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NAVAL CONSIDERATIONS
UPON
THE LETTERS
OF
LORD MELVILLE AND MR. ROSE,
RELATIVE TO THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A NAVAL ARSENAL
AT NORTHFLEET;

Tracing back to the Year 1765 the Proceedings which have taken place, relative to the Formation of a NEW NAVAL ARSENAL TO THE EASTWARD; and giving an Account of the Steps taken on that Subject, and the Opinions entertained by LORD EGMONT, LORD HOWE, LORD SPENCER, LORD ST. VINCENT, MR. PITT, and other GREAT NAVAL AND POLITICAL CHARACTERS.

The contents of the above will shew the fallacy of the "Observations" recently published under the Character of "An Officer in the Navy," though obviously flowing from the "Jobbing Interest!!"

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NAVAL CONSIDERATIONS,

&c.

IN discussing the question—whether, or not, a new Naval Arsenal be necessary on the *Eastern* side of this kingdom?—I have no inclination to advocate the cause of either of the Right Honourable Correspondents who have given their sentiments to the public, considering it as one of too much importance to be left for decision, to the passions, or prejudices, of the Friends of either one, or the other. My object is to state such facts to the public, and to appeal to such authorities in support of them, as happen to have come within the scope of the professional observation and inquiry of one, who can boast of almost as many years' service as either of those who have called the attention of the public to this subject; with the view of endeavouring to produce upon the minds of the Public that unanimity of sentiment by which it is desirable that so important a matter should be decided.

As, in the true order of dates, Mr. Rose's letter should have appeared before Lord Melville's, it becomes obvious that Lord Melville's letter should rather be considered as an answer to Mr. Rose's, than the letter of Mr. Rose a reply to Lord Melville;

and in that succession therefore, the Letters should be read, by those who may not hitherto have directed their attention to the subject under consideration; and many, no doubt, there are, who, not being influenced by personal or political attachment, or enmity, to either, have not yet felt sufficient interest or curiosity, to peruse their Productions. To these Persons, therefore, I wish particularly to address the following pages, because, from them, a calm, deliberate, and impartial Judgment may be expected.

The wants of the fleets employed to the *Westward*, being amply provided for by the Dock-Yards at *Portsmouth* and *Plymouth*, or being capable of being supplied, by the extension and improvement of those yards, it may tend to perspicuity, in the consideration of the grounds on which the necessity for a new arsenal at *Northfleet* are supposed to rest, *to put entirely out of sight every thing relating to those two yards*; for, let *them* be ever so defective, the warmest advocate for *Northfleet* would not think of proposing the construction of an arsenal *there*, in aid of the deficiencies of *Portsmouth* and *Plymouth*; on the other hand, let those yards be ever so perfect, or let them possess every facility for enlargement and improvement that could be desired, the most prejudiced person against *Northfleet* would hardly think of recommending the outlay of one shilling of the public money at either of those yards, in preference to *Northfleet*, for the services for which a yard at that place can be thought desirable.

In short, the services for which *Portsmouth* and

Plymouth are required are those to the *Westward*, and are quite distinct from those for which *Northfleet* can be deemed necessary, namely, those to the *Eastward*; or, in other words, in the *North and East seas*. For the fleets employed to the *Westward*, *Portsmouth* and *Plymouth* are the proper places for the docking, repair, and refit of the ships composing those fleets; and for the fleets employed in the *North and East seas*, *Northfleet* has been proposed, and the erection of a naval arsenal there may be necessary, *in case* it should be made to appear that the present *Eastern* yards, namely, *Deptford*, *Woolwich*, *Chatham*, and *Sheerness*, are inadequate to those purposes in their present state, and cannot be enlarged and improved to the extent required.

I will repeat that *Northfleet* must be proved to be *necessary* for the docking, repair, and refit of the ships employed in the *North and East seas*, and *there only*; or all thoughts of the measure must be relinquished; and my reason for pressing this point so much is, partly, because I have often heard *Northfleet* improperly connected with the services of the fleets employed to the *Westward*, but, chiefly, on account of the unnecessary mixture, in *Mr. Rose's* letter, of things so obviously distinct, in a way calculated to confuse very much the clear view of the subject; and this too, even after the appearance of a quotation from one of the Reports of Naval Revision, in which the measure of *Northfleet* is stated to be recommended in the following words:—(page 29 of *Lord Melville's* Letter)—“ We are far, however, from meaning that

“ a new dock-yard should be considered as superseding in any degree, the utility of the *Western* yards.”

“ But we consider a new dock-yard to be indispensably necessary to *supply the place of such of the Eastern* yards as are even now unfit for most of the purposes for which the use of a dock-yard is required.”

The reasons why Portsmouth and Plymouth yards can have nothing to do with the consideration of the necessity of having a new naval arsenal to the *Eastward*, are so well known to almost every Person, that it is like stating a truism to allude to them here. In this country the Westerly winds are known to prevail eight or nine months out of the twelve; owing to this cause, as Mr. Rose himself says, (but with another view,) “ it is not improbable that a ship might go from Plymouth to the West Indies while one was getting from Gravesend to Plymouth.” What then must be the situation of a fleet, damaged, by a storm, or an action, in the North or East seas, in having to encounter this difficulty, before the ships could get round to the *Western* yards, to be docked and refitted?

Indeed, to use the words of Mr. Rose, “ they would be likely to be detained in the Downs frequently for many weeks, in an extremely bad anchorage, with the wind at S. W. or S. S. W.” Whereas, if there were a dock-yard at Northfleet, in four-and-twenty hours the ships could be safe in dock. On the other hand, if the Easterly winds

should prevail, (which they do generally in the spring, about the time that the North-sea service commences,) when the ships, thus unavoidably sent to be refitted at the *Western* yards, are required again in the North seas, is it not easy to foresee what an opportunity would be afforded to an “ enterprising enemy,” “ now able, unfortunately,” as Mr. Rose says, “ to collect an immense force opposite to the mouth of the Thames, and within twenty-four or thirty hours’ sail from it, with one wind,” to carry on his operations from the Scheldt or Texel, (for which an Easterly wind would be favourable,) before our ships could be brought round to the Downs from Portsmouth and Plymouth, to afford the necessary protection? It is not probable that this would be thought a much more favourable state of things for the enemy, than if “ a large part of our navy” were assembled at Northfleet, ready, at a moment’s notice, to start and meet the enemy “ opposite the mouth of the Thames.”

