public acknowledgment of the entire and unreserved approbation of every article in this treaty, from us who are so immediately and so nearly concerned in its consequences." This was signed by the consul general, and every British merchant in Petersburg.

The approbation of those immediately concerned in the consequences is nothing to this author. He and his friends have so much tenderness for people's interests, and understand them so much better than they do themselves, that, whilst these politicians are contending for the best of possible terms, the claimants are obliged to go without any terms at all.

One of the first and justest complaints against the administration of the author's friends, was the want of vigour in their foreign negotiations. Their immediate successors endeavoured to correct that error, along

^b See the convention itself, printed by Owen and Harrison, Warwick-lane, 1766; particularly the articles 2. and 13.

with

with others; and there was scarcely a foreign court, in which the new spirit that had arisen was not sensibly felt, acknowledged, and sometimes complained of. On their coming into administration, they found the demolition of Dunkirk entirely at a stand: instead of demolition, they found construction; for the French were then at work on the repair of the jetties. On the remonstrances of General Conway, some parts of these jetties were immediately destroyed. The Duke of Richmond personally surveyed the place, and obtained a fuller knowledge of its true state and condition than any of our ministers had done; and, in consequence, had larger offers from the Duke of Choiseul, than had ever been received. But, knowing these to be short of our just expectations under the treaty, he rejected them. Our then ministers, knowing that, in their administration, the people's minds were set at ease upon all the essential points of public and private liberty, and that no projects of theirs could endanger the concord of the empire, were under no restraint from pursuing every just demand upon foreign nations.

The author, towards the end of this work, falls into reflections upon the state of public morals in this country: He draws use from his doctrine, by recommending his friend to the King and the publick, as another Duke of Sully; and he concludes the whole performance with a very devout prayer. The prayers of politicians may sometimes be sincere; and as this prayer is in substance, that the author, or his friends, may be soon brought into power, I have great reason to believe it is very much from the heart. However, after he has drawn such a picture, such a shocking picture, of the state of this country, he has great faith in thinking the means he prays for, sufficient to relieve us: after the character he has given of its inhabitants of all ranks and classes, he has great charity in caring much about them; and indeed, no less hope, in being of opinion, that such a detestable nation can ever become the care of Providence. He has not even found five good men in our devoted city.

He talks indeed of men of virtue and ability. But, where are his *men* of virtue and ability to be found? Are they in the present administration? never were a set of people more blackened by this author. Are they among the party of those (no small body) who adhere to the system of 1766? these, it is the great purpose of this book, to calumniate. Are they the persons who acted with his great friend, since the change in 1762, to his removal in 1765? scarcely any of these are now out of employment; and we are in possession of his desideratum. Yet I think he hardly means to select, even some of the highest of them, as examples fit for the reformation of a corrupt world.

He observes, that the virtue of the most exemplary prince that ever swayed a scepter "can never warm, or illuminate the body of his people,"

"if

"if foul mirrors are placed so near him as to refract and dissipate the rays at their first emanation." Without observing upon the propriety of this allusion, or asking how mirrors come to have lost their old quality of reflecting, and to have acquired that of refracting and dissipating rays, and how far their foulness will account for this change; the remark itself is common and true: no less true, and equally surprizing from him, is that which immediately precedes it; "it is in vain to endeavour to check the progress of irreligion and licentiousness, by punishing such crimes in *one individual*, if others equally culpable are rewarded with the honours and emoluments of the state." I am not in the secret of the author's manner of writing; but it appears to me, that he must intend these reflections, as a satire upon the administration of his happy years. Were ever the favours and emoluments of the state more lavishly squandered upon persons scandalous in their lives, than during that period? In these scandalous lives, was there any thing more scandalous than the mode of punishing *one culpable individual*? In that individual, is any thing more culpable, than his having been seduced by the example of some of those very persons by whom he was thus persecuted?

