



Things as they Are



[Price Two Shillings.]

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Quæ Tempora ! Quæ Potentiæ ludibria !

ERYC. PUTEAN.



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THINGS as they ARE.

THE Spirit of the Public, and especially of a British Public, has been always so favorable to those who venture to lay before it their sentiments on the state of its affairs, as might alone be a sufficient inducement, even without taking into the account the honor itself of the task.

Truth, or but the aim at truth, unadulterated with selfishness, partiality, or factious views, of which that Public has too piercing a discernment, for mere pretence to escape, is sure to find not only approbation but even protection from it. Nor is this its disposition, entirely undeserved. Flattery itself cannot, with all its art, assume a more delicate shape than that of the representation of truths fore-known not to be agreeable to those to whom they are represented, and yet for all that offered or even obtruded upon them. This supposes in them not only the rare justice of

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a candid acceptance, but the yet rarer good sense of profiting by truth, when made appear to them, even though themselves had not been the first to discover it, through those clouds of passions, or of artful design, which so often obscure it.

But even where such representations fail of immediate conviction, they cannot but have a good effect, if they but raise a salutary doubt: at least they can offend none but the passive slaves of prejudice, who prefer the implicitness of credulity or ignorance to the active research of their own reason; and would rather continue ruinously mistaken, than unpleasingly undeceived. To understandings of this stamp, Truth would in vain, and even dangerously hold out her torch, sure, for her reward, to have it dashed in her face. It is not for such as these, that either reason or experience were made. The opinion of millions of them, cannot outweigh even but the hope of pleasing or enlightening one man of sense, and in course, of candor. And sure no time ever called more powerfully for a fair and just disquisition into things than the present one, when the most pernicious falsities are
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careffed like friends, and the moſt wholeſome truths voted enemies to this country, of which whatever may be its inclination, its intereſt it can never be to remain ignorant or even in doubt. Public miſtakes are always public miſfortunes, and like miſfortunes too rarely come alone; error follows upon error, *ut unda ſupervenit undam*. But the danger is ſtill greater, and the leſs apt to be diſcerned or retrieved, when ſuch miſtakes are built upon the moſt laudable and moſt virtuous of all foundations, the love of country; and are more-over induſtriouſly fomented by ſuch men of Power as are eſteemed its friends. Some of them are perhaps ſincerely ſo, and deſerve therefore no reproach, but that of incapacity or want of penetration. Such too are admirable tools to thoſe who knowing better, have views diſtinct from that of the national intereſt, and draw much better ſervice from them, than if theſe their co-operators were in the ſecret of what they the more ſucceſſfully employ themſelves in perſuading others, from themſelves being perſuaded.

The following ſheets then are not impudently meant to ſet up a private opinion

in opposition to the public authority of those great and wise statesmen, at present so happily and so gloriously in charge with the conduct of the British system, if any such system there exists ; but purely to state matters of fact, so as to put every one into a way of exercising his own judgment upon them, with a request to every reader, which surely will not appear a very immodest one, of his not preferring any man's reason to his own, nor any prejudices he may have imbibed, to his own convictions of truth.

But as it is absolutely necessary to the ascertainment of things as they are, to know what they have been ; a summary recapitulation of precedent transactions will not improperly, nor, is it to be hoped, tediously clear the way.

Nothing is more susceptible of the most evident demonstration than that Britain was in her own most just defence forced into the present war with France. Stabbed at in her vitals in America, she was either obliged to acquiesce supinely in the French manifold invasions there, or to put a stop to them, by repelling the aggression with
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a commencement of hostilities. An immediate declaration of war would perhaps have been more consonant to the established forms of practice ; but since the French themselves had not paid any respect to them in their own procedure, they could at least with the worse grace complain of our having followed the bad example they had set us, and which was not the less real for its being the less manifest to the rest of Europe, from the remoteness and obscurity of the parts where they incontestably began their aggression.