The question, therefore, is, whether the *Eastern* yards are now adequate to the services which are to be performed by our navy in the *North and East seas*?—if not, whether they are capable of advantageous enlargement and improvement?—or, whether it would not be better to abandon two * of them, and to make a new one in a more convenient situation?

Whoever contemplates the great extent of Territory which our inveterate Enemy has acquired to the North—the command he now has over the Fleets of

* Deptford and Woolwich.

Russia—and the naval Resources of Denmark—the probability of his acquiring a similar Control over those of Sweden; in *particular*, the great exertions * which he has long been making to raise a *large* naval force at Antwerp; and the additional *encouragement to proceed in those* endeavours, which the failure of the late Expedition will naturally excite in his mind—must feel *convinced*, that we have now occasion for (indeed we do actually employ,) *larger* fleets in the *North and East seas* than at *any* period of the late, or present war, or, perhaps, of the naval History of this country: and the probability is, that the necessity for augmenting our fleets in that quarter will not only every year become more urgent, but, that, if ever Buonaparte should be able, by any means within his power, to attempt to dispute with us the empire of the Ocean, the struggle for that superiority will take place *in the North and East seas*.

Considering therefore the large fleets which we are now obliged to employ in the *North and East seas*, and looking forward to the almost *certainty* of the necessity for their *annual increase*, it must surely be admitted that we have now *more* occasion for the use of dock-yards on the *Eastern side* of this kingdom than ever; but so little able are the *present* yards to afford that additional assistance, which is so much wanted, that, in order to *prove* it, it is only necessary to state, that the ships, composing the fleet under the command of Lord Nelson, which attacked the Danes at Copenhagen, in 1801, were (with the

* Few people seem to look upon these exertions with a sufficient degree of proper apprehension.

exception of three or four at Chatham) actually fitted out at *Portsmouth and Plymouth!!* and, of course, incurred the chance of all those delays and inconveniences, which the rendezvous of ships, from such distant places, renders unavoidable.

The same thing necessarily happened when Lord Gambier's fleet was sent to Copenhagen; the ships had first to *come round from Portsmouth and Plymouth!!* and assemble in the Downs.

A similar inconvenience attends the formation of the fleet, now about to proceed to the Baltic, under the command of Sir James Saumarez; and, in short, must ever happen as long as the Eastern yards remain in their present insufficient state.

These facts, it is hoped, are sufficient to prove that the Eastern yards of this kingdom are *by no means* adequate to the fitting out and docking of *that portion* of our navy, which it is necessary to keep employed in the *North and East seas*. The next question for consideration is the practicability and propriety of improving and enlarging the *present* yards to the *Eastward*, so as to render them fit for the purposes for which they are now so *materially* deficient; in the course of which, I believe, it will be found that many *very high authorities* are not only of opinion that some of the dock-yards are “on the decline” (that allusion which Mr. Rose finds it so difficult to comprehend; see pages 11, 12, and 13): but that they are now *actually and irretrievably ruined, and wholly unfit to supply the wants of the service; and until the Country is unanimously* of this opinion,

it is hoped that not one shilling of the public money will be expended at Northfleet.

I will therefore suppose that a Convocation is assembled together (including such of the First Lords of the Admiralty, and other persons of esteemed talent and weight, as have, by their words, or actions shewn themselves to be of opinion, that, *ever since the year 1765*, the Eastern yards have been deemed inadequate to the purposes of the naval service *on that side* of the empire), in order to convince Mr. Rose, that, during the early part of that period, a new dock-yard was deemed "*expedient*;"—that, of late years, it has become absolutely "*necessary*" to the Eastward;—and, that the want of a *proper situation* alone has, until lately, prevented its formation.

The lists will stand thus (dead and living), arranged in chronological order; namely,

- 1765 Lord Egmont,
- 1785 Lord Howe,
- 1800 Lord Spencer,
- 1802)
- and } Lord St. Vincent,
- 1806)
- 1804 Lord Melville,
- Mr. Pitt,
- 1805 Lord Barham,
- Sir Roger Curtis,
- Admiral Domett,
- Messrs. Mylne,
- Huddart,
- Rennie,

and, I believe, I may venture to add the weight of the following names:—

- Lord Grey,
- Lord Sidmouth,
- Mr. Thos. Grenville,
- Lord Mulgrave, and
- Mr. Wellesley Pole.

versus

The Right Hon. George Rose.

Few in my profession being much accustomed to make long speeches, I shall content myself with putting into the mouths of these eminent Characters nothing but incontrovertible facts, which can be proved by existing documents; and as the rule of *seniores priores* is not a bad one, perhaps it may be satisfactory to the Right Hon. Gentleman to be addressed by Lord Egmont first, and the rest in rotation, in the order in which they are here placed.

1765.—LORD EGMONT.

SIR— I beg leave to state that I was fully convinced of the many disadvantages to which the naval service was subject, by reason of the delay, occasioned to large ships, in coming up the Thames, so long ago as when I was First Lord of the Admiralty;—that I even then perceived that the several sand-banks of the river Thames were gradually increasing;—that I foresaw also the rising greatness of the navy of this kingdom, and reflected, that, although there might be depth of water enough in the

‘ Thames to allow of small vessels sailing to and from
 ‘ Deptford and Woolwich dock-yards; yet that most
 ‘ probably, in the course of political events, there would
 ‘ be more occasion for the employment of *large ships*
 ‘ in the *North seas* than there had heretofore been—
 ‘ and that at last I became satisfied, that if, (instead of
 ‘ sending round ships to Portsmouth and Plymouth,
 ‘ when they wanted some trifling repairs), they could
 ‘ be docked on the Eastern side of this kingdom, it
 ‘ would be very advantageous to naval operations; and
 ‘ that if, (instead of waiting for the ships, wanted for
 ‘ Northern services, to come round from Portsmouth
 ‘ and Plymouth, when fair winds would permit), they
 ‘ could be fitted out in some yard to the Eastward, it
 ‘ would also be a very desirable thing. I therefore came
 ‘ to the resolution of having the ground in the Isle of
 ‘ Grain bored, with the view of forming a dock-yard
 ‘ there, for the fitting out, docking, and refitting of the
 ‘ large ships employed, or to be employed, in the
 ‘ *North and East seas* (not “ for docking and fitting
 ‘ ships” to the *Westward*, which I fairly own never
 ‘ entered my head). I was however, mortified to find
 ‘ that the sub-soil was so bad that it would not admit
 ‘ of it. As the next resource, I had the land at Sheer-
 ‘ ness bored, with the view of having that yard aug-
 ‘ mented; but here I was again disappointed, for
 ‘ the report which I received stated, “ that after the
 ‘ auger (the instrument used to bore the sub-soil)
 ‘ had got “ down about 8 feet, the sandy particles
 ‘ increased, and the hole immediately closed, on
 ‘ the auger being withdrawn.” This report I re-

‘ ceived in the year 1765; and I hope it will be con-
 ‘ sidered as some proof at least, that although, until
 ‘ lately, “ *you* never heard the measure spoken of, ex-
 ‘ cept loosely,” yet that I had done more than con-
 ‘ sider it loosely, when I was First Lord of the Admi-
 ‘ ralty; and as I have even *your* * authority for saying,
 ‘ that, “ if a new arsenal must be provided to the
 ‘ Eastward, a better situation than Northfleet can-
 ‘ not be found.” I am ready to admit, that it would
 ‘ have been the pride of my naval administration to
 ‘ have laid the foundation of a naval arsenal on that
 ‘ spot.’

