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THE
RIGHTS
OF
BRITISH SUBJECTS
To ELECT their Own
REPRESENTATIVES,
ASSERTED:

Proving, from the most Eminent Historians, the
Antient Usage, and the Necessity of the
FREQUENCY OF PARLIAMENTS,
THE
FREEDOM OF ELECTIONS,
And the Fatal Consequences which have attended
those PRINCES or their MINISTERS, who
have invaded either.

WITH
Seasonable Instructions to the ELECTORS, how to Con-
duct themselves in the Choice of their REPRESENT-
TIVES at the ensuing Elections; the *Qualifica-*
tions requisite for Gentlemen to be chosen into so great
a Trust, and the Necessity of Freedom of Speech in
the House of Commons.

With a DEDICATION to the ELECTORS
of GREAT BRITAIN.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-Noster-*
Row. 1740.

Price One Shilling.



TO THE
ELECTORS
 OF
GREAT BRITAIN.

Friends and Countrymen,



THE following Treatise was intended to have been publish'd for your Perusal, at the Expiration of the last Parliament; but was artfully stifled till the Elections were over: As you will perceive it was wrote with no other View than to convey a Knowledge to you of those inestimable Liberties enjoyed by your Ancestors, (and which, if we are not wanting to ourselves, we may still preserve;) the Right invested in you as Electors; the Character of Persons proper for you to repose so sacred a Trust in; to guard you against the Snares and fatal Allurements too often made use of, to deceive the unwary Elector, and to explain

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to you the Usage, Custom, and Bravery of your Ancestors: As therefore the End above proposed, could not then be answered, I was determined to prevent any further Sale till this Parliament was nigh expiring, because it would not sooner have its desired Effect; that it might be recent in your Memories: I hope you will find the several Heads so properly digested, as to arm you against the many Stratagems used to decoy the artless Elector into their Net, who, too often, when warmed with Liquor, have given a Vote for a Person, who had no other View than to barter away those valuable Liberties he had sworn to preserve.

As the EXCISE SCHEME was the memorable Event of the last Parliament, I beg you would recollect the narrow Escape you then had, and the Hazard you run of being deprived of your Liberties, by that deep-laid Scheme; so the late CONVENTION, (which was calculated not only to amuse, but to impose on the Judgment of all Mankind, Placeholders, &c. excepted) was what we were out-numbered by Votes, thro' our own Choice. His Majesty's most gracious Declaration of War, sufficiently evinces the Tergiversation of the *Spaniards*, and justifies me in my Assertion of the fatal Consequences attending it; not to mention the Indulgence granted by it to our common Enemy, to render their Fortresses impregnable in *Old and New Spain*, and to
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arm at their Leisure, as they could raise, or borrow Money; while the *British* Fleet was ploughing the Ocean, without any Enemy to cope with; exposed to the foaming Billows only, and had the Mortification of seeing them smiling in Security, with their Fleet safe in Harbour, and ours daily exposed, to be rendered incapable of Service, by every rude Blast of Wind.

The agreeable Accounts lately received from Admiral *Vernon*, are a sufficient Eviction of what we might, and ought to have then done, instead of passing the Convention; such a Proceeding might have saved some Millions to the Nation; such a resolute Attack as the above, on a Place of so great Strength, (as they have had so long Time to add to its Fortifications) and with so small a Force, would have made the haughty *Spaniard* tremble, and consequently tractable, when they found we were in earnest, to have readily granted what we had been so long treating for, without any further Expence, especially as they had not then cemented so advantageous an Alliance with *France*. I am supported in my Observation, of the Importance of this Action, by the joint Address of both Houses of Parliament, the Addresses of the Cities of *London* and *Dublin*, and the universal Joy shewn thro' the whole Kingdom.

For your own Security, therefore, look with an impartial Eye, on the several Gentlemen
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who voted for the Convention ; review without Prejudice, whether you think, from the Nature of it, they could have any Motive to induce a single Person of them to vote for it, unless they were under the Influence of some malevolent Planet.

Think! O think! 'ere it be too late, how shocking it is, that in every Parliament we must be alarmed with some Attack on our Liberties. Can it therefore be possible to imagine, by the Experience we have had, and the Dangers we have narrowly escaped, that we can any longer be bribed to destroy ourselves, to barter away the Liberties of our Country, to transmit Slavery down to Posterity, and to be recorded to latest Ages with Infamy.

Think! how absurd it is, for you to be continually petitioning and soliciting of those very Persons you have chose to represent you, humbly begging them to preserve you from that Slavery you brought on yourselves by such a Choice, when you have had, and I trust will soon again have, it in your Power to retract your former Errors ; to imitate the Virtues of your Ancestors, to despise the alluring Bait of Money, which must perish with you, by becoming free, unbiass'd Agents, and then you cannot avoid, Nature will cry aloud, and dictate you to vote for Gentlemen of approved Integrity : Gentlemen who live amongst you ; whose Characters can't be unknown to you, and whose Estates rendering them independent

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of any undue Influence : These are the Gentlemen who will secure your Liberties, who will prevent those continual Alarms you are under, of their being barter'd away, and will be able to transmit to your Posterity the Blessings you will enjoy by such a Choice. Consider how many Consciences have been sacrificed to that *Dagon*, the Excise, that Method being attended with the least Expence, of promising to put your Children into that Revenue, for their Votes : Let but those Parents review the State of such Children, and what wretched Figures they make in Life, and how much worse to Posterity, and then think with themselves, whether, had they bred them up in their own several Trades, Agriculture, &c. they would not have been more serviceable to their Country, than by studying the Art of entering Tradesmen's Houses, to the great Annoyance of their Families ; and how few of them ever after become serviceable to their Country, but live like Caterpillars, devouring the Fruits of it.

Let not the Inn-keeper, &c. be menaced out of his Vote to prevent the quartering of Soldiers on him ; let him remove the Cause, by voting according to Conscience, and the Effect of those Threats must cease.

Would you consider how shocking it is, to see Men who would make the narrowest Inspection into the Character of a Person he might trust for a small Sum of Money, and even

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even take implicitly the Character of a Man he is going to intrust with his Liberty, his Property, his Family, for SEVEN YEARS certain, and from whence lies no Appeal.

Every Freeholder in *England* will, in all Probability, soon be called on either to ruin or save his Country: Those Powers which we delegated to our Representatives, will soon return into our own Hands again; and when every Man's Vote is given back to him, every Freeholder is, in some measure, a *Legislator*: Consider then, how careful we ought to be in the Choice of Persons with whom we must intrust our *Invaluable Liberties* for seven Years to come. Be careful in reviewing the several Lists of the Gentlemen who have voted, either to Ruin, or Save his Country; if you approve of a Voter for the *Excise Scheme*, chuse him; if you approve of the *Septennialist*, or our modern *Conventioners*, *Placeholders*, and *Pensioners*, &c. chuse them; but let us consider seriously, if we have been oppressed, it has been by Tyrants of our own making; and if we should be oppressed again, it must be by the same Method: To prevent which, be careful of your Enquiry into the Characters of the Gentlemen who offer themselves as Candidates before you.

I am your Humble Servant,

PHILO BRITANNICUS.

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*See in your next issue. Mr. P. is not to be
but at the same time is not to be*

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THE

RIGHTS of the SUBJECT

IN ELECTING their

REPRESENTATIVES.

AS the Right of *Representation* in Parliament, is the highest Privilege enjoy'd by an *Englishman*: A Privilege of choofing Perfons with whom they are to intrust the Difposal of the *Properties, Liberties, and Lives*, not only of *themselves*, but of their *Relations, Friends, Family*, and in some respects, their *Posterity*: I fay, as they are now in a fair way of enjoying and exerting this Privilege, which they have not had an Opportunity of doing for *Seven Years* past, and are not likely to enjoy for *Seven Years* to come; I have, for the Use, and Instruction of the *Electors*, reduc'd the whole Body of *Parliamentary Law*, relating to *Elections*, into

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this narrow compass; that they may at one view, become Masters of those valuable Liberties, which were so inviolably preserv'd by their Ancestors: I have, from our Records, prov'd the *Frequency of New Parliaments*, and the FREEDOM of Electing them, for divers Ages; and have shewn the fatal Consequences which have attended those Princes who have invaded the Right of either: Nothing therefore remains for us to do, but to make our selves acquainted with those *invaluable Privileges*; to review the Care always taken by our Ancestors for their Preservation, and by persevering in the same Resolution, to transmit them down to our Posterity as entire as we receiv'd them from our Ancestors; which we should do, would we but consider how inestimable a Treasure it is; a Treasure! for which our Forefathers sacrificed their Lives for its Preservation; which will warrant any Zeal that may be shewn for it, and justify every Man who appears in its Defence.

The Appearance and Endeavours of single Men, may be, perhaps, of little weight; the Powers of each private Man may be small, in proportion to such an end; but yet he is to exert them, whatever they be: If others join their Endeavours, as they ought, he will attain his End; if they do not, he has done his Duty, and has conducted

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ducted himself so, as to take pleasure in the Reflection as long as he lives, That *he has delivered his own Soul*.

The Case of every Man in *England*, is like that of several Persons engag'd in Bond for Payment of a Sum; they are all bound jointly, and every one separate, for the Payment of the whole, and by one or other of them the Sum must be paid. There is indeed a material difference in these Cases; in that I have alluded to, the Obligation is voluntary, and contracted by our selves; in the other, which I am directly speaking of, the Obligation is natural, and supposing us born Members of this Society, it begins with our Life, and cannot end but with it; in the one, the Case is *private*, in the other, of a *publick* Nature, and consequently, founded on a higher Reason, and to be discharged with more vigorous Endeavours: And as in the one Case, if any fail to make Payment, the *municipal Law* obliges the rest to make it good, so, in the other, the *Supreme Law*. The Good, the Welfare, the Being of Society, requires every one to contribute to that End, and if any fail of their Obligations, the rest are still obliged to discharge theirs, to do their utmost for their Country's Service, to do Justice to it; if they cannot, at least to do all in their Power for that End, without which, they cannot be just to themselves. You

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You may read of Times, in which Publick Spirit was more general, and was, indeed, the Character of an *Englishman*; if it be less now, it is a Subject of melancholy Reflection. A private, selfish Spirit has been so encourag'd of late Years, and so generally possess'd People, that a Publick one is grown ridiculous, and rare enough to be the Contempt and Jest of those who want it.