In this imminent or actual state of war, it was but natural for our court to look out for allies, and to look out for them especially amongst those powers the most united to us by the ties of mutual interest or good offices. At the head of these, doubtless stood the queen of Hungary, naturally the enemy to France and in course, a friend to Britain. Unhappily her position was too critical with respect both to France and to Prussia, for her to declare for us. Nay, her direct declaration in our favor at that time, must have been not only pregnant with the utmost danger to
herself.

herself, but have been the very worst office she could do us. It was even highly impolitic to desire it : the reason is obvious. No one can doubt, but from the instant of such a declaration, France would have easily engaged Prussia to join with her, which would have produced a more formidable union, than even that of Austria with France, of which we so bitterly complain ; with what reason will soon be seen. It was said besides, that on our first overture, she had required too exorbitant a consideration for her joining with us. This is far from improbable : the house of Austria was never celebrated for its moderation towards us on that head.

Our court however sensible of the delicacy of the queen of Hungary's situation, respectively to Prussia, was, or seemed satisfied with her excuse. It proceeded next to negotiate the march of a Russian army into Germany. The proposal was no sooner made to Russia, than eagerly accepted. Nothing could more co-incide with its actual views. That court had not only for a fixt object, the getting a footing in the empire, but the Czarina herself had entertained

tertained a personal animosity against the king of Prussia. She was then to be enabled and paid with our own money, for doing the very thing on which her heart was most set. This march was concerted to answer two intentions; that of covering Hanover from the threatened invasion of the French, and of taking away, or at least of lessening the queen of Hungary's apprehensions from the king of Prussia, who might be said to be encamped on her frontiers with a formidable army ready for action. Encamped is no improper term here, since his dominions were all over one incampment, of which his own court of Potsdam, was the general quarters.

This Prince however, with his usual penetration, soon got notice of the treaty, and of the terms of it; which plainly shewed its being levelled against himself. If it may be said of him that he dreaded any power, it was that of Russia. He knew how ill he stood at that court, he knew its views upon Germany, or rather upon those of his dominions that lay the most convenient for its invasion. He knew that its standing maxim is to TAKE and HOLD.

Alarmed

Alarmed then, he could think of no better expedient for defeating the Russian intentions, than offering his alliance to his Britannic Majesty, the principal condition of which was to keep out all foreign troops from entering the empire, in which the French were principally meant, though out of remains of tenderness to them, not specifically named.

There existed two preponderant reasons for accepting this offer, built on two very powerful motives with mankind, hope and fear. Hope, that lying so much nearer and more convenient for covering Hanover, with so great a strength as he commanded, that that great and capital point would be better provided for, than by the alliance with Russia : Fear, that on a rejection of his proposal, Hanover might suffer from him, as he was very capable of serving it in the same manner, as he has done Saxony since. Power he undoubtedly had, and no one can think, that he would have wanted pretences.

Our court came accordingly into his proposals. This implicitly annulled the material part to Russia of the treaty so recently made with it. The Czarina could not but think herself

self grossly trifled with, and repented it accordingly. The alienation of that government from our nation may be dated from that time, and is not perhaps one of the least disadvantages incurred for the sake of the safety of Hanover.

But the British interest was sacrificed in vain. That no regard for this nation had any the least share in that first famous treaty of February 1756, with Prussia, not the consequences alone have shewn; but the express declaration of his Prussian Majesty made to the French King, through his minister the duke de Nivernois, just after the signature of it. “ * That he *flattered him-*
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* Qu'il se flattoit de lui avoir rendu un service très distingué, en separant, comme il avoit fait, l'Autriche de l'alliance de l'Angleterre; que loin d'avoir gêné ses operations contres les anglois, il lui avoit donné plus de facilité de les pousser avec vigueur; qu'il avoit arrêté les Russes alors leurs ennemis communs, et extrêmement fortifié par là la ligue des princes de l'empire, qu'il ne s'agissoit plus que de reformer le projet de porter la guerre dans l'électorat d'Hanover, changement dans le plan d'operations militaires d'autant plus facile, que la garantie des Païs bas n'étoit pas comprise dans celle de cet electorat. (*Etat Actuel des affaires de l'Allemagne.*)

“ self with having done him (the French
 “ king) a *most distinguished service*, in de-
 “ taching, as he had done, *Austria* from
 “ the *alliance* of *England* ; that so far from
 “ cramping his operations *against* the *Eng-*
 “ *lish*, he had procured him a greater *fa-*
 “ *cility* to *push* them *with* vigor : that he
 “ had stopped the *Russians*, their *then* com-
 “ mon enemies, and thereby extremely for-
 “ tified the league of the princes of the
 “ empire : that he (the French king) had
 “ now nothing to do but to alter his pro-
 “ ject of carrying the war into the electo-
 “ rate of Hanover, a change in the plan
 “ of military operations so much the more
 “ easy, for that the *guarantee* of the *Low-*
 “ *Countries*, was not included in that of the
 “ electorate.