1785.—LORD HOWE.

SIR,—‘ I beg leave to subscribe to all the arguments
 ‘ adduced by the Noble Lord who has preceded me;
 ‘ and, in proof of my being as well aware as he was, of
 ‘ the disadvantages attending the shallowness of the
 ‘ water in the Rivers Thames and Medway, I recollect
 ‘ I had a ship *built on purpose*, drawing *two feet less*
 ‘ water than ships of the same size (she was called the
 ‘ Brunswick); but she did not answer, and conse-
 ‘ quently no ship was built upon her model afterwards.
 ‘ But this is not all; for as, at Sheerness, the depth of
 ‘ water was ample, I was not discouraged by the at-
 ‘ tempts made by Lord Egmont, but had a plan actually
 ‘ formed for *enlarging* the dock-yard at that place. I
 ‘ was, however, at last obliged to give up the idea, for
 ‘ the same reason which had induced his Lordship to
 ‘ abandon it, the badness of the sub-soil. It may be in-

* See p. 1. of Mr. Rose's Letter.

ferred, however, from the two facts here stated, that, if I had known of the spot of land, since pointed out, at Northfleet, I should have assumed to myself the Eclat of laying the foundation of a dock-yard there; and I trust I have stated sufficient to shew that I was *fully impressed* with the necessity of forming a new dock-yard to the *Eastward*, if I had happened to have met with a convenient and proper situation, such as you, Sir, admit Northfleet to be.

1800.—LORD SPENCER.

SIR— I cannot give a more convincing proof of the importance which I attached to the formation of a new dock-yard to the *Eastward*, than by stating, that, when I was First Lord of the Admiralty, I directed the proper officer to give this subject very particular consideration; and, in pursuance of those orders, he reported to me, in the year 1800, that “ he had from time to time submitted various ideas of improvement relative to the dock-yards at Portsmouth and Plymouth; *but* that, with regard to the dock-yards at Deptford, Woolwich, and Chatham, considering their great *distance* from the sea—the *unavoidable difficulties* and *delays* attending the navigation of the rivers in which they were situated—the want of *sufficient depth of water* for ships of war, when in a state fit for sea—and the want of *all accommodation* for ships to lie, to fit within the precincts of *either of these dock-yards*—it had appeared to him, that, **HOWEVER GREAT MIGHT BE THE SUM, which should be appropriated to their improvement, still**

“ the sending a ship from sea in time of war to *either* of these yards, for the purpose of refitting or repairs, *must occasion a much greater expense*, for the performing a given quantity of work, than if it could have been done at an out-port; and this, *independently* of the **MUCH GREATER INEFFICIENT EXPENSE**, attending the maintenance of the Crew, and the wear and tear of the ship, during the time it would be thus excluded from the possibility of performing any actual service”—“ that the consideration of these circumstances, as well as of others, of the same tendency, had *convinced him*, that it would be *far more economical* to increase the present establishments at the out-ports, or to form some *new ones*, where ships might be refitted with all the dispatch that the nature of the work to be done would admit of, than to continue to incur the *very heavy expense*, which necessarily attends the employing the *inland dock-yards* for the naval purposes to which they are at present applied.”

After many more observations and statements, all pointing to the same object—the “ *expediency*” and “ *necessity*” of forming a *new dock-yard* to the *Eastward*, and resuming the consideration of the practicability of constructing one on the Isle of Grain; (for want of a better place—Northfleet not having been then pointed out) the report proceeded thus: “ *impressed with the conviction of the insufficiency of this out-port, (speaking of Sheerness,) as well as of the unfitness of all the inland dock-yards, (Deptford, Woolwich, and Chatham,) for the outfit or supply*

“ of his Majesty’s fleets, in actual service, and a situation having long ago been pointed out to me as eligible for a dock-yard on the Isle of Grain, I made it lately my particular business to examine the island itself.”

‘ It would be uninteresting, Sir, to detail what follows respecting the Isle of Grain ; because, since then, Northfleet having been pointed out, all idea of the Isle of Grain has long ago been abandoned.’

The same officer further reported to me, that having reflected on the *superior* advantages which a naval establishment, formed in *such a situation* as this, would have over the dock-yards of Chatham, Woolwich, and Deptford, he had been induced to defer giving any opinion on the subject of alterations *which had been proposed*, respecting those dock-yards, until he should have had some intimation of the pleasure of the Lords of the Admiralty, respecting the having in view the formation of *new Establishments* in the Isle of Grain, or *in some other situation*, possessed of similar advantages ; since, when once their Lordships should decide on the expediency of such an arrangement, it seemed advisable that *no more money* should be laid out for the *improvement of those dock-yards*, but with the view of rendering them more convenient for the particular services to which they would in future be appropriated.”

‘ I trust, Sir, that I need not take up your time any longer in order to satisfy you that I was fully convinced, *after ample “inquiry,”* of the necessity of a

‘ new dock-yard being formed to the *Eastward*; and that the obstacle which had prevented the execution of that plan by my predecessors—the want of a proper spot—was the one which rendered it impossible for me to cause the necessary works to be commenced.’

LORD ST. VINCENT.

SIR—‘ I think it desirable to give the suggestions which have occurred to me, relative to a new naval arsenal to the Eastward, in the state they were offered at the time I wrote them, to avoid, as carefully as I can, even the appearance of going out of my way to differ with you.’—(Mr. ROSE, p. 2.)

“ Lord St. Vincent is extremely desirous of attracting the attention, and strongly recommends to the serious consideration of his Majesty’s Ministers, the following Minute, containing the principal inducements for the establishment of a Naval Arsenal and Depôt of the first class and magnitude in the river Thames, between Northfleet and Greenhythe.”