It were to be wish'd, that all true Lovers of their Country would now exert their Endeavours for its Service, and would enter their Protest against BRIBERY and CORRUPTION, whether he can prevent it, or no; and I am persuaded they may then carry their Point, but a desponding Man will never carry any; Ruin is certain, when once a Man thinks it inevitable; for that Imagination will keep him from endeavouring to prevent it; whereas, Difficulties to Persons whose Spirits are so low appear insuperable, are often easily surmounted by the Resolute. Nature always exerts herself most, when she is most press'd; and it is for us to imitate her; to encrease our Endeavours, in proportion to the Difficulties we meet with, and the more Fury we are attack'd with, to oppose ourselves with the more Courage; so shall we incite others to follow our Example, and strengthen

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en our Cause; so shall we be most likely to attain our *Ends*, and benefit our *Country*; so shall we, whatever happens, have the Esteem of our Enemies, (and that is all we are to expect from 'em) as Men of *Spirit*, *Integrity*, and *Resolution*.

As a New Parliament therefore is going to be chosen; that great Resource of the Nation in all its Difficulties, and which it has always depended upon for the Redress of its Grievances: That it may be effectual for this Purpose, and truly answer the Ends of its first Institution; That it may not be the Source of as many Miseries, as it was originally design'd as Blessings to it, depends on our Choice of Members to compose it: A Choice! that we have all the motives in nature to engage us to use caution in; for the Trust we put in our Representatives, is the greatest we can put in Men; we trust them with our *Fortunes*, our *Liberties*, our *Lives*, and what is more, with our CONSTITUTION, and our COUNTRY; A Word! which would have inspir'd an *Old Roman* to have sacrificed his Life for the Good of it! A Concern! for which our Ancestors often offer'd up their Lives, and for which we ought always to be ready to venture our own. We trust them by express Designation, not for One, or Two, but for *Seven Years*, and in the Event, perhaps for

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as much longer as they please. We trust them *implicitly*, for there lies no Appeal from their Decrees; and if any Ruin flows in upon us, from any unworthy Choice we make, we have this uncomfortable Circumstance to imbitter it, *That we are ruin'd by our selves.*

If it should be ask'd by some, who have done their utmost to destroy those valuable Privileges I am writing of, By what Authority I have taken upon me this Liberty of talking to my Country-men? I shall answer, I enjoy it by my Birth-right, and that no Power now on Earth, without the most daring Violation of the *Liberties* of the *Subject*, can take it from me. The Power of Electing, and freely giving my Vote, for whom I please, certainly carries along with it a Power of canvassing every Man's Pretensions, of judging every Man's Qualifications for this Important Office, and consequently, of Directing and Persuading my Brethren to what I think best, and that in the most Publick manner. My Liberty and Property is concern'd in every several Election, and tho' I cannot say I actually choose my Representatives in every *Borough* in *England*, yet I am sure I suffer by every Evil Choice.

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It is therefore of the last Importance to the *Electors* of *Great Britain*, who have any regard for the Happiness and Welfare of themselves and Fellow Subjects, to be thoroughly inform'd of the Characters of those, in whom they shall think fit to repose the highest Trust: For if a Majority of improper Persons should happen to be return'd for the ensuing Parliament, the *British Liberties* will be in the utmost Peril, and the little Advantage which some *Electors* may gain by bartering their Votes, will be a poor and sorry Recompence for that inexpressible Ruin, towards which they have contributed: They would do well to consider the Story of that Arch Traytor, *Judas*, who, in deep Remorse and Despair, returned the Price of his Treachery, and became afterwards *his own Executioner.*

Many and frequent have been the Attempts of Wicked Men to destroy our Excellent Constitution, which God, in Mercy to us, hath been pleas'd, hitherto, to preserve; and we are encouraged from the Story of *Sodom* to hope, that if there are but a few *Righteous* left, his Providence will still watch over us for Good: But if Religion be made a Jest, and moral Honesty expos'd to Ridicule; if Bribery and Corruption appear openly at Noon Day, and meet with universal Applause and Encouragement,

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agement, even from those, whose Duty it is to suppress the same; if those, and many other Impieties, should happen to prevail as universally as another kind of Wickedness did in the aforesaid infamous City, I say, whenever this shall happen to be our Case, we may conclude, the Day of our Desolation is not far distant, and that some Exemplary Divine Vengeance will soon overtake us.

To represent therefore the proper Qualifications of Persons fit for so great a Trust; To inculcate the Motives which ought to influence us in the Choice of them, and to recommend Methods that are *Legal, Fair,* and *Just,* in the Proceeding to this Choice, is the Design of the following Treatise, wherein I have no private View, but the good of the Community: I shall therefore Preface no longer, but come to my first General Head, *viz. The Frequency of Parliaments.*

THE FREQUENCY of PARLIAMENTS is a Right inestimable, which the People of *England* have always claim'd, and been in Possession of, for several Ages; For one of the Fundamental and Principal Ends of *Parliaments* was, " For the Redress
" of Grievances, and Easing the Oppressi-
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" ons of the People." The *Mirroure of Justice*, an Ancient and Learned Treatise of the Law, which, as Lord *Coke* observes in his Preface to his 10th Report, was written in the *Saxon Times*, saith, That Parliaments were instituted *pur oyer & terminer les plaintes de dort, de le Roy, de la Roigne, & de leur Infans, & de eux specialment, de queux Torts lun ne poet aver autrement common droit;* " To hear and determine the
" Complaints of the wrongful Acts of the
" King, the Queen, and their Children,
" and especially of those Persons against
" whom the Subject otherwise could not
" have Common Justice.

Several Things were added to the above Treatise by *Horne*, a Learned Lawyer, who liv'd in the Reign of *Edward I* and *II*, who asserts it to be *the constant Usage of this Kingdom for Parliaments to assemble twice a Year, or oftner, if need be, at London, for making of Ordinances for the Good Estate of the Realm:* And those Times seem to be stationary, and were usually after *Easter* and *Michaelmas*; but on the encrease of the Number of Representatives, those Assemblies were less frequent; and therefore *Horne*, in the same Book, complains of it as an *Abusion of the Law:* *That whereas Parliaments ought to convene twice a Year at London, they, now-a-days meet but seldom,*
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and at the Will of the King. To prevent the encrease of this Abuse, it was provided by the fifth of *Edward II.* That a Parliament should be held once or twice a Year. By 4 *Edward III.* c. 14. That it should be holden every Year once, and more often, if need be. In 36. *Edward III.* c. 10. That for Maintenance of the Statutes, and Redress of divers Mischiefs which daily happen, a Parliament shall be holden every Year, as aforesaid, ordained by Statutes. The same Usage and Right is claimed by Parliament in 50 *Ed. III.* and acknowledg'd by that Prince in answer to their Petition. The same acknowledgment is made the first of *Richard II.* and their Meeting was not (as the *Mirroure* complains) for Aids and Gatherings of Treasure, but to redress delays in Suits, and to end such Cases as the Judges doubt of, for the Relief of the People in ordinary Cases. And according to *Bracton*, (a Learned Judge, who liv'd in the Time of *Hen. III.*) all ambiguous, and intricate Causes were referred to the Determination of this Learned Body. They used great Dispatch, (the Words of *Fortescue* are) *concito & citissime*, in the determining of them, and in the Reforming Abuses; So that the Subjects, in all Grievances, found in them a ready, as well as a sure Relief.

A Learned Author, in a Treatise of *The Rights of the Subjects of England*, ob-

observes, " That the *Great Charter* was
 " confirmed more than thirty Times in
 " full Parliament, with many special
 " Provisions for the *Militia*. It being most
 " Just and Reasonable, That what did so
 " much concern all, should be consider'd by
 " all. *Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus ap-*
 " *probetur.*

" There is one Clause in the Writ of
 " Summons to Parliament, about a War
 " with *France*, in the Reign of *Edward I.*
 " which seemeth to speak a Necessity of
 " Parliaments for Matters of War, not only
 " for Money, (as some have pleased to speak)
 " Or at the King's Choice to call them, if
 " he please. The Writ speaks an Act of
 " Parliament; *Lex justissima, & provida*
 " *circumspectione stabilita*; not let at loose
 " to the King's Pleasure, but as *Fortescue*,
 " or long before him, the Old *Modus* of
 " *Parliament*, maketh it necessary for the
 " King, and his Duty, to call a Parliament
 " in all such Cases.

" In one Parliament of *Richard II.* it was
 " enacted, That no Man condemned by
 " Parliament should move for Pardon; but
 " another Parliament ten Years after, did
 " annul that Act, as unjust, unreasonable,
 " and against the Law and Custom of Par-
 " liament: For, from this, which is the
 " highest

“ higheft here, there ftill lieth Appeal from
 “ itfelf to itfelf: For which alfo, by the
 “ Laws and Customs of the Kingdom, there
 “ were to be frequent Parliaments, that fo
 “ the *Errors* or *Omissions* of one (being
 “ ftill human, and therefore errable,) might
 “ be corrected and amended in another.

It was the Wifdom of our Ancestors, to bound and limit out the Being, Acting, and Continuing, not only of other Judges, but alfo of Parliaments.