This extract from a Pamphlet, entitled,
The Actual State of Affairs in Germany,
 published about that time, though never
 yet refuted, and then universally believed,
 and even in England, would not perhaps of
 itself now deserve any credit, if the sub-
 sequent conduct of his Prussian majesty had
 not perfectly corroborated it. One incon-
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testable truth in it is, that the Low-Countries were, at the special instance of one of the contracting parties, which could not be England omitted *. If reports too founded on the utmost probability, and on the known sentiments of his Prussian majesty towards the french court, may be credited; he was extremely blanked, not to say confounded at its not biting at the bait he had thrown out to it. He would not perhaps have been surprized at encountering the French as enemies to Britain, or to Hanover, but had never dreamt of encountering them as the friends of Austria. But in this he was disappointed.

France, whom he had twice left in the lurch, could have no great confidence in him, and imagined she should make her market better with Austria, now not only thoroughly indisposed towards this nation, but frightened at once at our desertion,

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* The word *Germany* was substituted to that of *Empire*, which in a more extensive sense comprehends the Low-Countries and Bohemia.

and at the designs of Prussia against her. She was moreover greatly exasperated at our renewal of the guarantee of Silesia to the King of Prussia ; a renewal which because perfectly unnecessary, she construed into an intention of nosing her with it.

In this ill-humor, and what was more powerful yet with her, in this her terror, can there be any wonder that she should strike in with France, that opened her arms to receive her, and courted her with every motive of revenge, of safety, and of apparent interest, circumstanced as she then was ; the sword of Prussia evidently whetted against her throat, and herself not even very decently treated by us, was there so much as an alternative at her option ? Have we any right to reproach her with a step to which ourselves had driven her, and evidently made a necessity to her ? Truth is not the less truth for being unpopular. Much has been said of her ingratitude to this nation for all the services done to her family ; but waving the plea of their having been constantly and obviously done, either for the interest of Britain, and perhaps of-
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tenest for that of Hanover, is the infamous and never-to-be forgotten peace of Utrecht, by which the crown of Spain and all its appendages, that would indeed have formed a so necessary counter-balance to France ; the want of which has cost us so many millions, were transferred from the house of Austria to the house of Bourbon, to be ranked amongst those services for which she is charged with so black a crime as that of ingratitude ? Does she owe us any great thanks for the part our court had in obliging her to part with Silesia ; which the whole British nation once thought so cruelly and unjustly wrested from her ? The times indeed are changed, but the right of things does not change with them. And for what did she part with a province of near a million sterling yearly revenue, to a mortal enemy, and once not esteemed by us the most generous one ? But for a poor half million adjusted and paid by us. It may be said this involuntary cession was at that time imposed on her by the desperation of her circumstances, consequently not imputable to us. Granted that were true ; granted that she was purely influenced by them, and
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not by our menaces of abandoning her, if she did not comply with the terms prescribed by Prussia; is nor the same plea of necessity receivable in the case of her embracing the alliance of France? No one in his senses can imagine it was her choice. She must know too well the interested designs and constitutional perfidy of that court.

The embroiling us then with Russia, with the Empress Queen, and in its consequences with almost all Europe, was evidently the consequence of that treaty of ours with Prussia in February 1756. We shall now see what benefit accrued to Britain, and to Hanover from his Prussian majesty's dispositions to observe it.

The main intent of it was doubtless to defeat the French designs of penetrating into the electorate of Hanover. Wesel, a place strongly fortified by the king of Prussia's father, who tendered it as the apple of his eye; Wesel, that important barrier, that could have stopped the French, at least six weeks, was ungarrisoned, and left the way clear for the French to enter into the heart of the Empire. Every one knows what
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followed ; they advanced into Hanover, had barely the advantage at the affair of Hastenbeck, and yet reduced the Hanoverians and Hessians to a pacific convention at Closter-Seven, to which Richelieu was so weak as to trust, without insisting on their laying down their arms.