“ In consequence of the great increase in the size of our ships of war, and their corresponding draught of water, the river Medway has become *extremely unfit* and inadequate* to lay them up in, the water being *so shoal*, that they take the *ground* on the ebb tide, and suffer *material injury*, being frequently caught by the heel by the mooring-chains, and remaining athwart the stream during the tide.”

* Mr. Rose says, that “ *he* has understood, that, in the Medway, at least *double* the number of ships may be moored than ever were laid up there.”—P. 15.

“ Besides their distance from the Nore, and the
 “ difficulty and delay of navigating them thither, both
 “ Deptford and Woolwich have become *improper* for
 “ the building and repair of large ships, both for the
 “ reasons above assigned, which are common to those
 “ yards, and for others which are local and peculiar to
 “ them. Owing to the injudicious mode which has
 “ been adopted of extending the yard by an encroach-
 “ ment upon the river, Woolwich is a source of *per-*
 “ *petual and enormous expenditure*: all the mud and
 “ silt, in consequence of this unadvised measure, *now*
 “ deposit in front of the docks, and are *constantly to be*
 “ *removed, with great labour and cost*, as often as there
 “ is occasion to dock, undock, or launch any ships of
 “ the line. This arsenal might be therefore advan-
 “ tageously reduced, and confined to the building and
 “ repairing of vessels of inferior classes exclusively,
 “ and continue to receive stores for the uses of the
 “ other yards, while Deptford might be converted to
 “ great advantage by the transfer of the Army Vic-
 “ tualling Office to that place.

“ There are at present two distinct establishments
 “ of this description; and all the victualling-stores
 “ brought up the river in ships of any size are con-
 “ veyed in lighters to both wharfs, and shipped much
 “ in the same manner. It is superfluous to point out
 “ the *vast expense * thus incurred*; and at the same
 “ time the *waste, pillage, and depredation †*, to which

* Mr. Rose says, “ the expense of employing craft on such
 “ service appears to be *too trifling* to deserve attention.”

† Again he says, “ some misconception must have prevailed
 “ about the plunder of stores.”

“ the stores of every species are thus constantly ex-
 “ posed. As this yard abutts on the old victualling-
 “ stores, (called the Red House,) and possesses a basin
 “ capable of receiving ships of burthen, and of being
 “ enlarged to any extent that might become neces-
 “ sary, these evils are susceptible of an easy remedy;
 “ and the greatest part of the expense, both of this
 “ yard and Woolwich, may well be *dispensed with*,
 “ and carried to the *aid of the projected establishment*.

“ The docks at Sheerness stand much in need of im-
 “ mediate repair, and those at Chatham are precisely in
 “ the same urgent predicament, besides that the *foun-*
 “ *dation of the latter has been ascertained to be so un-*
 “ *safe and precarious*, that Lord St. Vincent hesitated
 “ to risk the public money upon their repair after the
 “ peace in 1801, and contemplated the formation and
 “ establishment (here submitted to Ministers) of a new
 “ and complete naval arsenal, upon the most eligible
 “ site the whole *Eastern coast* might present for this
 “ great object.

“ Lord Spencer had directed his views to the same
 “ object, and his Lordship had thought the Isle of
 “ Grain might prove a convenient spot for the esta-
 “ bishment—in consequence, had presented a plan;
 “ but upon the actual survey and inspection which
 “ took place before the Lords of the Admiralty, on the
 “ 19th of September, 1802, (vide Minutes of the In-
 “ spector in the Admiralty-Office,) the foundation of
 “ that island was found to be a quicksand, and the
 “ place itself proved so unwholesome, that one very
 “ valuable servant of the public fell a sacrifice, and

“ another almost miraculously escaped the malignity
“ of its atmosphere.

“ In order to shew the actual state of all the arsenals
“ at this time existing in the two rivers, it is judged
“ proper to insert the opinion officially delivered to
“ the Lords of the Admiralty by the Inspector-General
“ upon the occasion alluded to. This Officer states
“ to their Lordships, that

“ Considering the great distance of Deptford,
“ Woolwich, and Chatham, from the sea, and the dif-
“ ficulties and delays attending the navigation of the
“ two rivers, and the want of a sufficient depth of
“ water for the ships of war in the vicinity of those
“ yards, he was of opinion that it would be more ad-
“ visable, on principles of utility and economy, to in-
“ crease the establishments at the out-ports, or to
“ form new ones, than to continue to incur the very
“ heavy expense that must attend the employing
“ these inland dock-yards for the general purposes to
“ which they are at present applied.”

“ With regard to Sheerness the Inspector-General
“ proceeds to state—“ Though it has the advantage of
“ depth of water, and a situation to the North of the
“ Foreland, yet the nature of the soil (in most places
“ a quicksand), and its being on the wrong side of
“ the harbour with respect to the prevailing winds,
“ are disadvantages that should prevent the expen-
“ diture of any considerable sum of money upon re-
“ pairs (now much wanted) if another place can be
“ found that is not liable to the same objections.”

“ Such being the local inaptitude, inconvenience, or

“ insecurity of all the dock-yards in the two rivers, it
“ remains only in this place to observe, that these de-
“ fects cannot be supplied, according to the first sug-
“ gestion of the Inspector-General, by any augmenta-
“ tion of the arsenals at the out-ports; and that no re-
“ medy can be devised for the evil, at least none that
“ can meet it with efficacy and full success, unless a
“ convenient site, and a sure foundation, can be sup-
“ plied by the *Thames itself*, to which these defective,
“ or dangerous establishments, may be in a great mea-
“ sure transferred, and which shall be free from the
“ respective wants, difficulties, and hazards of them
“ all!

“ It is evident that this point involves a question of
“ great general policy, and of the essential science of
“ the state. The augmentation of the Western yards
“ might and must produce an increase of shipping,
“ easily estimated by naval arithmetic and calcula-
“ tion; but the celerity, the certainty, and the true
“ locality of the first disposable naval force of the
“ country, upon any exigency and surprise, *cannot be*
“ *transferred from the river* *, *particularly since the*
“ *whole coasts of Holland, and Belgium, are become a*
“ *part of the dominions of France.*

“ The Thames being the great depôt and emporium
“ of the national commerce, it is from thence that our
“ first and earliest resources must *always* be called out
“ and collected. It is from thence that the seamen are
“ *always* supplied for the *first* and most *pressing* neces-

* What !! Not even to Southampton River? Hamble River?
Beaulieu River?—(Mr. Rose, p. 16.)