It is to be obferved, That in thofe Days, *Frequency of Parliaments*, was a *Frequency of New Parliaments*; each Parliament ended with the Seflion, and was difmifs'd *sine die*, and fcarce any Seflions lafted above 40 Days; and therefore the Wages of Knights and Burgeffes were for that Term, and their Attendance requir'd no longer; according to that memorable Record in *Knigh-ton*, (one of our beft Historians) being the Message fent by both Houfes to King *Ric. II.* at *Eltham*, wherein they represent to him, *That they have an Ancient Statute for it, That in cafe the King wilfully abfents himfelf, and will not come to Parliament, as having no Care of vexing his People, nor regard of their great Expences, after Forty Days they are free to go home, and the King has no wrong done him.*

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These Expences were borne by the Counties and Boroughs that fent Deputies to Parliament, who coming thither without any felfifh Views, only for the *Common Good* of the Kingdom, found no Difficulty to reform Abufes, and to difpatch the Bu- finefs before them in fo fhort a Time.

And even fo late as Queen *Elizabeth's* Time, during the Courfe of her Glorious Reign; a Reign! almoft of continual War and Jealoufie, and under which all Branches of Trade had their Rife; being a Reign of fo much Action, which certainly muft afford as much Bu finefs for Parliaments as any fince, and yet, as appears by Sir *Simon D'Erwe's Journal*, *Scarce any Parliament throughout it, exceeded that Time.*

The Continuance of a Parliament for one *Seflions* only, was fo undeniably the Old and constant Ufage of that Body, that our History and Statute Books do not afford us a fingle Instance to the contrary, till the Reigns of *Harry* the 8th and *Queen Mary*; the Violence and Arbitrarinefs of the firft is too well known, that no one can be furprized at his doing an Act unknown to our Conftitution, and *forcing a Parliament*, when, perhaps, his Affairs requir'd it; and, as to the latter, 'tis evident what Schemes he had form'd for abolifhing the *Reformation*

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tion here, and as this was her only View from the beginning of her Reign, may appear from the following Oration made by a Worthy Gentleman (Master *John Hales*) to Queen *Elizabeth*, and delivered to her Majesty at her first Entrance on her Reign, wherein he tells her,

“ * That Queen *Mary's* first *Parliament*,
 “ wherein She and her Council grounded,
 “ and wrought a great part of their Tyranny;
 “ And wherein they meant to overthrow whatsoever King *Edward* had, for
 “ the Advancement of God's Glory, brought
 “ to pass, was of no Force or Authority:
 “ For she perceiving her Enemies Stomach
 “ could not be emptied, nor her Malice
 “ spew'd on the People, by any good Order,
 “ she committed a great Disorder; *She, by*
 “ *Force and Violence, took from the Commons*
 “ *their Liberty; that according to the Ancient*
 “ *Laws and Customs of the Realm, they*
 “ *could not have their Free Election of Knights*
 “ *and Burgesses for the Parliament: For she*
 “ well knew, that if either *Christian Men,*
 “ or *true Englishmen* should be *Elected*, it
 “ was not possible that to succeed, which
 “ she intended: And therefore in many
 “ Places, divers were chosen by *Force of her*
 “ *Threats, mete to serve her Malicious Af-*
 “ *fections;*

* Fox's Book of Martyrs, Vol. III. p. 819, 820.

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“ *fections; wherefore that Parliament was*
 “ *no Parliament, but may be justly called*
 “ *a Conspiracy of Tyrants and Traytors; for*
 “ *the Great Part, by whose Authority and*
 “ *Voices Things proceeded in that Court,*
 “ *by their Acts most manifestly declared*
 “ *themselves so; the rest being both Chri-*
 “ *stians, and True Englishmen, although*
 “ *they had good Wills, yet were not able*
 “ *to Resist, or prevail against the Multitude*
 “ *of Voices and Suffrages of so many Evil,*
 “ *false to God, and Enemies to their Country.*
 “ *Also divers Burgesses being orderly Chosen,*
 “ *and lawfully Returned, as in some Places*
 “ *the People did what they could to resist*
 “ *her Purposes, were disorderly and unlaw-*
 “ *fully put out, and others without any Order*
 “ *of Law, in their places placed.*

After this Account no Body can wonder, that a Parliament so constituted should be thought necessary to be continued contrary to usual Custom.

Various are the Advantages attending these Usages of our old Constitution, and some Mischiefs now complain'd of, would be effectually prevented: Members might duly attend the Service of the Houses, without Prejudice to their Health, private Affairs, or a tedious Absence from their Families: That Privilege from *Arrests* and
Suits,

Suits, which Judge *Jenkins* † complains of as unreasonable, in the Case of the then Parliament of 1647. (" Since the Law allow'd " no Protection for any Man employ'd in " the Service of the Kingdom, but for one " Year ") would, in the Case of the Observance of the Usages, be no Inconvenience at all to any Subject; there would be hardly time enough in a Parliament, to apply *properly* for the corrupting of a Man's Integrity; and it would be scarce practicable, when the Representative is so continually from time to time oblig'd to have Recourse to his Constituents for a New Election, and must conduct himself so, as to merit their Approbation: The Electors would be always truly Represented, while they have such frequent Opportunities of changing their Proxy, if he should change his Sentiments, and fail in his Trust. Strangers would scarce think it worth their while to purchase at a dear Rate, a Seat for so short a Space; and a constant and quick Return, would create a Charge too excessive for any Person's Purse to defray, and might therefore, possibly, Discourage them from engaging in any Expence at all; and as there are generally the least Disturbances, where there is the least Money spent, the Peace of the Kingdom might possibly be promoted thereby.

† *Vid.* His Treatise of the Inconveniencies of a Long, continued Parliament.

thereby. It is certain, That in former Ages we had not that occasion for Laws against Bribery that we have now, and therefore it is to be hoped, by all those who wish well to our Constitution, that the late Law for preventing that pernicious, fashionable Practice, will have its desired Effect, and deter those unhappy Wretches, who by their Conduct one would imagine were born for Slavery, from selling their Country: If we appeal to the Experience of this last Age, we may learn, That as the disusage of Parliaments for Twelve Years under King *Charles I.* raised up that Flame in the Nation which brake out so violently in 1641, so, the Perpetuity of the Parliament, that the King then, in his Distress, agreed to, was the Cause of the utter Ruin of our Constitution.

Some extraordinary Junctures there may be, in which it may be necessary to continue Parliaments longer than usual, of such particular Cases I do not pretend to judge; but this, I think, cannot be deny'd, That the first Account we meet with in History, of a *Pensionary Parliament*, was the long one of King *Charles II.* which caused all the Patrons of Liberty in those Days, to declaim in the strongest Terms against the Continuance of it; and the Friends of the *Revolution* have declared themselves of the

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same Sentiments: And the famous Mr. *Samuel Johnson*, who was so Serviceable in his Writings to prepare the way for the Revolution, as well as to defend it afterwards, expresses himself upon this Subject in the following Words; “ *Parliaments* by their Constitution are not to be stale, as I have seen one in my Time retain’d above nineteen Years with *Pensions*, and another, a fewer Years, with *Places*, and turning out of *Places*: But if a *Parliament* were Corrupted neither of these Ways, yet a *Standing Parliament* will always stagnate, and be like a Country Pond, which is over-run with Ducks Meat.

Having, I apprehend, sufficiently demonstrated the Necessity, as well as Benefits, accruing from the *Frequency of Parliaments*, for the Preservation of our *Constitution*, I proceed now on equal Authorities, to shew how the same Cause must produce the same Effect, in the FREEDOM of our ELECTIONS.

FOREIGNERS, in all their Writings and Observations upon *England*, the Wisdom of its Form of Government, the Limited Prerogative of the Crown, and the Just Liberties of its People, have always attributed those Blessings to the *Constitution* of

of our *Parliaments*; and it is certainly this our Privilege of Representation, which is not only the Original, but the Security of all the rest: For while they feel themselves at the Mercy of *Despotick Power*, they behold us, as yet, enjoying many valuable Liberties, which they look upon as the Effect of this *Representation*; and therefore cannot help envying our Condition, whilst they lament their own. How careful then ought we to be in the Preservation of so invaluable a Blessing? How numberless are the Examples of our Ancestors, as before observ’d, to urge us on to imitate them? Who, at a vast Effusion of Blood and Treasure, have transmitted this Right inviolate to us, and certainly we ought to convey it down to Posterity, as entire as we receiv’d it from them: They thought its Preservation absolutely necessary, for the Security of their Liberties, Properties, and even their Lives: They thought the Comfort of them was destroy’d, if the Security of them was uncertain: Full of this Spirit, and those Sentiments, did they nobly exert themselves, and assert this Right, Of the *Freedom of Representation*: Which Right, as I have observ’d, has been supported and maintained chiefly by two Methods, *viz.* The *Frequency of Parliaments*, and the *Freedom of Electing* them.

This Freedom must necessarily result from the *Right of Representation*; and those cannot, with Propriety, be stiled the *Representatives* of a People, who are not by them Elected and Deputed as such; Or, of what Use can an Election be, if not made with Freedom?

As the Freedom therefore of Elections is an essential part of our *Constitution*, so has it, for Ages past, been always esteemed. The Writ of Summons plainly directs and enjoins an entire *Freedom* in the Election of such as are to be returned to serve in Parliament: It Commands the *Sheriff* to see, that *Knights*, as well as *Burgesses*, *libere & indifferenter elegeri juxta formam statutorum inde edit & provis*, be freely and indifferently chosen, pursuant to the tenour of the Statutes in that Case made and provided, *viz.* "That the arduous Affairs of the Kingdom may not, by any means, remain undone, for want of full and sufficient Powers in the *Knights*, *Citizens*, or *Burgesses*, from the Communities they represent, or by reason of the *improvident Election* of them." Now, how can those be fully and sufficiently authorized and empowered to act for the People, that are not *freely Elected* by them, from whom they derive that *Commission* and *Authority*, which is absolutely

solutely necessary to make what they do valid, and accounted the Statutes of the Realm?