The author is so eager to attack others, that he provides but indifferently for his own defence. I believe, without going beyond the page I have now before me, he is very sensible, that I have sufficient matter of further, and, if possible, of heavier charge, against his friends, upon his own principles. But it is because the advantage is too great, that I decline making use of it. I wish the author had not thought, that all methods are lawful in party. Above all, he ought to have taken care not to wound his enemies through the sides of his country. This he has done; by making that monstrous and overcharged picture of the distresses of our situation. No wonder, that he, who finds this country in the same condition with that of France at the time of Henry the Fourth, could also find a resemblance between his political friend and the Duke of Sully. As to those personal resemblances, people will often judge of them from their affections: they may image in these clouds whatsoever figures they please; but what is the conformation of that eye which can discover a resemblance of this country and these times, to those with which the author compares them. France, a country just recovered out of twenty-five years of the most cruel and desolating civil war that perhaps was ever known. The kingdom, under a veil of momentary quiet, full of the most atrocious political, operating upon the most furious fanatical factions. Some pretenders even to the crown; and those who did not pretend to the whole, aimed at the partition of the monarchy. There were almost as many competitors as provinces; and all abetted by the greatest, the most ambitious, and most enterprising power in Europe.

No.

No place safe from treason; no, not the bosoms on which the most amiable prince that ever lived, reposed his head; not his mistresses; not even his queen. As to the finances, they had scarce an existence, but as a matter of plunder to the managers, and of grants to insatiable, and ungrateful courtiers.

How can our author have the heart to describe this as any sort of parallel to our situation? To be sure, an April shower has some resemblance to a water spout, for they are both wet; and there is some likeness between a summer evening's breeze, and an hurricane; they are both wind: but who can compare our disturbances, our situation, or our finances, to those of France? Great Britain is indeed at this time wearied, but not broken, with the efforts of a victorious foreign war; not sufficiently relieved by an inadequate peace; but somewhat benefited by that peace, and infinitely by the consequences of that war. The powers of Europe awed by our victories, and lying in ruins upon every side of us. Burthened indeed we are with debt, but abounding with resources. We have a trade, not perhaps equal to our wishes, but more than ever we possessed. In effect, no pretender to the crown; nor nutriment for such desperate and destructive factions as have formerly shaken this kingdom.

As to our finances, the author trifles with us. When Sully came to those of France, in what order was any part of the financial system? or what system was there at all? There is no man in office who must not be sensible, that ours is, without the act of any parading minister, the most regular and orderly system perhaps that was ever known; the best secured against all frauds in the collection, and all misapplication in the expenditure of public money.

I admit that, in this flourishing state of things, there are appearances enough to excite uneasiness and apprehension. I admit there is a canker-worm in the rose:

— *medio de fonte leporum*
Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat.

This is nothing else than a spirit of disconnection, of distrust, and of treachery, amongst public men. It is no accidental evil; nor has its effect been trusted to the usual frailty of nature: the distemper has been inoculated. The author is sensible of it, and we lament it together. This distemper is alone sufficient to take away considerably from the benefits of our constitution and situation, and perhaps to render their continuance precarious. If these evil dispositions should spread much farther, they must end in our destruction; for nothing can save a people destitute of public and private faith. However, the author, for the present state of things, has extended the charge by much too widely; as men are but too apt to
I take

take the measure of all mankind from their own particular acquaintance. Barren as this age may be in the growth of honour and virtue, the country does not want, at this moment, as strong, and those not a few examples, as were ever known, of an unshaken adherence to principle, and attachment to connexion, against every allurement of interest. Those examples are not furnished by the great alone; nor by those whose activity in public affairs may render it suspected that they make such a character one of the rounds in their ladder of ambition; but by men more quiet, and more in the shade, on whom an unmixed sense of honour alone could operate. Such examples indeed are not furnished in great abundance amongst those who are the subjects of the author's panegyrick. He must look for them in another camp. He who complains of the ill effects of a divided and heterogeneous administration is not justifiable in labouring to render odious in the eyes of the publick those men, whose principles, whose maxims of policy, and whose personal character, can alone administer a remedy to this capital evil of the age; neither is he consistent with himself, in constantly extolling those whom he knows to be the authors of the very mischief of which he complains, and which the whole nation feels so deeply.