“ *sities upon the breaking out of war, and they are fur-*
 “ *nished unfailingly by the east-country and coal*
 “ *trades, as well as from the general traffic of the river,*
 “ *upon the burst of every occasion. It abounds, too,*
 “ *with timber, and every species of naval stores from*
 “ *the Baltic, so that it is always virtually a grand dis-*
 “ *posable magazine and arsenal, for the purposes of*
 “ *the navy, and for every sudden exigency of the state.*
 “ *The vast means it embraces can never, by compulsive*
 “ *causes, be assembled in any other spot of the whole*
 “ *empire; nor, if they were so, could they be organized*
 “ *or applied with equal certainty and dispatch.*”

“ The whole question therefore resolves itself into
 “ this dilemma, whether the present arsenals in the
 “ rivers shall be repaired, *with all the inconvenience*
 “ *and danger* which have been demonstrated, or *a new*
 “ *establishment be founded in the Thames.*”

“ Should the plan in the contemplation of Lord St.
 “ Vincent be adopted by the King’s Ministers, and a
 “ commensurate establishment formed on the spot pro-
 “ posed, commanding on the one hand all the seamen
 “ and all the stores of the commerce of the capital, and
 “ of the river; and, upon the other, an easy and safe
 “ communication with its mouth; it is not *difficult to*
 “ *foresee with * what increased energy and dispatch a*
 “ *fleet will always be able to put to sea upon the most*
 “ *sudden and unexpected emergencies*, particularly as
 “ the ample means and resources of the river, and of all
 “ the establishment, would be powerfully assisted by

* Mr. Rose says, “ *he should think it difficult for much greater*
 “ *expedition to be used than he has been an eye-witness to.*”

“ the respective divisions of marines at Chatham and
 “ Woolwich.

“ There is still another important benefit which must
 “ result to the country, if a basin was to be formed of
 “ a sufficient extent to admit such of the ships of war
 “ as might be ordered to be paid off to the Eastward,
 “ so that the stores could be returned *at leisure by the*
 “ *people of the yard*, and the hands immediately dis-
 “ charged. No person, perhaps, who has not had an
 “ opportunity of beholding them, *can credit or con-*
 “ *ceive the havoc and destruction* occasioned by the
 “ disorder and riot that usually prevail among seamen
 “ expecting their discharge; but it is easy to conjec-
 “ ture the *loss * sustained by the public, by the neces-*
 “ *sity which now frequently occurs, of keeping ships for*
 “ *a considerable time in commission*, by which a great
 “ and perfectly useless, but unavoidable expense, is in-
 “ curred for the pay and provisions of the ship’s
 “ companies.”

“ Upon the subject of expenditure and economy,
 “ as applicable to this establishment, Lord St. Vincent
 “ will only observe in the first place, that the ex-
 “ penses of three of the existing arsenals will be in a
 “ very great degree convertible to this object; and se-
 “ condly, that it cannot be achieved at too high a
 “ price, either considering the *advantages* that may
 “ confidently be expected from it, or the *great danger*
 “ *of entirely wasting and throwing away the public*
 “ *money upon the repairs of arsenals whose founda-*

* Mr. Rose says, “ *we have not heard of mischiefs resulting*
 “ *from it.*”—(P. 17.)

“*tions are so little to be depended upon, and which cannot ever successfully be effected, without prolonging the present difficulties and disadvantages of their communication with the sea, as well as their local defects and inconveniences. He inclines to think that the master importance of this plan exempts it from the rules of any general system of public economy, and also that it is prescribed by an economy the most abstract and rigid, considering the only alternative that remains, of risking and speculating with the public purse upon so unsafe and hazardous a bottom*.*”

1804.—LORD MELVILLE.

SIR—“I have nothing to add to the letter which I wrote to Mr. Percival, except that I really do suppose that you were not aware, which I happened to be, of the mature consideration which this subject had received, or of the authorities by which it was supported, when you wrote your answer. I have, however, reconsidered the subject, and I fairly own that the naked facts and arguments brought under my attention, as grounds for the formation of a new Naval Arsenal at Northfleet, were sufficient to produce conviction upon my mind of the necessity (I do

* If the country had fully known the grounds upon which Lord St. Vincent had formed his opinion of the necessity and advantage of the establishment of a naval arsenal at Northfleet, and had been aware that that measure had long ago received the sanction of his high authority, it is not probable that the adoption of it would have remained so long in doubt.

“not mean bare “expediency”) of the immediate adoption of that plan, already much too long delayed; but that, when it is considered that those facts and arguments are supported by the decided opinions of such high authorities as those who, by their words and actions, have sanctioned the great outlines of the plan in question, I confess that my opinion upon the subject has not been in the smallest degree shaken by any thing that you have advanced; nor do I see the most distant necessity for that “further inquiry” which it is professedly your object to have instituted, remaining fully convinced that the subject has already received all that full and ample consideration which its importance and magnitude deserve.”

The remaining advocates for Northfleet, viz. Mr. Pitt, Lord Barham, Sir Roger, Curtis, Vice-Admiral Domett, &c. &c. not having any thing to add to the able manner in which the other Noble Lords had stated their opinions, and justified their proceedings when at the head of the Admiralty, would not detain the Convocation for the purpose of delivering their sentiments upon the subject.

Mr. Pitt (peace to his manes) rested satisfied with merely stating, that, if the present Wearer of his Mantle would refer to the Treasury-warrants under date the 8th August, 1805, he would find his signature to one, by which a special clause was directed to be inserted, in a lease then about to be granted by the Crown, for the privilege of laying down certain moorings at Northfleet, reserving in the Crown the right of resumption whenever the intended new dock-

yard at that place should be constructed, and for the commencement of which, it is well known that Mr. Pitt only waited, until the Board of Revision had made their report upon the subject. Lord Barham contented himself with briefly remarking, that, like Mr. Rose, he *originally* entertained *great doubts* upon the necessity of the undertaking of so great a work, and entered upon the investigation of the grounds upon which that necessity was stated to exist, with a mind disposed to negative the adoption of the proposed measure; but that, *after* he had examined attentively into the bearings of the question, he became completely converted, and that he was now a warm advocate for its immediate commencement, and most speedy completion. He added, that he had only two observations more to make; the one that he thought it rather hard that, at his time of life, when at least sober reason might be supposed to reign, Mr. Rose should accuse him, in conjunction with his grave colleagues (one of whom has since borne his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave), of being "insensibly carried away by their zeal for improvement," and of "throwing * down great and expensive buildings," and "setting up others;" in short, of "toppling down high towers and moss-grown steeples," as if the very wild-fire and enthusiasm of intemperate ungovernable youth had suddenly rushed into their veins, which nothing but the cautious advice and prudent admonition of Mr. Rose's long experience

* The buildings in Deptford and Woolwich are very old, and must very soon be taken down.

and penetrating observation in naval matters were likely to curb and restrain within decent bounds of moderation!! The next and last remark which the Noble Lord had to make, related simply to a matter of fact. Mr. Rose in the course of his letter observes, that "if there are not already sufficient slips in the King's yards for frigates, he *supposes* more may be provided." The following is the answer which Lord Barham begged leave to state he received when he made inquiry in the year 1805, on this very point. "With respect to their Lordship's question, whether more slips may not be constructed, we do *not* think there is space sufficient for *any* increase, except in Portsmouth yard, where, on the new ground, an additional slip for a 74-gun ship was originally intended."