Our Old Laws were very careful to obtain and secure this Freedom. The Statute of *Westminster the first*, * provides, *That Elections should be freely and duly made, without any Disturbance whatsoever.* The King is said to *Command* this, and therefore binds *Himself* not to disturb any Electors in the making of such *Free Elections*: And he further Commands, under great Forfeiture, "That no *Great Man*, nor other, by *Force* of *Arms*, nor by *Malice*, or *Menacing*, shall disturb any to make *Free Election*." And the Learned Lord *Coke*, in his Comment on the above-mentioned Statute, refers to the Statute of 7 *Henry IV. c. 15.* which says, "That for *Knights* of the Shires for Parliament in a full County, a *Free and indifferent Election* shall be made, notwithstanding any *Prayer* or *Commandment* to the contrary: This Statute (he says) was made at the grievous Complaint of the Commons, being interrupted in their *Free Elections*, by the King's Letters Patents, under pretext of an Ordinance in the Lords House, in 46 *Edward IV.* but for the future it was to be, *sine prece*, with-
" out

* Statute of Westminster, *Ann. Dom.* 1274.

“ out any *Prayer* or *Gift*, and *sine praecepto*,
 “ without Commandment of the King, by
 “ *Writ*, or otherwise, or of any *other*; and
 “ this was an Act but *declaratory* of the *An-*
 “ *cient* Law and Custom of Parliaments.”

It was the Old Rule of the Common Law,
 as Old as the very Being of Parliaments,
 and not the Creature, or result of any Act
 of theirs.

Knighton, an Eminent Historian lately
 quoted, writes, “ *Quod ex antiquo Statuto*
 “ *& Consuetudine laudabili & approbata, &c.*
 “ That by an Ancient *Statute* and *Custom*,
 “ laudable and approved, that no Man
 “ could deny; the King was once a Year
 “ to convene his *Lords* and *Commons* to his
 “ Court of Parliament, as to the highest
 “ Court of the whole Realm. *In qua om-*
 “ *nis Aequitas, &c.* In which *Court* all
 “ *Equity* ought to shine forth without the
 “ least Cloud or Shadow, like the Sun in
 “ its Meridian Glory; where *Poor* and
 “ *Rich* refreshed with *Peace* and *Ease* of
 “ their Oppressions, may always find infal-
 “ lible and sure Refuge and Succour, the
 “ Grievances of the Kingdom redress'd, and
 “ the State of the King and Government
 “ of the Realm debated with wiser Coun-
 “ cils; the *Domestick* and *Foreign* Enemies
 “ of

* De Eventibus Angliæ lib. 5. fol. 2681, Col. 1, 2.

“ of the King and Kingdom, destroy'd and
 “ repelled, and to consider how the *Char-*
 “ *ges* and *Burthens* of both, may be suf-
 “ tained with more Ease to the People.”

Fortescue observes, * *That if any Statutes*
fall short of their intended Efficacy, though
devised with such Solemnity and Wisdom in the
Contrivers of them, they may be soon reformed
by the like Assent of Parliament, from whence
they originally flow'd. By their Authority,
 the Delays in our Pleas, (as the same Au-
 thor says) the Doubts, the Errors and Abu-
 ses of our Courts of Judicature are removed,
 explained, corrected and reformed: They
 serve to suggest to the King the Methods
 proper, as well to promote the Prosperity
 of the Nation, as to redress all its Grievan-
 ces, whether in their Affairs of Government
 at Home, or in their Concern with Foreign
 States and Dominions Abroad. They are
 the Guardians of the Liberties and Privi-
 leges of the People, against all Invasions
 from any Quarter; a check to *Insolent* and
Licentious Ministers, and a Terror to ambi-
 tious and over-grown *Statesmen*; are a De-
 fence not only against the Corruption of
 these, but even against the *Violence* of a
Prince aiming at *Arbitrary Power*: They
 are the People's Trustees for the disposal of
 their

* Fortescue de laudibus legum Angliæ. c. 18.

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their Money, for Examining into the Publick Accounts, and for maintaining the true Interest of the Kingdom; and so long as they duly discharge these Trusts, it is impracticable for any Prince, or Ministry, to overturn our *Constitution*, or break through it in any Material Instances.

But if instead of providing for the real Necessities and true Interest of the Nation, they wantonly throw away its Treasure in Unnecessary and Destructive Wars, or let Officers securely Embezzle it without calling them to Account; if, instead of moderating between the Prerogative of the Crown and the Liberties of the People, they should entirely attach themselves to the one and neglect the other; if under the specious Pretence of Affection to a Prince, they should sink into so slavish a Compliance, as to strike in with his Views of *Arbitrary Power*, and support him in the Necessary Steps to obtain it; if they should prove such *humble Creatures* of a *Ministry*, as seeing them engag'd in Illegal, Corrupt, and Ruinous Courses, they should either justify their Conduct, or decline to examine into, and punish it as it deserves; if they should thus violate that Constitution they ought to preserve; suspend those *Liberties* of the People, they ought to guard; justify that Corruption they ought to Reform, and patronize

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tronize those *Guilty Persons* who ought to be overwhelmed with their severest Censures, the Case must be miserable indeed, and then may we justly dread that Ruin, which that great Statesman, Lord *Burleigh*, seem'd so apprehensive of, *viz. That England could hardly ever be ruined, but by her own Parliaments.*

But we are happy in thinking this is not our Case, nor ever can be, without a universal Corruption of the Nation; an Evil, from which the Particulars who compose it, must suffer so much, that we have room to hope it never may be. There is not a more powerful Restraint against a Corrupt, Wicked, or mean Action, than SHAME, but it has its Influence only on private Men, and does not affect Bodies: When Corruption becomes general, it ceases to be Scandalous; it looks, almost, with the Air of Authority, and there are *few*, (tho' infinitely to be valued are those *few*) whose Integrity is Proof against Temptations offer'd at such a Juncture: So, that as a Calamity of the Nature I have observ'd, would, in all probability, be without a Remedy, we are to wish it may be for ever without a Precedent.

As I have shewn the Sense of our Ancestors, concerning the Dignity, Use and

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Freedom of Parliaments, so is it sufficient Encouragement for us to be careful in the Choice of our Representatives, without which Care, it will be impossible for us to preserve the *Freedom* of our *Elections*, or to hope to obtain such Advantages in their Meeting for the *Redress* of *Grievances*, as our judicious Historians have pointed out to us.

I proceed now to the last Century, wherein I shall give the Opinion of King *James I.* *Charles I.* and *William III.* concerning Parliaments and their Freedom.

King *James*, in his first Speech to his Parliament in *England*, says, * “ That not
“ only the *Royal Prerogative*, but the Peo-
“ ple’s Security of Lands, Livings, and
“ Privileges, were preserved and maintain-
“ ed by the Ancient Fundamental Laws,
“ Privileges, and Customs of this Realm ;
“ and that by the abolishing, or altering of
“ them, it was impossible but that present
“ Confusion will fall upon the whole State
“ and Frame of this Kingdom.

And in his last Speech to his Parliament, he seems sensible of his Error, for his disuse and contempt of Parliaments, *viz.* “ I am
“ so desirous (says he) to forget all Rents in
“ former

* Pulton’s *Statutes*, Jacobi, cap. 2. fol. 1157.

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“ former Parliaments, that it shall not be
“ in my default, if I am not in love with
“ Parliaments and call them often, and de-
“ fire to end my Life in that intercourse
“ between me and my People, for the ma-
“ king of *good* Laws, reforming of such
“ Abuses as I cannot well be informed of,
“ but in Parliament, and for maintaining
“ the good Government of the Common-
“ wealth. ”

King *Charles I.* was of the same Opinion, when he said, * “ The Law is the Inheri-
“ tance of every Subject, and the only Se-
“ curity he can have for his Life, or Estate,
“ and the which being neglected, or dis-
“ esteemed, (under what specious shew so-
“ ever) a great Measure of Infelicity, if
“ not an irreparable Confusion, must with-
“ out doubt fall upon them.” It is well
known, that no Princes ever more tenaci-
ously insisted on their Prerogatives, and an
Independency on Parliaments, than *James*
and *Charles* the first.

And even our late Glorious Deliverer
from Arbitrary Power, King *William*, in his
Declaration acknowledges, “ That according
“ to the Constitution of the *English* Go-
“ vernment,

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“ vernment,

* Declaration to all his Loving Subjects, *vid.* Exact Col-
lection of Declarations, p. 28, 29.

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“ vernment, and immemorial Custom, all
 “ Elections for Parliament Men ought to
 “ be made with an entire Liberty, without
 “ any sort of Force, or requiring the Elec-
 “ tors to chuse such Persons as shall be na-
 “ med to them.

And the Act of the first of *William* and
Mary, declaring the Rights and Liberties
 of the Subject, asserts it to be a Fundamen-
 tal Right, “ That Elections of Members
 “ ought to be Free, and that a Violating
 “ of this Freedom of Election of Members
 “ to serve in Parliament, is an endeavour
 “ to *subvert* and *extirpate*, the *Religion*, and
 “ the *Laws*, and the *Liberties* of the King-
 “ dom.