The persons who are the objects of his dislike and complaint, are many of them of the first families, and weightiest properties, in the kingdom; but infinitely more distinguished for their untainted honour public and private, and their zealous but sober attachment to the constitution of their country, than they can be by any birth, or any station. If they are the friends of any one great man, rather than another, it is not that they make his aggrandisement the end of their union; or because they know him to be the most active in caballing for his connexions the largest and speediest emoluments. It is because they know him, by personal experience, to have wise and enlarged ideas of the public good, and an invincible constancy in adhering to it; because they are convinced, by the whole tenour of his conduct, that he will never negotiate away their honour, or his own: and that, in or out of power, change of situation will make no alteration in his conduct. This will give to such a person, in such a body, an authority and respect that no minister ever enjoyed among his venal dependants, in the highest plenitude of his power; such as servility never can give, such as ambition never can receive or relish.

This body will often be reproached by their adversaries, for want of ability in their political transactions; they will be ridiculed for missing many favourable conjunctures, and not profiting of several brilliant opportunities of fortune: but they must be contented to endure that reproach; for they cannot acquire the reputation of *that kind* of ability, without losing all the other reputation they possess.

N

They

They will be charged too with a dangerous spirit of exclusion and proscription, for being unwilling to mix in schemes of administration, which have no bond of union, or principle of confidence. That charge too they must suffer with patience. If the reason of the thing had not spoken loudly enough, the miserable examples of the several administrations, constructed upon the idea of systematic discord, would be enough to frighten them from such monstrous and ruinous conjunctions. It is however false, that the idea of an united administration carries with it that of a proscription of any other party. It does indeed imply the necessity of having the great strong holds of government in well-united hands, in order to secure the predominance of right and uniform principles; of having the capital offices of deliberation and execution in those who can deliberate with mutual confidence, and who will execute what is resolved with firmness and fidelity. If this system cannot be rigorously adhered to in practice (and what system can be so?) it ought to be the constant aim of good men to approach as nearly to it as possible. No system of that kind can be formed, which will not leave room fully sufficient for healing coalitions: but no coalition, which, under the specious name of independency, carries in its bosom the unreconciled principles of the original discord of parties, ever was, or will be, an healing coalition. Nor will the mind of our Sovereign ever know repose, his kingdom settlement, or his business order, efficiency, or grace with his people, until things are established upon the basis of some set of men, who are trusted by the publick, and who can trust one another.

This comes rather nearer to the mark than the author's description of a proper administration, under the name of *men of ability and virtue*, which conveys no definite idea at all; nor does it apply specifically to our grand national distemper. All parties pretend to these qualities. The present ministry, no favourites of the author, will be ready enough to declare themselves persons of virtue and ability; and if they choose a vote for that purpose, perhaps it would not be quite impossible for them to procure it. But, if the disease be this distrust and disconnection, it is easy to know who are sound, and who are tainted; who are fit to restore us to health, who to continue, and to spread the contagion. The present ministry being made up of draughts from all parties in the kingdom, if they should profess any adherence to the connexions they have left, they must convict themselves of the blackest treachery. They therefore choose rather to renounce the principle itself, and to brand it with the name of pride and faction. This test with certainty discriminates the opinions of men. The other is a description vague and unsatisfactory.

As to the unfortunate gentlemen who may at any time compose that system, which, under the plausible title of an administration, subsists but for

for the establishment of weakness and confusion; they fall into different classes, with different merits. I think the situation of some people in that state, may deserve a certain degree of compassion; at the same time that they furnish an example, which, it is to be hoped, by being a severe one, will have its effect, at least, on the growing generation; if an original seduction, on plausible but hollow pretences, into loss of honour, friendship, consistency, security, and repose, can furnish it. It is possible to draw, even from the very prosperity of ambition, examples of terror, and motives to compassion.