The Convocation, previously to their separating, placed in Mr. Rose's hands (in order that he might satisfy himself about the necessity for "further inquiry" and for the procuring of "detailed plans" and surveys,) three reports from Messrs. Milne, Huddart, and Rennie, one made in the year 1805, and two in 1808, relative to the state of the river Thames, as affecting the usefulness of Deptford and Woolwich dock-yards.

These reports were framed in pursuance of directions which they had received, to give an opinion as to the cause of the accumulation of mud in the river; and, in particular, to propose such means as they should judge advisable to remove the very great increase of mud in front of Woolwich dock-yard; and the last report, it will be observed, was presented *after a de-*

tailed plan had been made by those *very engineers* whom Mr. Rose so justly extols, of that part of the river Thames, above and below that yard, within the scope of the present inquiry.

In that report, after stating that ships of war, lying at their moorings in front of Woolwich yard, sew (or, in other words, bury their bottoms) *several feet* in the *mud*—after giving their reasons why the river in the vicinity of Woolwich is *incapable* of being restored to its original state—after declaring their opinion, that the fitting of the larger ships of war there should be *entirely given up*, and *removed to a more proper place*—those engineers conclude by stating, that, “ they had *not* thought it *necessary* to detail *any* mode that had occurred to them for removing the mud and soil from the channel in front of Woolwich dock-yard, *because* they were of opinion, as *before* stated, that *any* mode they *could propose*, so as to attain any considerable improvement, would be attended with such an ENORMOUS EXPENSE in the execution, and would be so VERY UNCERTAIN in its effect, that they thought it needless to trouble the Honourable Board by entering into it.”

After the receipt of this opinion, however, it being thought by some persons, like Mr. Rose, that *further inquiry* was necessary, before they should venture to act upon advice which had for its object the *prevention* of so much *unnecessary* expense, the report of the above-named engineers was actually referred to Messrs. Bough and Co. mud-diggers, who, naturally thinking that the raising of one and a half, or two millions of tons of mud, at 2s. per ton, was likely

to prove a very desirable sort of job in their line, strongly recommended the plan of clearing the Thames of mud!! and, in short, by their uncommon talents, so convincingly satisfied Government that Messrs. Milne, Huddart, and Rennie, were quite ignoramuses, that their proposal was immediately adopted!! and they were set to work forthwith!!—They have been now employed about a twelvemonth, and they have been paid in the course of that time between forty and fifty thousand pounds!!—How disinterested their opinion must have been!! and the most fortunate circumstance for these eminent (mud) engineers is, that the mud *accumulates almost* as fast as they take it away!!

Now, if Mr. Rose be so fully impressed, as he states himself to be, with the necessity of economy, pray let him do a piece of real service, by using his influence with the “First Minister,” in putting a stop to this wasteful expenditure, which is literally throwing money into the mud—and, as a motive to induce him to do so, let me ask him this question—Is not this expenditure taking place in direct *opposition* to the *decided* and *unanimous opinion* of his three *favourite* engineers, Messrs. Milne, Huddart, and Rennie? And does he think that the expenditure of above forty thousand pounds per annum should be allowed to be continued, on the sole authority of the opinion of Messrs. Bough and Co. *versus* Messrs. Milne, Huddart, and Rennie? reflecting that the opinion of Messrs. Bough and Co. *to* expend the money in question, is in *accordance* with *their interest*;

and that of the engineers, *not* to spend it, *against* theirs! !

The revival of the antiquated fears about laying up ships in Wet Docks might be answered by the statement of facts, if facts were likely to produce conviction; but, although, in days of yore, it was an adage that "facts were stubborn things," they are now attempted to be answered, not by "bold assertions," but by "bare persuasions." However, as the time may come again when facts will be held in estimation, I will fain hazard the mention of one, the more so as it happens to be accompanied with an opinion given by an engineer of great eminence—an opinion supported by other high authorities—an opinion which produced conviction on the mind of Mr. Pitt, who, during the time that the proposals for Wet Docks in the river Thames were before Parliament, paid very particular attention to the subject, and was very minute and penetrating in his examination.—And lastly, an opinion, in perfect confidence and in concurrence with which more than half of the *Commercial Wealth* of this Kingdom is *committed* to the *safety* of *Wet Docks*, in *preference* to open Harbours.

Mr. Rennie says, "I here beg to remark, that *less* danger will arise to the ships in ordinary, from being moored in a dock in still water, *than* if moored in the Thames, as, whenever a fire is discovered in any one, the others may be moved away, before it can come to such a head as to endanger them. This was *exemplified* some years ago at Hull, where a vessel accidentally took fire in the dock, at a time

"when it was *much crowded*; all the adjacent vessels were however removed from her, and the fire extinguished *without injuring any other*; and this was effected *without even* the aid of steam-engines, which here (at Northfleet) will, *in a few minutes*, be ready to pour a *large stream* of water on the burning vessel."

With regard to the fortifications for the protection of the naval arsenal in question, on the land side, which Mr. Rose estimates at four millions!! it must be obvious, that the extensive works at the Lines at Chatham, being intended to stop the advance of an enemy on his march in that direction to the Capital, must also cover the *intermediate* spot at Northfleet, in the direct road *between those lines and London*; and consequently, that no expense can be set down to the naval arsenal for Fortifications, except, perhaps, for a few Redoubts on the high lands surrounding the spot in question, which *ought not* to cost a hundred thousand pounds; and for these the ground is considered extremely eligible. Indeed one of the mounts in the vicinity was a favourite spot with the Romans, who, in consequence of its commanding situation, formed a camp there*. On the sea side, a few cannon planted on the heights above the chalk-pits, would make a formidable battery, or, at most, one or two redoubts, in addition, would be all that could be necessary; while,

* Northfleet was the most prominent spot fixed upon at the time of the Spanish Armada, for the protection of the Thames. I have lately been favoured with the sight of a Plan made in the year 1588, descriptive of the mode in which the banks of the river were then fortified.

on the other side of the river, Tilbury Fort would be an advanced protection against surprise.