This has, indeed, been always look'd up-
 on as the Fundamental Security of the
 Lives, Liberties, and Properties of the Sub-
 ject: In this Opinion, the King and People
 generally agree: For whenever Princes
 have set up for *Arbitrary Power*, and en-
 ter'd into Measures to subvert the *Constitu-
 tion*, they have endeavour'd to pave their
 way by the Invasion of this Right, which
 has often caus'd a Jealousy in the People,
 to prevent such Invasion, and made them
 watchful against it, and oppose it to the ut-
 most, lest it might be attended with the
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very Consequences that such Princes pro-
 posed.

If ever therefore we should live to see
 this Right invaded, then we may conclude
 there is a Design to subvert the Constituti-
 on, and whoever may appear to have a
 Hand in it, ought to be deemed an Enemy
 to his Country, and consequently, every
 Man who retains any Measure of the *Old
 English Spirit*, will treat him as such: For
 to destroy the *Freedom of Elections*, is (as
 Mr. *Locke* says) *To cut up the Government
 by the Roots, and as perfect a Declaration of
 a Design to subvert the Constitution, as is possi-
 ble to be met with.*

The late Archbishop of *Dublin's* Obser-
 vation on the Freedom of Elections is so
 beautiful, that I cannot omit quoting him;
 “ Whoever (says he) knows the Constitu-
 “ tion of *England* must observe, That the
 “ Subjects have no other Security for their
 “ Liberty, Property, and Lives, except
 “ the Interest they have in choosing their
 “ own Representatives in Parliament: This
 “ is the *only Barrier* they have against the
 “ *Encroachment of their Governours*; take
 “ it away, and they are as *absolute Slaves*
 “ *to the King's Will*, and as miserable, as
 “ *the Peasants in the most Absolute Govern-
 “ ment in Europe.*

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There would, doubtless, be an End of the Freedom of Elections, when a Prince interposes in them: The Common People, who living out of the Sight of Greatness, live also without the Desire of it, and have no Ends to serve but the Common Good, would, if left to themselves, hardly ever err in their Choice; what Reason tells us in this Case, *Experience*, constant *Experience* confirms: For if we search into the History of this Nation, we shall find it true, *That our best Parliaments have been the result of the People's free Choice, and we have scarce ever suffer'd from a Parliament, but when their Right of Election has been invaded.*

A wise, therefore, and a good Prince, who knows and pursues his own, and the People's true Interest, will never interpose his Authority, to take away, or interrupt this Freedom: A *Richard* the Second, a *Queen Mary*, or an *Oliver Cromwell*; a weak, obstinate, heady, and ambitious Prince, that has Designs against the Liberties of his People, like the first; One, that like the second, forms Resolutions to subvert the Religion of his Country; or, like the last, *Usurps* the Power he claims, and may therefore be supposed desirous of the utmost he can grasp, may perhaps, be carried into such an extraordinary Conduct, but it is hardly

hardly to be conceived that *any other* should.

An eminent Writer in the Reign of King *Charles* the first, in a Letter to his Friends in the House of Commons, representing the Grievances of the Kingdom, has the following remarkable Observation. * *Parliaments*,
 ‘ in my time (says he) have been wont to
 ‘ take up some space at the first Meetings,
 ‘ to settle the House, and to determine of
 ‘ *unlawful Elections*, and in this point, they
 ‘ never had greater cause to be circumspect
 ‘ than at this Time: For by an Abuse late-
 ‘ ly crept in, there is introduced a Custom,
 ‘ which if it be not foreseen, and prevent-
 ‘ ed, will be a great derogation to the Ho-
 ‘ nour, and a weakning to the Power of
 ‘ your House. Where the Law giveth a
 ‘ Freedom to Corporations to elect *Burgeses*,
 ‘ and forbiddeth any indirect Course to be
 ‘ taken in their Elections; many of the
 ‘ Corporations are so *base minded* and *timo-
 ‘ rous*, that they will not hazard the Indig-
 ‘ nation of a *Lord Lieutenant's Letter*, who,
 ‘ underhand, sticks not to threaten them
 ‘ with the Charge of a Musket, or a Horse,
 ‘ at a Muster, if that he hath not the *Elec-
 ‘ tion* of the *Burgeses*, and not they them-
 ‘ selves.

* Annals of King *Charles* I. p. 238. *Ann. Dom.* 1627.

‘ And

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‘ And commonly those that the Lords
 ‘ recommend, are such as desire it for *Pro-*
 ‘ *tection*, or are so ignorant of the Place
 ‘ they serve for, as that there being occasion
 ‘ to speak of the Corporation for which they
 ‘ are chosen, they have asked their Neigh-
 ‘ bours sitting by, Whether it were a *Sea*,
 ‘ or a *Land Town*?

These were some of the Grievances complain'd of, in the beginning of the Reign of that unhappy Prince, and notwithstanding such Invasion of the Liberty of the Subject, as above-mentioned, yet, had not his Ministry dexterity enough to model a Parliament fit for their *Purposes*; nay, so careful were they to preserve the *Old Constitution* entire, that they would not suffer the least Innovation on their *Rights* and *Privileges*, as you may perceive by the many Remonstrances publish'd by the House of Commons, at that time; which was the Cause of his Majesty's falling into such a dislike of Parliaments, that he called no more till the fatal Year 1640. during which recess of twelve Years, the National Grievances were grown too great to be redress'd, or the People's Minds quieted, which produc'd the effect of the unnatural Rebellion which follow'd.

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I shall conclude this Head with a Speech spoke in the House of Lords by the Earl of *Mulgrave*, in the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, touching the *Freedom of Elections*, and *Impartial Proceedings* in *Parliament*, which ought to be imprinted in the Heart of every Elector, for their Government in the *Choice* of their *Representatives*.

My Lords,

THIS Debate is of so great Consequence, that I resolv'd to be silent, and rather to be advis'd by the Ability of others, than to shew my own want of it; besides, it is of so nice a Nature, that I, who speak always unpremeditatedly, apprehend extremely, saying any thing which may be thought the least reflecting; tho' even that, ought not to restrain a Man here from doing one's Duty to the *Publick*, in a Business where it seems to be so highly concerned.

I have always heard, I have always read, that Foreign Nations, and all this Part of the World, have admired and envied the Constitution of this Government. For not to speak of the King's Power, here is an House of Lords to advise him on all important Occasions, about *Peace* or *War*; about

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all Things that may concern the Nation ; the Care of which is very much intrusted to Your Lordships. But yet, because your Lordships cannot be so conversant with the Generality of the People, nor so constantly in the Country, as is necessary for that purpose, here is an House of Commons also chosen by the very *People* themselves, newly come from among them, or should be so, to represent all their Grievances, to express the true Mind of the Nation, and to dispose of their Money, at least, so far as to begin all Bills of that Nature ; and if I am not mistaken, the very Writ for Elections, sent down to the Sheriffs, does empower them to choose ; What? Their *Representatives*.

Now, my Lords, I beseech you to consider the Meaning of that Word *Representative* ; Is it to do any thing contrary to their Mind ? It would be absurd to propose it : And yet how can it be otherwise, if they, after being chosen, change their Dependence, engage themselves in Employments, plainly inconsistent with that great Trust reposed in them ? And that I will take the Liberty to demonstrate to your Lordships they now do, at least according to my humble Opinion.

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I will instance, First, the least and lowest Incapacity they must be under, who so take Employments.

Your Lordships know but too well what a general Carelessness there appears every Day more and more in the publick Business ; if so, how is it likely that Men should be as diligent in their Duty in Parliament, as that Business requires, where *Employments*, and a great deal of other Business, shall take up both their Minds and their Time ?

But then in some Cases it is worse ; as in Commands of the Army, and other Employments of that Kind, when they must have a divided Duty : For it does admirably become an *Officer* to sit Voting away Money in the *House of Commons*, while his Soldiers are, perhaps, taking it away at their Quarters, for want of his Presence to restrain them, and of better Discipline among them ; nay, perhaps his Troops, or Regiment, may be in some Action Abroad, and he must either have the Shame of being absent from them at such a Time, or from that House where he is intrusted with our Liberties.

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To this I have heard but one Objection by a noble Lord; That if this Act should pass, the King is not allow'd to make a Captain a Colonel, without disabling him to sit in Parliament.

Truly, if a Captain has only deserved to be advanced for exposing himself in Parliament, I think the Nation would have no great Loss in the King's letting alone such a Preferment.

But, my Lords, there is another sort of Incapacity worse than this, I mean of *Parliament-Men* having such *Places* in the *Exchequer*, as the very Profit of them depends on the Money given to the King in Parliament. Would any of your Lordships send and intrust a Man to make a Bargain for you, whose very Interest shall be to make you give as much as he can possibly?

It puts me in mind of a Farce, where an Actor holds a Dialogue with himself, speaking first in one Tone, and then answering himself in another.

Really, my Lords, this is no Farce, for it is no laughing Matter to undo a Nation: But 'tis altogether as unnatural for a Member of Parliament to ask first in the King's
 5 Name

Name for such a sort of Supply; give an Account from him how much is needful towards the paying such an Army, or such a Fleet, and then immediately give, by his ready Vote, what he had before asked by his Master's Order.

Besides, my Lords, there is such a Necessity now for long Sessions of Parliaments, and the very Privileges belonging to Members are of so great Extent, that it would be a little hard and unequal to other Gentlemen, that they should have all the *Places* also.

All the Objections that have been made, may be reduc'd to these;

First, 'Tis told us, That 'tis a disrespect to the King, that his Servants, or Officers, should be excluded.

To this, I desire it may be considered, That 'tis in this Case, as when a Tenant sends up any Body to Treat for him; would any of your Lordships think it a disrespect, nay, would the King himself think it any, if the Tenant would not wholly refer himself to one of your own Servants, or the King's Commissioners, in the Case of the Crown? And if he chuses rather some plain and honest Friend of his own, to supply
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his Absence here, will any blame such a Proceeding, or think it unmannerly?