I believe the instances are exceedingly rare of mens immediately passing over a clear marked line of virtue into declared vice and corruption. There are a sort of middle tints and shades between the two extremes; there is something uncertain on the confines of the two empires which they first pass through, and which renders the change easy and imperceptible. There are even a sort of splendid impositions so well contrived, that, at the very time the path of rectitude is quitted for ever, men seem to be advancing into some higher and nobler road of public conduct. Not that such impositions are strong enough in themselves; but a powerful interest, often concealed from those whom it affects, works at the bottom, and secures the operation. Men are thus debauched away from those legitimate connections, which they had formed on a judgement, early perhaps, but sufficiently mature and wholly unbiassed. They do not quit them upon any ground of complaint, for grounds of just complaint may exist, but upon the flattering and most dangerous of all principles, that of mending what is well. Gradually they are habituated to other company; and a change in their habitudes soon makes a way for a change in their opinions. Certain persons are no longer so very frightful, when they come to be known and to be serviceable. As to their old friends, the transition is easy; from friendship to civility; from civility to enmity; few are the steps from dereliction to persecution.

People not very well grounded in the principles of public morality, find a set of maxims in office ready made for them, which they assume as naturally and inevitably, as any of the insignia or instruments of the situation. A certain tone of the solid and practical is immediately acquired. Every former profession of public spirit is to be considered as a debauch of youth, or, at best, as a visionary scheme of unattainable perfection. The very idea of consistency is exploded. The convenience of the business of the day is to furnish the principle for doing it. Then the whole ministerial cant is quickly got by heart. The prevalence of faction is to be lamented. All opposition is to be regarded as the effect of discontent. All administrations are declared to be alike. The same necessity justifies all their measures. It is no longer a matter of discussion, who or what

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

administration is; but administration is to be supported as a general maxim. Flattering themselves, that their power is become necessary to the support of all order and government; every thing which tends to the support of that power is sanctified, and becomes a part of the public interest.

Growing every day more formed to affairs, and better knit in their limbs, when the occasion (now the only rule) requires it, they become capable of sacrificing those very persons, to whom they had before sacrificed their original friends. It is now only in the ordinary course of business to alter an opinion, or to betray a connexion. Frequently relinquishing one set of men and adopting another, they grow into a total indifference to human feeling, as they had before to moral obligation; until, at length, no one original impression remains upon their minds; every principle is obliterated; every sentiment effaced.

In the mean time, that power which all these changes aimed at securing, remains still as tottering and as uncertain as ever. They are delivered up into the hands of those who feel neither respect for their persons, nor gratitude for their favours; who are put about them in appearance to serve, in reality to govern them; and, when the signal is given, to abandon and destroy them; in order to set up some newer dupe of ambition, who, in his turn, is to be abandoned and destroyed. Thus living in a state of continual uneasiness and ferment, softened only by the miserable consolation of giving now and then preferments to those for whom they have no value; they are unhappy in their situation, and find it impossible to resign it. Until, at length, soured in temper, and disappointed by the very attainment of their ends, in some angry, in some haughty, or some negligent moment, they incur the displeasure of those upon whom they have rendered their very being dependent. Then *perierunt tempora longi servitii*; they are cast off with scorn; they are turned out, emptied of all natural character, of all intrinsic worth, of all essential dignity, and deprived of every consolation of friendship. Having rendered all retreat to old principles ridiculous, and to old regards impracticable, not being able to counterfeit pleasure, or to discharge discontent, nothing being sincere, or right, or balanced in their minds, it is more than a chance, that, in the delirium of the last stage of their distempered power, they make an insane political testament, by which they throw all their remaining weight and consequence into the scale of their declared enemies, and the avowed authors of their destruction. Thus they finish their course. Had it been possible that the whole, or even a great part of these effects on their minds, I say nothing of the effect upon their fortunes, could have appeared to them in their first departure from the right line, it is certain they would have rejected every temptation with horror. The principle of these remarks,

like

STATE OF THE NATION.

like every good principle in morality, is trite; but its frequent application is not the less necessary.