It has been said, that that sagacious prince, the King of Prussia, had strong reasons for with-drawing that garrison. No doubt he had. But whatever they were, they baulked, in a great measure, the very first and capital intention of the treaty he had long before signed, and which brought on that of Versailles between the Empress Queen and the French King of the first of May following.

In September, of that year, his Prussian Majesty made his irruption into the protestant electorate of Saxony ; of which, by a new, and till then, unheard of distinction, he took possession, in the form of a *deposite*. There is no need of characterizing this step here. What the opinion of his Electoral Highness of Hanover was, may be seen in the memorial delivered in by his comital minister at Ratisbon, where he solemnly

lemnly disavowed, and even detested it. His Britannic Majesty was however of a contrary way of thinking, since the very same prince who had taken that, at least, irregular step, was solemnly recommended by him to the nation as its *natural ally* ! Common-sense is however at a loss to reconcile such contradictions.

The war was hotly carried on in Germany ; a war that seems to have been a contest for which side should commit the greatest blunders. Those of Prussia were unhappily for him the fewest. Unhappily for him, it may without a paradox be said, since all his great and shining victories, obtained by his superiority in generalship, and in his forces over the greatest blunderers that ever pretended to know any thing in war, have brought him no nearer an issue, whilst they must weaken him in proportion as they have exasperated, those enemies of his, who surely had not before wanted the inclination, and are now thereby reduced to the necessity of crushing him, or of perishing themselves. Berlin, the King of Prussia's own capital had been laid under contribution, and two such victories as would
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in former times have probably transferred the whole Roman Empire to the gainer of them; have not as yet produced to him the recovery of a part even of his own dominions, which is to this instant in the hands of his enemies. But this is far from all that is against him. A capacity so great, an activity so indefatigable as his, seconded by the best troops and generals in Europe, have hitherto enabled him to withstand the united force of those great powers that are confederated against him; and may he long continue to maintain his deserved superiority over them! But when he shall have reduced, and even destroyed the empress queen; suppose her even hunted out of Viennay and forced to fly to Hungary, or elsewhere, from before the face of his victorious army; suppose even the rest of his enemies discouraged, and out of condition to assist her effectually in her distress; there still remains for him to surmount, an obstacle not the less invincible, for its present appearance of being the very weakest; the laws of the empire. Against this rock he must ultimately split, because, humanly speaking, though it may be shaken, it cannot

be subverted without dragging after it a general ruin. Will not, or at least ought not all Germany to arm to a man in defence of a constitution thus threatened to be overturned, and which cannot be annihilated without a violent and entire change of the system of Europe? Will other powers, now neutral, stand by and see their own safety endangered by such a revolution? It may be said, that peace will be the issue of such a reduction of the empress queen; but is she not too much exasperated? can she make it without her allies? and should she even submit to her conqueror with their consent, what reliance can she have on the stability of any treaty with him? "She must be crushed then: the king of Prussia will effectually eradicate her power." Granted. But who is to be substituted in the room of that House, which has for so many ages presided over Germany, and which Germany cannot help respecting and supporting, even though it has so many just reasons to complain of it? Will it be answered that the king of Prussia will fill up that void? Every true Englishman who looks on him in his present light of popularity, would and ought to

to wish it; but no one that knows any thing of the state of Europe, or of the empire, can entertain so frantic a hope. Nothing is, it is true, above the personal merit of so great a prince. But is he immortal? will his successors have the same claim? will Germany, on so frail a tenure as that of his life, exchange an old established family for a very new one? Will it tamely sacrifice its liberty, privileges, and every thing that is sacred, to a master thus imposed on it by force of arms, and from whom, as a master, it can hardly expect more respect to its laws, than he has shewn them as a subject and member of the empire? Has he even, at this very hour, after all his amazing successes, acquired one considerable ally, except Britain? The French he has already beat and driven back; and suppose now the Empress-queen forced to take refuge in her wilds in Hungary, will these events, probably, deliver him from one of those enemies that now keep the sword in his hand, and compel him to fight for his very existence, not only with them, but with the seasons themselves? Will his advantages not rather multiply his