Thus, therefore, the original estimate of 6,000,000*l.* may be again taken as the basis of our view of the expense proposed to be incurred; and as Mr. Rose, in opposition to the very strong facts adduced, in proof of the reasonableness of the expectation that that sum would not be exceeded, has rested satisfied with saying, "that he is persuaded the arsenal would not be "finished for any thing like that sum," *without producing one single fact, or one solitary argument, in support of such persuasion, I cannot resist the temptation I feel to re-state those facts as follows: namely, that the great works lately carried on, at an immense expense, by the enterprise of Individuals, in the construction of the West-India, the London, the East-India, and other docks, were executed for very nearly the sums at which they were estimated; and further, that, in those estimates, the usual addition of ten per cent. only was made for incidental expenses: whereas, double that sum, namely, twenty per cent. has been added for contingencies, and included in the Estimate of the construction of the naval arsenal at Northfleet!! or, in other words, the real estimate is five millions, to which is added a whole million more for extras and contingencies, being half a million MORE than what is customary in similar cases.*

Now, these are facts which certainly require to be refuted by facts alone, and not by mere suppositions. Indeed, I can only account for Mr. Rose's opinion upon this subject, by taking it for granted, that his *persuasions* are founded upon a knowledge of the *great inaccuracy* of the estimates formed by *public officers,*

and the immense waste and expense at which *public* works are executed under *such* superintendence; and impressed with this conviction, I will be much bolder in my assertions than even Mr. Rose, and commit myself upon the declared opinion, that *fifteen* millions will never see Northfleet completed in *as many years, if* left to the conduct and superintendence of *public officers.*

To return, however, to the consideration of the *liberal* estimate of six millions, let us consider of what items it must be (generally speaking) composed. These may be divided into two principal heads: 1st. The wet docks, dry docks, slips, and every thing connected with them, so as to render Northfleet fit for the building of a certain portion of the navy, and for the docking, repair, and refit of the whole of the *North and East Sea squadrons,* and for the laying up in time of peace, in ordinary, such part of the navy as the probability of the extent of *North and East Sea services* on the breaking out of a war would render advisable; and as the number of line-of-battle ships and frigates only (exclusive of sloops, &c.) now in the Navy is stated by my old friend Steel's List to consist of about 550 sail, I think one fifth * part (or 110 sail) is the *least* number that we *ought* to keep at Northfleet; and I believe I shall be pretty near the mark, if, for *the whole of these* purposes, I put down 4,000,000*l.*

* An erroneous idea has gone abroad that it was intended to lay up the *whole navy* of England at Northfleet!!! instead of only *one-fifth* part of it!!

Under the 2d head I will place all descriptions of storehouses, (including rigging-houses, mast-houses, cable-houses, &c.) and likewise all the manufactories, in which the application of machinery is intended to be produced, (such as the ropery, canvas-manufactory, block-machinery, saw-mills, rolling-mills, &c. &c.) and the whole of these I will consider as making up the remaining 2,000,000l.

Now with regard to the expense of these two heads—the storehouses, and the manufactories, above alluded to—it must be admitted, that *wherever* you lay up your ships, whether at Northfleet, or in the Medway, or in Southampton-Water, or in Falmouth Harbour, or Milford-Haven, Government *must* incur the expense of building *additional storehouses* for the reception of the rigging, masts, &c. &c. of the ships paid off and laid up in ordinary. This was so fully *proved* at the end of the last war, that it does not admit of a doubt—it is *positive matter of fact*. It therefore follows, that, as storehouses *must* be built somewhere, no part of the cost of them should be considered as forming any portion of the expense to be placed to the account of Northfleet, but should in fact be abated from the estimated sum of six millions.

With respect to the manufactories and machinery, all that Mr. Rose contends for is the *possibility* of building them in the present yards. It is presumed he does not mean to say, that, because erected in *those* yards, under the superintendence of *public* officers, they will cost nothing!! and further he admits (p. 6), that “the attainment of these objects on which

“there is *no difference of opinion* could be *infinitely better* provided for in a *new* naval arsenal of sufficient extent, than in the *present* yards,” for obvious reasons which he afterwards states. Thus, therefore, the *whole expense* of those manufactories, as well as of the storehouses, should be abated from the sum which can fairly be laid to the account of Northfleet, because, if the arsenal at Northfleet should not be constructed, still the *same expense must* be incurred for *these* purposes in some *other* places.

The two together (the storehouses, and the manufactories) having been stated, under the second head, at two millions, it follows that the said sum is to be deducted from the total estimate of six millions, thus leaving the remaining sum of four millions (stated under the first head) as the real and fair expense to be placed to the new arsenal at Northfleet, and which sum we shall next proceed to consider. Mr. Rose (p. 33) admits, that, by laying up ships in a wet dock, the expense of mooring-chains, and the charge for the men in ordinary, would be saved. Let us see, therefore, what these *admitted savings* would amount to on the number of ships, namely 110, (say sixty line-of-battle ships and fifty frigates,) intended to be moored at Northfleet. The expense of mooring-chains, &c. for a line-of-battle ship, is well known to be above 3000l. But, in order to be very moderate in my estimate, I will be content with taking only that sum; the mooring-chains, therefore, for sixty line-of-battle ships, would cost 180,000l. and for fifty frigates, at 2000l. each, 100,000l. more, making a total of

280,000l. for mooring chains*. The men to take care of the line-of-battle ships cannot be averaged at less than ten each, and of the frigates at five each, making a total, for sixty line-of-battle ships and fifty frigates of 850 men, whose wages and victuals, at 3s. per day each, will amount to about 46,537l. per annum, being, at four and a half per cent. (the rate at which a loan may be supposed to be negociated at the present price of stocks), the interest of somewhat more than 1,033,000l. capital money: adding, therefore, the amount of Mr. Rose's admitted savings together, they will come to 1,313,000l. which, being abated from the 4,000,000, before alluded to, will reduce the actual and fair expense to be laid to the account of the new naval arsenal at Northfleet to the sum of 2,687,000l. the annual interest of which, at 4½ per cent. will be the mighty sum of 120,915l. per annum!! being about the *one hundred and fifty-seventh part* of the *present annual* expense of the navy!! and against this annual expense there will remain to be set off the estimated savings of the Commissioners of Revision of 400,000l. per annum † (for the view I have taken of the subject is entirely different from the one ascribed to them) but, even supposing *not one sixpence of the savings* of the Commissioners of Revision should be capable of being realized (and I confess their amount

* Nothing is here placed to the account of bridles, expense of laying down moorings, keeping them in repair, buoys, and buoy-ropes, use of lighters, &c. &c. &c.