As to others, who are plain practical men, they have been guiltless at all times of all public pretence. Neither the author, nor any one else, has reason to be angry with them. They belonged to his friend for their interest; for their interest they quitted him; and when it is their interest, he may depend upon it, they will return to their former connexion. Such people subsist at all times, and, though the nuisance of all, are at no time a worthy subject of discussion. It is false virtue and plausible error that do the mischief.

If men come to government with right dispositions, they have not that unfavourable subject which this author represents to work upon. Our circumstances are indeed critical; but then they are the critical circumstances of a strong and mighty nation. If corruption and meanness are greatly spread, they are not spread universally. Many public men are hitherto examples of public spirit, and integrity. Whole parties, as far as large bodies can be uniform, have preserved character. However they may be deceived in some particulars, I know of no set of men amongst us, which does not contain persons, on whom the nation, in a difficult exigence, may well value itself. Private life, which is the nursery of the commonwealth, is yet in general pure, and on the whole disposed to virtue; and the people at large want neither generosity nor spirit. No small part of that very luxury, which is so much the subject of the author's declamation, but which, in most parts of life, by being well balanced and diffused, is only decency and convenience, has perhaps as many, or more, good than evil consequences attending it. It certainly excites industry, nourishes emulation, and inspires some sense of personal value into a l ranks of people. What we want is, to establish more fully an opinion of uniformity, and consistency of character, in the leading men of the state; such as will restore some confidence to profession and appearance, such as will fix subordination upon esteem. Without this, all schemes are begun at the wrong end. All who join in them are liable to their consequences. All men who, under whatever pretext, take a part in the formation, or the support of systems constructed in such a manner, as must, in their nature, disable them from the execution of their duty, have made themselves guilty of all the present distraction, and of the future ruin, which they may bring upon their country.

It is a serious affair, this studied disunion in government. In cases where union is most consulted in the constitution of a ministry, and where persons are best disposed to promote it, differences, from the various ideas of men, will arise; and, from their passions, will often ferment into violent heats, so as greatly to disorder all public business. What must be

the

OBSERVATIONS ON A LATE

the consequence, when the very distemper is made the basis of the constitution; and the original weakness of human nature is still further enfeebled by art and contrivance? It must subvert government from the very foundation. It turns our public councils into the most mischievous cabals; where the consideration is not how the nation's business shall be carried on, but how those who ought to carry it on shall circumvent each other. In such a state of things, no order, uniformity, dignity, or effect, can appear in our proceedings either at home or abroad. Nor will it make much difference, whether some of the constituent parts of such an administration are men of virtue or ability, or not; supposing it possible that such men, with their eyes open, should choose to make a part in such a body.

The effects of all human contrivances are in the hand of Providence. I do not like to answer, as our author so readily does, for the event of any speculation. But sure the nature of our disorders, if any thing, must indicate the proper remedy. Men who act steadily on the principles I have stated, may in all events be very serviceable to their country; in one case, by furnishing (if their Sovereign should be so advised) an administration formed upon ideas very different from those which have for some time been unfortunately fashionable. But, if this should not be the case, they may be still serviceable; for the example of a large body of men, steadily sacrificing ambition to principle, can never be without use. It will certainly be prolific, and draw others to an imitation. *Vera gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur.*

I do not think myself of consequence enough to imitate my author, in troubling the world with the prayers or wishes I may form for the publick: full as little am I disposed to imitate his professions; those professions are long since worn out in the political service. If the work will not speak for the author, his own declarations deserve but little credit.