adversaries? Even such prosperous events as might, in the usual course of things, have gained friends even to a bad cause, have however won none over to his, and only served to draw the closer the ties of alliance between the powers combined against him. Some of them are not only protestant powers, but even near relations to him; yet there have not been wanting some, or mad, or silly, or designing enough to treat this war he is carrying on as a religious one. Can such a condition then as his, with all the glare his victories have diffused over it, blind one man of sense or reflection to the hollowness of it? Is it not rather so truly deplorable that his sword the more successful it is, is but digging the deeper and the more inevitable a precipice for him? Even now the prodigious pitch to which he has carried his power discovers its weakness, since nothing can be plainer than its being of the nature of a large structure, that wanting proportionable foundations, and cement, the higher it should be raised would but be the nearer coming to the ground. Let him take Olmutz; let him gain battle upon battle, let him plant,

plant, if he will, his victorious standards on the ramparts of Vienna ; he is not a jot the more advanced, if Germany and the rest of Europe are but the more provoked, and resolutely bent against his aggrandizement ? They have but too much felt, and can hardly not resent the airs of despotism he has already given himself to his co-estates ; his prescribing to his equals rules of conduct in the most imperious strain ; his threatening those his fellow-members of the empire, who armed against him only in obedience to its laws, and to whom he has scarce imputed it as less than the crime of high-treason against his own majesty. But his procedure especially towards Saxony, has made him enemies of all those powers, who may not care to have the established law of nations give place to a new *Code-Frederic* crammed down their throats, by which the strange expedient of seizing and taking a neighbouring state, *in depofite*, may grow into practice, under its propagation, like that of the Alcoran, by the sword. Even then, in a political, to say nothing of a sentimental light, for that is unquestionable, the fortune of the
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poor, fugitive, distressed, but faithful king of Poland, seems less to be pitied than that of the Prussian hero in all his glory, hurried as he has been by fears, real or imaginary, out of the character of a benefactor to mankind into that of its destroyer.

But whether his cause be as just as it is so generally imagined here, or as unjust as the rest of Europe, looks on it to be, and has already given judgment against him, it is much to be doubted whether Britain as his ally, can do him much effectual service, whilst in the attempt she may do infinite mischief to herself. Nor ought the unpopularity of this doubt to deter any one, to whom Prussia is less dear than his own country, from urging what he conceives to be the truth, though sure of offending where he does not convince. The daring to displease is often not the least of services, though it rarely meets with the acknowledgment it deserves. But to liquidate this question, and to form just conclusions, some retrospect is necessary into the actual state of Britain, from the breaking out of the war with France to this present time.

Minorca

Minorca infamously lost, the unprosperous events in America, and indeed the general mismanagement of affairs, without order, without system, without dignity, naturally alarmed the nation for the consequences. The insolence of the French had swelled in proportion to our weaknesses; and they who had not long before scrupled to compare us to the antient Romans, now began to hold us as cheap as the modern ones. Our natural friends were grown cold and indifferent towards us. A miserable neglect, or at best a faint perfunctory management of the national interest, always subordinate to a foreign one, ruinously for itself preferred, and ardently pursued, could not well tempt other powers to connect with us. In short, the balance of the public opinion, both at home and abroad, was completely against us.

Such a situation could not but awaken Britain. Her first emotions were those of so violent an indignation against the authors of it, as to suspend even her exertion towards providing a remedy. This state of astonishment or stupor the French mistook for fear or despondence. At first,
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indeed, the nation imagined herself weak, only because her power had been weakly administered, and that she had not for a long time seen so much as an attempt at a just dispensation of her strength. She had very reasonably indeed lost her patience, but nothing of her courage, even though numbers had labored to induce a total despair, and by dint of telling the public that it was already ruined, had almost persuaded it that it was so. To the nation then under her present irksome sensations of shame for the past, and of apprehensions for the future, it was a kind of relief from them to hope better things from a change of administration: all ranks, all conditions groaned for it, not even excepting the underlings in offices, all uncurious as they generally are about who occupy the places above them, so they do but hold theirs; the dogs in the street scarce more indifferent about what hand throws a bone to them, or about the dirt in the midst of which they find it. Nothing could more invincibly prove the uniform sense of the nation. In its hurry, however, for a choice of new protectors, it was contented to take the readiest and the first that presented themselves