Besides, your Lordships know, even this Act admits them to be chosen, notwithstanding their Employments, provided the Electors know it first, and are not deceived in their Choice.

All we would prevent, is, That a good rich Corporation should not chuse to intrust with all their Liberties, a *plain, honest, Country Neighbour*, and find him within six Months chang'd into a *preferr'd, cunning Courtier*; who shall tye them to their Choice, tho' he is no more the same Man, than if he were turn'd *Papist*; which by the Law, as it stands already, puts an Incapacity upon him,

Another Objection is, That this Act may, by its Consequence, prolong this Parliament, which they allow, would be a very great Grievance; and yet suppose the King capable of putting it upon us; which I have too much respect for him to admit of: Tho' I am glad, however, that it is objected by *Privy-Counsellors* in Favour, who, consequently, I hope, will never advise a Thing which they now exclaim against, as so great a Grievance.

But,

But, pray my Lords, What should tempt the King to so ill a Policy? Can he fear a *Freedom of Choice* in the People, to whose good Will he owes all his Power, which these Lords suppose he may use to their Prejudice?

And therefore give me leave to say, as I must not suspect him of so ill a Design, as the *perpetuating* this *Parliament*, so he can not, he ought not to suspect a Nation, so entirely, I was going to say, so fondly, devoted to him.

My Lords, no Man is readier than my self to allow, That we owe the Crown all Submission, as to the Time of calling *Parliaments according to Law*, and appointing also where they shall sit. But with Reverence be it spoken, the King owes the Nation entire Freedom in chusing their Representatives; and it is no less his Duty, than 'tis his true Interest, that such a fair and just Proceeding should be used towards us.

Consider, my Lords, of what mighty Consequence it may be, that so many Votes should be Free, when upon one *single One*, may depend the whole *Security* or *Loss* of the Nation: By *one single Vote* such Things may

may happen, that I almost tremble to think. By *One single Vote a General Excise may be granted, and then we are all lost*: By *one single Vote*, the Crown may be impowered to name all the *Commissioners* for raising the Taxes, and then surely we should be in a fair only way towards it.

Nay, whatever has happened, may again be apprehended; and I hope those *Reverend Prelates* will reflect, That if they grow once obnoxious to a *prevalent Party*, *one single Voice* may be as dangerous to that Bench, as a general Dissatisfaction among the People proved to be once in a late Experience; which I am far from saying by way of Threatning, but by way of Caution.

My Lords, We may think, because this concerns not the House of Lords, that we need not be so over careful of the Matter: But there are Noblemen in *France*, at least such as were so before they were Enslav'd, who, that they might domineer over others, and serve a present Turn, perhaps let all Things alone so long, till the *People* were quite Master'd, and the Nobility themselves too, to bear them Company.

So that I never met a *Frenchman*, even of the greatest Rank, (and some had Ten Thousand Pistoles a Year in Employment) that

that did not envy us here, for our *Freedom*, from that *Slavery* which they groan under. And this I have observed universally, except just Monsieur *Colbert*, or *such People*: Because they were the *Ministers* themselves who occasion'd these Complaints, and thriv'd by the *Oppression* of others.

My Lords, This Country of ours is very apt to be provok'd; we have had a late Experience of it: And tho' no wise Man, but would bear a great deal, rather than make a Buffle, yet really the People are otherwise, and at any time change a present Uneasiness for any other Condition, tho' a worse: We have known it so *too often*, and sometimes repented it *too late*.

Let them not have this new Provocation, in being debarr'd from a Security in their *Representatives*: For malicious People will not fail to infuse into their Minds, that all those vast Sums which have been, and still must be raised towards this War, are not disposed away in so fair a Manner as it ought to be: And I am afraid they will say, Their Money is not *Given*, but *Taken*.

However, whatever Success this Bill may have, there must needs come some good Effect of it: For if it *Passes*, it will give

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us *Security*, if it be *Obstructed*, it will give us *Warning*.

I shall now proceed, with all possible brevity, to give some Instances, wherein this valuable Freedom has been invaded, and shew the fatal Consequences which have attended those Princes who have attempted such Invasion.

HISTORY affords many Instances how various have been the Instruments made use of, and as various too are the Means employ'd for this End; but I shall take notice only of those, which our mislead Princes themselves, or such who have possess'd themselves of their Power, have actually used, or attempted to use, for the carrying on their Destructive Purposes; and shall begin with the Reign of *Richard* the Second, who push'd on by the *sordid Flattery*, and *corrupt Suggestions* of his *Ambitious Favourites*, proceeded to violent Ruptures with the Nobility and Gentry of the Realm, who opposed the *Male Administration* of those publick Enemies to the Peace and Happiness of the Kingdom: He, to make himself *Absolute*, and crush those *Noble Persons* who opposed his Schemes, and to have a *Parliament* which might support him in those Measures, summoned all the Sheriffs of

of *England* to *Nottingham Castle*, enjoining them to suffer no Knight to be *Elected* in their *Shires*, but whom the King and his Council should have approved and chose. But his Injunction met with an unanimous Refusal from the *Sheriffs*, who not complying at that time, which was the eleventh Year of his Reign, but insisting on the *Commons Right* of having *Free Elections*, they were dismiss'd.

Finding therefore this Method then Impracticable, he took another, and presently after, issuing out Writs to the *Sheriffs*, to elect *Knights* and *Burgesses* for *Parliament*, he insertd this strange and unusual Clause in them, That they should choose such Men as were *in Debatis modernis magis indifferentes*; a Clause which his Council represented to him, and the King himself in New Writs issu'd out afterwards to supersede the former, on a general Complaint of the People, acknowledged to be *illegal, contrary to the Form of Election used from Ancient Times, and a Violation of the Liberties of the Lords and Commons of the Kingdom, which they had always enjoyed till that Time.*

Notwithstanding all this, his *Favourites*, to *screen* themselves from the just Resentment of the Nation, prevail'd with him to break through *this Ancient Form of Election*

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and Liberties of the Lords and Commons, and (as mention'd in the nineteenth Article exhibited against him at his being depos'd)
 “ *To send his Commands very often to his*
 “ *Sheriffs to return certain Persons named*
 “ *by himself, as Knights of Shires to sit in his*
 “ *Parliaments; which Knights being his*
 “ *Favourites, he might lead, as he had of-*
 “ *ten done; sometimes by various Threats*
 “ *and Terrors, and sometimes by Gifts, to*
 “ *consent to such Things as were prejudi-*
 “ *cial to the Kingdom, and exceeding*
 “ *Burdensome and Oppressive to the Peo-*
 “ *ple.*

Another remarkable Instance of such an Invasion of this Freedom, which cannot be sufficiently wonder'd at, was in the Reign of *Henry the Fourth*, one of the most Politick Princes that has sat upon the Throne of *England*, which makes it more amazing how he should be guilty of such a Step, as consider'd in all its Circumstances, is perfectly unaccountable: He had been witness to the Clamours rais'd against *Richard II.* for inserting in the Writ for a New Parliament, a Clause so gentle, and in appearance so inoffensive, as *That Persons who were indifferent in the Disputes of that Time should be chose:* He had seen this, and other Invasions of the Freedom of Elections, contribute greatly

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greatly to that universal Difaffection of the People, which ended in the Ruin of that Prince, and was alledg'd as a Ground for his being depos'd: He knew this, and yet, whether there is any Witchcraft in an *ill Title*, to put a Man on violent Measures, in the Exercise of the Power he has seiz'd, or whether any strong Passion got the better of his Judgment, and hurried him on to run the hazard of losing that Favour of the *People*, to whom he ow'd his Crown, he fell into the like Measures with those his Predecessor had been depos'd for: For *Baker* tells us in his *Chronicle*, “ That in “ the sixth Year of his Reign, he called a “ Parliament at *Coventry*, and sent Process to “ the Sheriffs to choose none that had any Know- “ ledge of the Laws.” And *Walsingham* says, “ That the King Commanded to add a “ Clause to the *Writ* of Summons to a “ Parliament, *That no Lawyer should be re-* “ *turned.*” But, as to the Particulaas of the *Writ* he is mistaken, there being no such Clause in it; however, it is (in what would produce the very same Effect) in the *King's Letters Patents, or Proclamation for calling the Parliament.* I do not, indeed, find any Complaint thereof in that *Parliament*; but how could it be expected, that those who sat there, by virtue of such *illegal Returns, or unfair Practices*, should either complain of them, or censure the Steps which

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which occasion'd them. In the next Parliament, however, in the Seventh Year of his Reign, the Commons made a grievous Complaint, for being interrupted in their *Free Elections*, by Means and Encouragement of this *Precept* of the King; and this Complaint produc'd the Act of 7 Henry IV. c. 15. *For Securing the Freedom of Elections, notwithstanding any Prayer, or Command to the contrary; i. e. as Lord Coke interprets it, "They were to be made without any Commandment of the King, by Writ or otherwise, or of any other."* Herein expressly prohibiting the *Crown* giving any Directions in a *Proclamation*, or any other Manner, either as to the *Choosing* or *Rejecting* of Persons who shall appear as *Candidates* at an *Election*.

And when that *weak, easie Prince, Henry* the Sixth, who was always led by his *Favourites*, and made use of by his *Corrupt Ministers*, as a *Tool*, to gratify their Passions and serve their Interests, did, "In Compliance * with the Importunity of those Seditious, and Evil dispos'd Persons, having no regard to the Dread of God, nor to the Damage of the Prosperous Estate of the King, nor his Realm, summon a *Parliament* at *Coventry* in the thirtieth
" Year

* Vid. Act 39 Hen. VI. cap. 1.