APPEN.

A P P E N D I X.

SO much misplaced industry has been used by the author of The State of the Nation, as well as by other writers, to infuse discontent into the People, on account of the late war, and of the effects of our national debt; that nothing ought to be omitted which may tend to disabuse the publick upon these subjects. When I had gone through the foregoing sheets, I recollected, that, in my pages 39 and 40, I only gave the comparative states of the duties collected by the excise at large; together with the quantities of strong beer brewed in the two periods which are there compared. It might be still thought, that some other articles of popular consumption, of general convenience, and connected with our manufactures, might possibly have declined. I therefore now think it right to lay before the reader the state of the produce of three capital duties on such articles; duties which have frequently been made the subject of popular complaint. The duty on candles; that on soap, paper, &c. and that on hides.

Average produce duty on soap, &c. for 8 years ending 1767,	£. 264.902
Average of ditto for 8 years, ending 1754,	228.114
Average encrease,	£. 36.788
Average of net produce of duty on candles for 8 years, ending 1767,	155.789
Average of ditto for 8 years, ending 1754,	136.716
Average encrease,	£. 19.073
Average net produce of duty on hides, 8 years, ending 1767,	189.216
Ditto 8 years, ending 1754,	168.200
Average encrease,	£. 21.016

This encrease has not arisen from any additional duties. None have been imposed on these articles during the war. Notwithstanding the burthens of the war, and the late dearness of provisions, the consumption of all these articles has encreased, and the revenue along with it.

There is another point in The State of the Nation, to which, I fear, I have not been as full in my answer as I ought to have been, and as I am well warranted to be. The author has endeavoured to throw a suspicion, or something more, on that salutary, and indeed necessary, measure of opening the ports in Jamaica. "Orders were given," says he, "in August, 1765, for the free admission of Spanish vessels into all the colonies." He then observes, that the exports to Jamaica fell £.40.904 short of those of 1764; and that the exports of the succeeding year, 1766, fell short of those of 1765, about eighty pounds; from whence he wisely infers, that, this decline of exports being *since* the relaxation of the laws of trade, there

His notes, P. 22.

there is a just ground of suspicion, that the colonies have been supplied with foreign commodities instead of British.

Here, as usual with him, the author builds on a fact which is absolutely false; and which, being so, renders his whole hypothesis absurd and impossible. He asserts, that the order for admitting Spanish vessels was given in August, 1765. That order was not signed at the treasury board until the 15th day of the November following; and therefore so far from affecting the exports of the year 1765: that supposing all possible diligence in the commissioners of the customs in expediting that order, and every advantage of vessels ready to sail, and the most favourable wind, it would hardly even arrive in Jamaica within the limits of that year.

This order could therefore by no possibility be a cause of the decrease of exports in 1765. If it had any mischievous operation, it could not be before 1766. In that year, according to our author, the exports fell short of the preceding, just eighty pounds. He is welcome to that diminution; and to all the consequences he can draw from it.

But, as an auxiliary to account for this dreadful loss, he brings in the Free-port act, which he observes (for his convenience) to have been made in spring, 1766; but (for his convenience likewise) he forgets, that, by the express provision of the act, the regulation was not to be in force in Jamaica, until the November following. Miraculous must be the activity of that contraband whose operation in America could, before the end of that year, have reacted upon England, and checked the exportation from hence! unless he chooses to suppose, that the merchants, at whose solicitation this act had been obtained, were so frightened at the accomplishment of their own most earnest and anxious desire, that, before any good or evil effect from it could happen, they immediately put a stop to all further exportation.

It is obvious that we must look for the true effect of that act at the time of its first possible operation, that is, in the year 1767. On this idea how stands the account?