selves. These were those who had once before risen by the "speech-trade" in this speech-making age, and who had the most recently galled and fatigued, by popular harangues, especially against continental connections, those very ministers with whom they had for years continued very quietly and tamely co-operating, in consequence of that wretched bargain they had once before made of the popularity they had obtained by abusing them. But whether the sweet-meat gag that had so long stopped their mouths was melted down their throats, and given them an appetite for a new and a larger one, whether from a native restlessness, or whether they could not resist the tempting occasion from the actual face of things, to try if the confidence of the people could not be once more captivated and made subservient to their private views by their appearance in an opposition, they set up a fresh one. They succeeded. The dull nauseating farce of concerted, temporizing, insignificant resignations was now played, and, by amusing, satisfied the bulk of the public. Every thing was hoped for from the new elect. It would, at this time, be a tedious and needless task

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to enter into particulars here of all that ferment precedent to its subsiding at length into the triple alliance of those three heads of parties, whose extream difference from one another in a number of points did not promise a very kind or effectual mixture. Nor, in truth, could it be accounted for otherwise than by supposing them uniformly of the same principle and disposition, at bottom, to hold power on its old and only tenure, an implicit and practical assentation to such continental measures as should be dictated to them. For any thing else, they might be the masters. The absurdities however, the ridicule which all of them subscribed to the public, in that period of contest, can hardly be so soon forgot, unless indeed on the foot of their not being intrinsically worth remembrance. Nothing was, in fact, less serious nor less memorable, unless for the damage it occasioned, whilst all the public councils were at a stand, and all our military operations languished. All Europe stood amazed at seeing nothing attempted by us, either in arms or negotiations, in so momentous a crisis. No matter. Britain was overpaid for its delays, since they at length

length issued in that happy compromise of all the claimants of power by which that ministry was established, which has already done such prodigious things, and promises to do so many more, if the holding together of characters so discordant, could flatter us with the hopes of its long duration. This is however that co-alition of parties which has been by so many well-meaning people mistaken for the so much wanted, and the so desirable national union, as if in those parties the nation itself had consisted, or could be represented by them.

In the mean time our misfortunes, our disgraces had precisely a contrary effect to what the missionaries of timidity and despair had expected, or to what the like would have probably operated on our good neighbours the French. Whoever knows that nation, must know that even the smallest reverses of fortune soon damp and deject them ; but a British spirit the greatest rather animate. It is with Britons in politics, as it is in the field, their courage increases with their wounds.

To this acknowledged, and it may be said, almost peculiar characteristic of the

British people, the new ministers will hardly be ashamed of confessing that they have the highest obligation ; since they not only owe ~~it~~ to their support, but their being enabled to make the very best figure their capacities or talents would allow them to make. They will doubtless then spurn that nauseous flattery, from which it has been so falsely and injuriously said that, since their accession to power, they had infused into the nation that spirit, which the very truth is, that they themselves had received from it. Without it could one of them have been so elated as to vent that silly gasconnade ? “ That before his entrance
 “ into power he had imagined the English
 “ were ruined, but, that he had not been
 “ three weeks IN before.” *I gad!* he found that *the French, it was, who were at the last gasp.*

In short, the pretension of the fly on the wheel, could not be more ridiculous than their assuming any merit for the great and noble spirit now evidently raised, and of which it is to be hoped that the French, who are originally the occasion, will severely feel
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the consequences, whenever it shall be put under a proper and effectual direction.

But this was not the only obligation the ministers had to the people ; even their best counsels, their wisest measures were dictated to them by the common sense of the nation. They will hardly deny that the care of the American colonies, and namely the attack of Cape-Breton, the effectual protection indispensably due to trade and navigation, the keeping up the navy, were all points long before strenuously recommended by the voice of the public. Not to have paid attention to it, would have been indeed the height of stupidity. It would not have only robbed them of the honorable title of *ministers of the people*, and of the life and vigor the public confidence gives to all their acts and procedure, such as they are, but of the power of continuing in their places, as well as carrying collaterally other points necessary to their being endured in that closet, into which the popular acclamation had enabled them to introduce themselves. And even in these points they had no hard task to succeed,
since

since they happened to co-incide with a public passion, that was risen to a degree of enthusiasm, in favour of a hero, who had done so much to deserve our grateful good wishes to his cause, and every thing in short from us, but absolutely joining with him, which it may be easily demonstrated could be for the advantage of neither.