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" Year of his Reign, *for no better an End, than to destroy certain of the Great Nobles, faithful and lawful Lords, and Estates of the King's Blood, and other of the faithful liege People of the Realm of England, for the great Rancour, Hatred and Malice, which the said Seditious Persons of long time have had against them, and of their greedy, insatiable Covetousness, to have the Lands, Hereditaments, Possessions, Offices, and Goods of the said Lords, and faithful liege People."* He took Measures as dishonest as these Views to attain them.

It is natural to imagine, that unless the whole Nation was as corrupt as his *Ministers*, he could not easily, in case of a *Free Election*, find a *Parliament* that would support them in such Things: He was therefore necessitated, in the pursuit of them, to *violate* this *Freedom of Elections*: For, as the same Act further says, "A great part of the *Knights*, for divers Counties of the Realm, and many *Burgesses* and *Citizens*, for divers *Boroughs* and *Cities*, were named, returned, and accepted, some of them without due and free Election, some of them without any Election, against the Course of the King's Laws, and the Liberties of the *Commons* of this Realm,
" by

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“ by the Means and Labours of the said
“ *Seditious Persons*.

It can't be expected, that such a pack'd Assembly as this, (for I know not how to call it a Parliament) was likely to advance either the King's Welfare, or the Good of the Kingdom; and accordingly we find *few of their Acts were made for this End*.
“ Though (as the above-recited Act further
“ says) greater part of the Statutes and Ordinances made therein, being labour'd by
“ the Conspiracy, Procurement, and Excitation of the said *Evil disposed Persons*,
“ for the accomplishment of their *Rancour*,
“ and *inordinate Covetousness*, and against
“ all good Faith and Conscience, finally to
“ destroy the said lawful Lords, Estates,
“ and liege People, and their Issues, as
“ well Innocents as other, and their Heirs
“ for ever.” It is certain, that Acts of such a Nature, by what Authority soever made, ought to be reversed and annulled, as those of this Parliament were by the next in 39 *Henry VI*. But there appeared such a Defect in the *Constitution* of this *Parliament*, that the following was not content with the revoking its Acts, but to distinguish it with more particular Marks of Abhorrence, *Declared it to be void, and holden for no Parliament*.

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These are some flagrant Instances wherein our *Princes* have broke in upon the People's Right, of *Freedom of Elections*, as well as of the Means whereby they have effected it: The Ends they have had in view, in these Steps, tend as little to the Honour of the Prince, as the Quiet of the People; and as the latter, from the foregoing Account, have Reason to guard against such Innovations, the former have but poor Encouragement to repeat them; as appears by the fatal Consequences attending the Authors of such Innovations.

And *first*, let us review the Fate of *Richard* the Second, who had abundant Reasons to repent of his Arbitrary Proceedings, and Invasion of the *Freedom of Elections*; for as it made a great Article and Ground of his being depos'd, so was it attended with such *Discontents* in the Nation, as made his own *Followers* and *Troops* desert him, which enabled *Henry IV*. to seize, and mount the Throne without Bloodshed, and almost without Opposition: An Event, which was soon follow'd with the Death of King *Richard*; tho' it had more lasting ill Consequences to the Nation, by laying the Foundation of a *Disputed Succession*, which involv'd it in all the Calamities and Miseries of a *Civil War*, and was not ended but

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with

with the Death of some hundred Thousands of our Countrymen, and the Loss of more of the Blood of our Princes and Nobility, than all the Wars of *France* had shed; all which might have been prevented, had not King *Richard* adher'd tenaciously to the pernicious Council of his *Ambitious Ministers*, but had made the Laws of the Land, (as preserv'd inviolably by his Ancestors) the Rule of his Actions.

And in the Case of *Henry* the Fourth, the Act says, " *That from his foremention'd Practice, many great Jeopardies, Enormities, and Inconveniencies, well nigh to the Ruin, Decay, and universal Subversion of the said Realm have ensued;*" and History informs us, That hereupon burst out the Flame of the *Civil War*, which ended in the Ruin of *Henry* the Sixth, his Son, Prince *Edward*, and the greatest part of his Adherents.

When Queen *Mary* wanted a Parliament to join with her, in the *Extirpation* of our Religion, she made use of Threats, to force the People into the Choice of such Persons as were fit for her Purpose; and when that was not sufficient, she *Arbitrarily and Illegally* excluded Members that were orderly Chosen, and lawfully Returned, and with-

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out any Order of Law, placed others in their Stead. But what was the Consequence of this Parliament? Why, 'tis true, by getting such a *Parliament* to her Purpose, she well nigh attained her End; She abolished the *Reformation* here, but it was only for a Time; for she died before she could utterly extirpate it; she died after an uneasy Life, for Grief, occasioned by the Loss of *Calais*, and of all the Territories left to the *English* in *France*, which they had enjoy'd for 200 Years successively; a Loss! which the Kingdom owes to *that very Parliament*, which projected and authorized the *Spanish Match*, subjected the Kingdom to a *Foreign Prince*, and thereby expos'd it to the certain Danger of being engag'd in *Expensive Wars*, for the sake of his *Foreign Dominions*, as we found it in the Event; an Event! that ought never to have been forgotten, because it can never be enough lamented by us.

Such have been the Consequences of violating this invaluable Right of the *Freedom of Elections!* a Violation! that every Lover of his Country must abhor; That *no Prince*, who has a regard for Justice, would commit, and *no Subject*, that has the true Spirit of an *Englishman*, could bear.

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I come

I come next to consider the *Qualifications* requisite for Persons to be elected into so *Important a Trust*.

IT was a frequent saying of that able Statesman, Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*, (as before observ'd) *That England could hardly ever be ruin'd but by her own Parliaments*. An Opinion, which as it is perfectly agreeable to our Experience, is founded likewise on Reasons weighty enough to have it universally embrac'd: For it is from this Assembly of Persons, from every Part of the Kingdom, that a Prince learns the true State and Condition of it. By their Advice and Assent, he enacts Laws for the Common Good, serving as well for a Direction to his own Conduct, as a forcible Obligation on that of his People: And as it is a Maxim in Law, *That the King can do no Wrong*, so it is founded on this Reason, That if any be committed, his *Ministers* only, are answerable for it. Every Error in the *Prince*, is supposed to be owing to the *False Representations*, or *Evil Suggestions* of his *Corrupt Ministers*.

To guard against such Mistakes in the *Prince*, and to punish such Corruption in his *Ministers*, as well as to prevent, or remedy,

medy, the Evils flowing from both, is the Business of a Parliament; *That Great Council of the Nation!* A Council! which we ought to hope were infallible; but since that is a Perfection denied to human Nature, we ought to exert our Endeavours to have it composed of Members, whose Views and Methods of Life, whose Principles, Temper, and Understanding, whose Integrity and Publick Spirit might add a Reputation to the Authority of that Body, and advance its Councils and Resolutions as near *Infallibility* as possible.

This, the Prince, who is to receive Advice from it, ought to wish for, at least, as much as the People; for it is his Interest equally with theirs; and therefore, unless he is weak enough to Mistake, in so material a Point, or *has Views, inconsistent with the Good of the Nation*, he can never be seduced into any Measures contrary to so desirable an End; an End! which nothing can advance so much, *as the People's being left entirely to a free Choice of their Representatives*.

A King, who is entrusted with the highest Power in a State, lies under the highest Obligations to use it well; and is infinitely concerned, in point of Interest, to raise in his People an Opinion that he does so:
And

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And as nothing will destroy this more effectually than the Invasion of a Right they are so justly fond of; those *Ministers*, who for securing to themselves the *Possession* of a *Power* they do not deserve, shall advise him to Directions of this kind, do but ill consult his Service; when they are sure to give the People a Jealousy of his Designs; for extraordinary Steps are seldom taken to no *Purpose*, and *illegal Measures* can only tend to *illegal Ends*.

I shall reduce what further Advice I have to give the Electors, to this general Head, of *not accepting a Bribe*. If it was possible to prevent my Country-men from opening their Hands to so base an Offer, 'tis impossible to think, but that we should have *happy Times*. It would be as impossible not to have a good *House of Commons*, as it would be for such an House to encrease our Miseries, or not endeavour to remedy them: If *Bribery* could have no Force, it would be unreasonable to imagine, that any of our late Members, who stand mark'd with Infamy, should be return'd again.

As to such *Candidates* who have already serv'd in Parliament, the Electors may easily be inform'd what their Conduct has been, and can judge, whether it be, or be not agreeable to them; and as to others, they

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they must, as well as they can, learn their general Character and way of Thinking; and likewise theirs by whom they shall happen to be recommended: And they have also a Right to know from the Candidates themselves, their Opinion of such Publick Matters, as may probably come under the Consideration of the next Parliament.

There are many Heads, on which Electors may interrogate their Candidates; but none, I think, of greater Importance than their Opinion in relation to the late EXCISE BILL, the ACT for SEPTENNIAL PARLIAMENTS, &c. and to insist on their Promise to use their utmost Endeavours for re-establishing *Triennial Parliaments*, which we obtain'd by an Act in the Sixth Year of the Reign of our Glorious Deliverer, King *William* the Third. I say, if we could suppose that *Bribery* had no Influence, it would be impossible that the People should not remedy themselves, when they have it in their Power, and seem so sensible of doing it now or never. If then we should have a bad House of *Commons*, it must be owing to *Bribery*, and, no doubt, but *Bribery* will support it.

It behoves therefore, every Lover of his Country, every Friend to its Liberties, to oppose every Election of Persons not qualify'd,

lisy'd, as above: For can it be supposed, that a Man of small Estate, a Numerous Family, and a *Considerable Employment*, will stand the fiery Tryal of Temptation? When Poverty stares him in the Face, and even the noble Passions of Love and Fatherly Tenderness, shall strongly solicit him to give up his Conscience? Can those Men be supposed to protect the Liberties of the People, who are perpetually in fear of the Frowns of an *Ambitious haughty Minister*? Can such Men be thought sparing of the Nation's Money, who must starve themselves, if they do not profusely squander it? There is no more than a bare possibility, that such Men's Virtue will triumph over their Necessity, but there is absolutely an Impossibility, that the Electors should be thought *Wise* in the Choice of such Men.