† Six millions every fifteen years.—See Lord Melville's Letter, page

fills my mind with doubts of their accuracy, to the full extent), *still* there will remain to be set off against this vast sum of 120,000l. per annum!! First, the saving of the expense of the lighters and small craft, and the wages and victuals of their crews, which, though Mr. Rose says it “appears to be too trifling to deserve attention,” Lord St. Vincent says, “it is superfluous to point out the *vast* expense thus incurred.” Secondly, the prevention of pillage and embezzlement, which, though Mr. Rose says “some misconception must have prevailed, he thinks, “about the plunder of stores,” Lord St. Vincent says, in continuation of the preceding sentence, it is superfluous to point out “the WASTE, PILLAGE, “and DEPREDATION to which the STORES OF “EVERY SPECIES are THUS CONSTANTLY “EXPOSED.” Thirdly, the saving of the time of the workmen in going to and returning from ships moored several miles distant from the port of refit. Fourthly, of the expense of the ships' boats employed in fetching stores, or on other services connected with the dock-yards; and lastly, as Lord St. Vincent observes, “the important benefit which must “result to the country, if a basin were to be formed, “of sufficient extent to admit such of the ships of “war as might be ordered to be paid off *to the Eastward*, so that the stores could be returned at “leisure by the people of the yard, and the hands “immediately discharged. No person, perhaps, who “has not had an opportunity of beholding them,” (Mr. Rose says, “*We have not heard of the mischiefs “resulting from it!*”) “can credit or conceive the

“ *havoc and destruction* occasioned by the disorder
 “ and riot that usually prevail among seamen respect-
 “ ing their discharge. But it is easy to conjecture
 “ the LOSS sustained by the public, by the necessity
 “ which now frequently occurs of keeping ships for a
 “ CONSIDERABLE TIME in commission, by
 “ which GREAT and perfectly USELESS, but UN-
 “ AVOIDABLE EXPENSE, is incurred for the pay
 “ and provisions of the ships’ companies *.”

The public will now judge, whether the tender ap-
 peal which has been made to their feelings, about
 loading them with additional taxes, to the amount of
 six hundred thousand pounds per annum, for the sake
 of erecting a naval arsenal at Northfleet, came with a
 very good grace from Mr. Rose; and whether out of
 the 19 millions, now annually expended upon the navy
 of this kingdom, the country will hesitate to sanction
 the appropriation of about the 157th part of that ex-
 pense, to the payment of the interest of the money
 wanted to carry into execution a measure which has
 been thought desirable and necessary, *for so many*
years past, by the *numerous great naval and political*
characters whose proceedings and opinions upon this
 question have been, very inadequately I confess, de-
 tailed in this paper.

I have purposely avoided the discussion of the ex-
 traneous subjects alluded to by Mr. Rose—such as

* The expense of maintaining Deptford and Woolwich Yards
 is supposed to cost about 200,000l. per annum, the whole of which
 is proposed to be transferred to Northfleet.

the propriety of giving our large ships more depth of
 hold, to enable them to carry their lower-deck ports
 higher out of the water—the expediency of making
 Falmouth a rendezvous for the Channel fleet—of
 making Milford a building or repairing yard, and some
 other points; because, though they are of importance
 in themselves, yet they really ought not to be men-
 tioned in the consideration of the question respecting
 Northfleet.

In order, however, that it may not be supposed,
 that what Mr. Rose says on these subjects is un-
 answerable—let it be recollected, that, upon the first
 point here alluded to, it appears that the Navy-Board
 (including of course the *surveyors* of the navy, being
 on the subject of *building* ships) stated to the Lords
 of the Admiralty, in June, 1806, that “ they could
 “ not but be aware, (even without the examples of the
 “ many French ships which have been taken,) that
 “ *increased depth of hold would give the ships more*
 “ *stability, and enable them to carry their ports higher.*”
 Shortly afterwards the Lords of the Admiralty accord-
 ingly ordered more depth of hold to be given to the
 Nelson, Caledonia, and other large ships. On this
 point, therefore, the question rests as follows—The
 Lords of the Admiralty, and the Comptroller and Sur-
 veyors of the Navy, versus Mr. Rose. On the 2d point,
 the making of Falmouth a rendezvous for line-of-
 battle ships, the fact happens to be, that Mr. Rose’s
colleagues, the present Lords of the Admiralty, have,
in opposition to his opinion, recently *broken up* the
 establishment at Falmouth, and abandoned the attempt

(which had been on trial for four or five years) of rendezvousing the Channel fleet in that harbour. And lastly, with respect to Milford, it also so happens, that, *notwithstanding* Mr. Rose's advice, those same colleagues, the present Lords of the Admiralty, have actually ordered the establishment of a building-yard at that place. To say more upon these topics at present would be superfluous, as Mr. Rose alone can explain the motives by which he is influenced in thus making an appeal to the Public, against the actions of his own coadjutors in office.

I cannot conclude without remarking that the Canal mentioned by Mr. Rose, (p. 10), from Purfleet to Blackwall, is intended to be on the *Essex* side of the river; (indeed there are reasons which render it impossible to be formed on the *Kent* side;) so that when the Right Honourable Gentleman has got his ships "of the largest draught of water" up his Canal, he must (in order to transport them from thence to his dock-yards at Deptford and Woolwich, on the *Kent* side of the river) have either an aqueduct bridge over, or Mr. Dodd's tunnel under the Thames!! with appropriate machinery for hoisting them over the bridge!! or diving them through the tunnel!! This would really be an amusing spectacle for the inhabitants of London!! especially as Mr. Rose must himself undertake the superintendence and execution of the works!! for I am *quite sure* not one of the eminent Engineers he mentions will venture upon so difficult a task.

Whether in this notable project Mr. Rose has been

guilty of what he imputes to others, namely, "being insensibly carried away by zeal for improvements," or whether "he might not in this instance have been aware of the infinite importance of an examination" whether or not his project were consistent with common sense, I will not pretend to determine.

FINIS.