1764 Exports to Jamaica	£.	456.528
1765		415.024
1766		415.544
1767 (first year of the free-port act)		467.681

This author, for the sake of a present momentary credit, will hazard any future and permanent disgrace. At the time he wrote, the account of 1767 could not be made up. This was the very first year of the trial of the free-port act; and we find that the sale of British commodities is so far from lessened by that act, that the export of 1767 amounts to £. 52.000 more than that of either of the two preceding years, and is £. 11.000 above that of his standard year 1764. If I could prevail on myself to argue in favour of a great commercial scheme from the appearance of things in a single year, I should from this increase of export, infer the beneficial effects of that measure. In truth, it is not wanting. Nothing but the thickest ignorance of the Jamaica trade could have made any one entertain a fancy, that the least ill effect on our commerce could follow from this opening of the ports. But, if the author argues the effect of regulations in the American trade from the export of the year in which they are made, or even of the following; why did he not apply this rule to his own? He had the same paper before him which I have now before me. He must have seen that in his standard year (the year 1764), the principal year of his new regulations, the export fell no less than £. 128.450 short of that in 1763! Did the export trade revive by these regulations in 1765, during which year they continued in their full force? It fell about £. 40.000 still lower. Here is a fall of £. 168.000; to account for which, would have become the author much better than piddling for an £. 80 fall in the year 1766 (the only year in which the order he objects to could operate), or in presuming a fall of exports from a regulation which took place only in November 1766; whose effects could not appear until the following year; and which, when they do appear, utterly overthrow all his flimsy reasons and affected suspicions upon the effect of opening the ports.

This

This author, in the same paragraph, says, that "it was asserted by the American factors and agents, that the commanders of our ships of war and tenders, having custom-house commissions, and the strict orders given in 1764 for a due execution of the laws of trade in the colonies, had deterred the Spaniards from trading with us; that the sale of British manufactures in the West Indies had been greatly lessened, and the receipt of large sums in specie prevented."

If the American factors and agents asserted this, they had good ground for their assertion. They knew that the Spanish vessels had been driven from our ports. The author does not positively deny the fact. If he should, it will be proved. When the factors connected this measure and its natural consequences, with an actual fall in the exports to Jamaica, to no less an amount than £. 128.450 in one year, and with a further fall in the next, is their assertion very wonderful? The author himself is full as much alarmed by a fall of only £. 40.000; for, giving him the facts which he chuses to coin, it is no more. The expulsion of the Spanish vessels must certainly have been one cause, if not of the first declension of the exports, yet of their continuance in their reduced state. Other causes had their operation, without doubt. In what degree each cause produced its effect it is hard to determine. But the fact of a fall of exports upon the restraining plan, and of a rise upon the taking place of the enlarging plan, is established beyond all contradiction.

This author says, that the facts relative to the Spanish trade, were asserted by American factors and agents; insinuating, that the ministry of 1766 had no better authority for their plan of enlargement than such assertions. The moment he chooses it, he shall see the very same thing asserted by governours of provinces, by commanders of men of war, and by officers of the customs; persons the most bound in duty to prevent contraband, and the most interested in the seizures to be made in consequence of strict regulation. I suppress them for the present; wishing that the author may not drive me to a more full discussion of this matter than it may be altogether prudent to enter into. I wish he had not made any of these discussions necessary.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 5. l. 4. from the bottom, r. reduced 1756 sail. p. 7. l. 8 from the bottom, for p. 1. in the margin r. p. 9. p. 7. l. 7. from the bottom, for encreases r. enures. p. 14. l. 10. for conduct r. convoys. p. 10. l. 1. r. 1763. ib. l. 5. r. 344. 161. ib. l. 21. for 139.500 r. 149.500. ib. l. 23. for nearly r. more than. p. 23. l. penult. r. 760.706. p. 24. l. 13. r. 878.544. p. 44. l. 1. r. 295.561.

[The page contains several paragraphs of extremely faint, illegible text. The text appears to be a formal document or report, possibly containing a title, a main body of text, and a signature block at the bottom. The content is too light to transcribe accurately.]