Therefore he who holds any considerable Office during Pleasure, cannot be deem'd a proper Person to represent any part of a *Free People*, because, such Men must be ungrateful to their *Benefactors*, before they can be *True* to their *Principals*.

If we review History, we shall find, that since *Bribery* and *Corruption* became so powerful, all Attempts against our Constitution have been carry'd on by *Courtiers*, in the House of Commons: How few Instances

ces have we of Men, who have resisted the Torrent to the Loss of a Good Place? And where this wonderful Virtue has appear'd, Have not *Evil Ministers* always made Examples of such *resty Dependants*, and turn'd them out of *Office* the very day they *voted contrary to Command*? Let the Electors therefore consider, That the Bible is in all their Hands, wherein they may read, *That no Man can serve two Masters*.

But then, if the Majority of the House should consist of *Officers*, Where would be the Hopes of punishing the *Evil Minister*? If the Persons who ought to be the Accusers are not only Guilty, but even thrive by the Preservation of the Criminal: Where then is that Awe upon Ambition, flowing from the Resentment of so powerful a Body? Will not the *Courtiers* in the House take the Alarm, thinking themselves engag'd in Honour, as well as Interest, to bring him off, not knowing how soon it might be their own Case? Indeed, if such a Majority should get place, we have nothing to expect but Poverty and Slavery from such a Fraternity, who will have their own *Common Cause* to plead, in opposition to that of the Publick, and must be oblig'd to save one another, for the Security of themselves. And as a very eminent Author lately observ'd, " *That when-*
I " *ever*

“ *ever the Majority of the House of Commons*
 “ shall be composed of the Dependants on
 “ the Crown, the *Liberties of Great Britain*
 “ can subsist only DURANTE BENE
 “ PLACITO.

I shall conclude this Head with some Observations on *Honour*, being a Necessary Qualification for *Candidates* at the ensuing Election, from a Letter to the House of Commons, *Ann.* 1627.

‘ *Trajanus* commended *Plutarch* for his
 ‘ Precepts in School, when he taught, that
 ‘ Men should labour to deserve Honour,
 ‘ but avoid the getting of it basely;
 ‘ for if it were Reputation to have it
 ‘ by Desert, it were Infamy to buy it for
 ‘ Money.

‘ Honour is not to be valued according to
 ‘ the vulgar Opinion of Men, but esteem-
 ‘ ed as the Sirname of Virtue, ingendered
 ‘ in the Mind; and such Honour *no King*
 ‘ can give, or Money purchase. He that
 ‘ will strive to be more Honourable than o-
 ‘ thers, must abandon *Passion, Pride,* and
 ‘ *Arrogancy*; that so his *Virtue* may shine
 ‘ above others. For Honour consists not
 ‘ in the Title of a Lord, but in the Opini-
 ‘ on People have of his Virtue; for it is
 ‘ much

‘ much more Honour to deserve, and not
 ‘ to have it, than to have it, and not de-
 ‘ serve it.

‘ The true Honour amongst the Honou-
 ‘ rablest, is, where Fortune casts down,
 ‘ where there is no Fault; but it is *Infamy*
 ‘ where Fortune raiseth, where there is no
 ‘ Merit.

‘ Examine the State and Condition of
 ‘ Men raised to Honour these Twenty five
 ‘ Years past, and whether it be *Desert, Fa-*
 ‘ *vour,* or *Power,* that hath preferred them?

‘ Enter into the Mischief the Kingdom
 ‘ hath suffered, and doth suffer by it, and
 ‘ the Cause of his Majesty’s great Wants
 ‘ will soon appear, if you collect with your
 ‘ selves, how many hungry Courtiers have
 ‘ been raised to the highest top of Honour.

The next Thing that is essentially ne-
 cessary to the Being of Parliaments, is *Li-*
berly of Speech in the House, without which
 they have but little *Force* or *Power*; Speech,
 (as the aforementioned Author observes) be-
 gets Doubts and resolves them, and Doubts
 in Speeches begets Understanding; he that
 doubts much asketh often and learns much,

and he that fears the worst, soonest prevents a Mischief.

‘ If Freedom of Speech should be prohibited, when Men with Modesty make repetition of the *Grievances* and *Enormities* of the Kingdom; when Men shall desire Reformation of *Wrongs* and *Injuries* committed, and have no relation of Evil Thoughts to his Majesty, but with open Heart and Zeal, express their dutiful and reverend Respect to him and his Service; I say, if this kind of *Liberty of Speech*, be not allow’d in Time of *Parliaments*, they will extend no further than to Quarter Sessions, and their *Meetings* and *Assemblies* will be unnecessary; for all Means of Disorder new crept in, and all *Remedies* and *Redresses*, will be quite taken away.

‘ As it is no Manners to contest with the King in his Election of Counsellors and Servants, (for Kings obey no Men but their Laws) so were it a great Negligence and part of Treason, for a Subject not to be Free in Speech, against the *Abuses*, *Wrongs*, and *Offences* that may be occasioned by *Persons in Authority*. What Remedy can be expected from a Prince to the Subject, if the *Enormities* of his Kingdom be concealed from him? Or what King, so Religious

‘ Religious or Just in his own Nature, that may not hazard the Loss of the Hearts of his Subjects, without this *Liberty of Speech* in *Parliament*? For such is the Misfortune of most Princes, and such is the Unhappiness of Subjects where Kings Affections are settled, and their Loves so far transported to promote their Servants, as they only Trust and Credit what they shall inform. In this Case, What Subject dares complain? Or what Subject dares contradict the Words or Actions of such a Servant, if it be not warranted by *Freedom of a Parliament*, they speaking with Humility? For nothing obtaineth Favour with a King so much as diligent Obedience.

‘ The surest and safest Way between the King and his People, which hath least Scandal of Partiality, is with Indifference, with Integrity, and Sincerity, to examine the *Grievances* of the *Kingdom*, without touching upon the Person of any Man, farther than the Cause giveth occasion. For otherwise, you shall contest with him that hath the Prince’s Ears open, to hearken to his enchanting Tongue: He informs *Secretly*, when you shall not be admitted to *Excuses*; He will cast your *deserved Malice against Him*, to your *Contempt against the King*, and seeking to lessen his Authority; and

‘ and so will make the Prince the Shield of
‘ *his Revenge.*

‘ These are the sinister Practices of such
‘ Servants, to deceive their Sovereigns, when
‘ our *Grievances* shall be authentically pro-
‘ ved, and made manifest to the World, by
‘ your *Pains* to Examine, and *Freedom* to
‘ Speak. No Prince can be so affectionate
‘ to a Servant, or such an Enemy to him-
‘ self, as not to admit of this Indifferent Pro-
‘ ceeding: If his Services be allowable and
‘ good, they will appear with Glory; if bad,
‘ your Labour shall deserve Thanks, both
‘ of Prince and Country.

When Justice shall thus shine, People
will be animated to serve their King with
Integrity: For they are naturally inclined
to imitate Princes in good and bad. The
Words of *Cicero* will then appear, *That ma-
licious and evil Men make Princes poor, and
one Perfect Good Man is able to make a Nation
Rich.*

‘ There is no Remedy left for false Reports
‘ but a Freedom of Speech in Parliament;
‘ for there is no wise Man that speaks, but
‘ knows what and when to speak, and how
‘ to hold his Peace. Whilst Subjects Tongues
‘ are ty’d, for fear they may reach him a rap
‘ whose Conscience cries Guilty, the King
‘ and

‘ and his People are kept from understanding
‘ one another, the Enemy is heartned Abroad,
‘ and Discontent nourish’d at Home; and
‘ all for One, who is like a *Dragon*, that
‘ bites the Ear of the Elephant, because he
‘ knows the Elephant cannot reach him
‘ with his Trunk; and Princes are abus’d
‘ by False Reports whisper’d in their Ears
‘ by *Sycophants* and *Flatterers.*

Which puts me in mind of a Question
which was ask’d *Diogenes*, viz. What Beast
bit forest; he answer’d, Of Wild Beasts, the
Back-biter, of Tame, the *Flatterer.*

I shall conclude with the following Ad-
vice to the Electors, That if any of them
know of *any Corruption*, whether in the
Abuse of Publick Money, or Power, or any
other way prejudicial to our Freedom of
Election, and not oppose it if he can, or
at least, *expose* it, is deficient in of the
Duty he owes his Country. In Cases where
the Publick is concern’d, no Man should
be idle or silent; in old *Rome*, it would have
been an Honour to be a Prosecutor in the
Case of such a Corruption; and *Plutarch*
makes it to be one of the noblest Parts in
the Character of *Cato*, who *bound himself in
an Oath, that he would be the Accuser of
whomsoever he should know to have given Mo-
ney for the purchasing Suffrages for Elections:*
And

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And there was a Law which appointed Rewards and Honours for those who should Impeach them. This might prevent the Secrecy of Crimes of this kind; and to make such Corruption publick to the World, is to raise a general Resentment against it, by which means, those who are not utterly abandon'd to it, may be reclaimed; and I hope the *Majority* of the *People of England* will consider Themselves, their Relations, their Friends, and their Posterity; and if so, we may be pretty confident that the *Majority* of the House of *Commons* will be like those that sent them: We may then reasonably expect, that the ensuing Parliament will close the Breaches in our Constitution; will restore to the free People of *England*, the greatest Bulwark of their common Liberties, the *Frequency of Parliaments*, and consequently, the *Freedom of Elections*.

F I N I S.