That period was now come of itself, in which those orators who had, in a great measure, gained their popularity by fulminating against all continental connexions, indiscriminately, which was certainly an excess, had the greatest room in the world for pluming themselves on their opinion. The defection of Austria, the convention of Closter-seven, and above all the irregularity of the K. of P——'s procedure solemnly disowned and detested by even the electoral ministers of Hanover, formed an inexhaustible fund for eloquence to display itself victoriously, and with the best grace imaginable, for such especially as had before opposed the vain and endless waste of subsidies upon Germany. Nothing could have withstood the arguments that so obviously occurred against once more entangling the
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nation in alliance with the powers of the continent. Instead of which, the moment of their triumph was the moment of their desertion, and what posterity will hardly believe if such silly inconsistencies are worth the transmission to it; from having succeeded in decrying continental connections, they were at that very juncture whiffled round into advocates, for perhaps the most dangerous one of all.

To examine this position with candor, no Englishman is desired to distrust his own judgment: what he has to be in guard against, is his inclination, which too often imposes on it: especially where his prejudice is bred by laudable motives, in which case his opinion takes the lead of his reason, instead of being guided by it; than which inversion there cannot be a greater nor more common inducement both to error, and to obstinacy in error.

Austria, though driven into the arms of France by a momentary and very pardonable fit of ill-humor and terror, could not, in all good policy, be considered or treated as an irreconcilable enemy. This alliance was by the highest authority, even in a
speech

speech from the throne, styled an *unnatural* one: and the truth is, that it was too much so, to be, humanly speaking, presumed a durable one. There could be no fear neither of the French king's not punishing her, more than we perhaps ought to wish, for her folly in trusting a court, that was never hitherto trusted but it betrayed. We might then have, with more propriety, condoled with her on her acquisition of a master in the shape of an ally. Here the prudence would have been to have stopped, and not to widen desperately the breach, by openly aiding or abetting one whom she had so much reason to look on as her mortal enemy. A few remonstrances, and a little time for the experience of the sincerity of France, would in all probability have brought her back to a sense of her own safety and interest. At least, this was the conduct to which the French dreaded the most our adherence and its consequences. Their best politicians express themselves clearly to this effect, whilst the reconciliation of the courts of London and Vienna was not yet set at an impracticable distance, by our subsequent measures, which
soon

dissipated those apprehensions of France, the very keeping up of which was so obvious an advantage to us.

- In the mean time, Austria might indeed well be surprized, if the strangeness of our politics had left any room for the being surprized at any turn they should take, to see us run headlong into such close engagements with her enemy, and one who never had been over-celebrated for his sentiments of friendship or esteem for this nation. We never, in fact, had the honor to be much in his good graces. She could not forget, though we so perfectly had, his treatment of us in the affair of the Silesia-loan. She as well as the whole world knew that his predilection had been entirely for France. Its fashions, the despotism of its government had been long his model, and even its language was become his own language and that of his court, in contempt of his native one, the German tongue. In short, all the reasons that seemed to her so strong against this new alliance, could only aggravate her resentment at its having been made, in wrong of our antient and established one with her.

Neither has Hanover itself any great reason to boast of its reliance on the treaty made with him purposely for its security. One of the first steps after it, was the evacuation of Wesel, which disabled him from effectuating his engagements, and laid the road to Hanover open to the French. They penetrated into it, as if in defiance of the Prussian guarantee, who gave the troops assembled to oppose the invasion little or no assistance. It may be said, that he could spare none; that his attention was engrossed; that all the forces he took with him, not to mention those he opposed to the Swedes and Russians, were little enough to make head against the combined armies of France and the Empire; that in short, the glorious account he gave of those enemies against whom he had chosen immediately to march, amply absolves him. It certainly does so, but not with respect to Hanover. The treaty either meant his covering that electorate, or it meant nothing. His opposing the foreign troops that had made their way into another part of the empire, was nothing to Hanover, which thereby suffered as much as if no such treaty had existed. The letter of it was,

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it is true, fulfilled, but the spirit of it eluded, in a manner specious indeed, but which could not still be very satisfactory to Hanover, that saw itself reduced to make that treaty of neutrality, so ill received here, but of which none could evidently have so little reason to complain as his Prussian Majesty.

Of all the injuries however done to that illustrious Prince, not one can be a greater, from the ridicule of it, than the ranking amongst his motives, the protection of the Protestant Religion. Yet ignorance, always credulous, and always furious to maintain the absurdities it has once swallowed, has found him amongst enthusiasts and methodists here, panegyrists of a principle that, on this occasion, evidently never once entered his thoughts. His crushing a co-estate, which the first in Europe embraced the light of protestantism from Luther, its first missionary, and had moreover the double merit of remaining firmly attached to that religion, under a Roman-catholic sovereign, and of its retaining its allegiance to that sovereign, though of that faith, can be no proof of his over-tenderness for any pro-

testants that should stand in the light of his political views. It may be superfluous to name here the other protestant powers actually in arms against him, which shews, at least, that they do not consider this war in a religious light. To say the truth, few of the Princes on either side seem overloaded with religion, which, at best, is oftener their pretext, than their real motive. Even that eternally bigotted house, the house of Austria, enslaved as it is, to this hour, to the jesuits, has however begun to relax much of its cruel and persecuting fervor against its protestant vassals. Experience has convinced it, as well as the house of Bourbon, that even their numberless oppressions and acts of ingratitude to their innocent subjects of that persuasion, are not able to shake that fidelity of theirs to their lawful sovereigns, which they place amongst their articles of doctrine, and is not amongst the least proofs of its purity and goodness. Even then the obduracy of superstition itself has been in some measure softened and disarmed by the uniform tenor of conduct in the followers of a religion, more conformable to the meekness of the gospel,
breath-

breathing, as it evidently does, the spirit of toleration and good-will to all mankind.

But as to his Prussian Majesty, especially, no man in his senses will suspect him of so false a zeal, as that of kindling a war in favor of the protestant religion, when there was not the shadow of a proof, either of its being attacked by any Romish power, or of any intention of its being attacked. No. He took a much better and more effectual way of serving it, and of shewing his sense of the weakness of the roman-catholic religion in the permission he gave to the famous Meccenati, said to be the same man who some years ago appeared in England, under the assumed title of count Ughi, to build a magnificent Romish church in the heart of his dominions, in his capital, in Berlin itself. In that concession too a begging brief for contributions to it was included, and authorized under the seal of his own chancery. The first stone of it was laid in his name by the count de Haake, the thirteenth of July 1746. A medal was struck on this occasion with the following inscription, *FAV-TORI suo Religio Romano-Catholica*. Superstition is always blind, and did not see in
this

this indulgence that profound contempt of it, which it so evidently implied. Even the court of Rome, that has made so many bubbles, was on this occasion the bubble of that Prince. The Pope himself expressed his grateful sense of that grant. But had he known the superior genius of the King of Prussia better, had he done him, in short justice, he could not but be sensible that that monarch must look on the Court of Rome in its true light, of a Court of Conser-
vancy of some of the most blasphemous and absurd fictions that ever dishonored the human understanding for swallowing them; a Court that has put the sacred truths of the gospel to a not less vile use than that of making, under favor of them, its spurious ingraftment of those impostures go down, on which it has erected its whole system of lucre and tyranny; whilst what it has the supreme impudence to call the *only* Church, in which the salvation of mankind can be obtained, is palpably nothing but a strong hold of pillage and oppression, manned by knaves, and maintained at the expence of prejudice-ridden fools.

On the occasion however of the present war in Germany, the Roman-catholic powers

powers have ascribed to his Prussian majesty one motive, amongst others, that does him infinitely more honor, than that which some of his fellow-protestants have ignorantly done, perhaps with as little reason as the other. The papists then impute it to him as matter of offence, a project of secularizing some of the great spiritual states of Germany, and of even forming a league amongst the protestant princes to that effect. As great a public benefit however as such an immutation would be, and in course worthy of his Prussian majesty's undertaking it, the wonder would be if the Roman catholic powers did not, as such, oppose it, if but for being the proposal of a protestant one ; though it may be believed, that even some of them are not so scrupulous, but they would consent to it, on the condition of coming in for a share. But however that may be, religion itself must still be absolutely out of the question : the *perfect* purity of it disdains and disclaims all mixture with temporal concerns.

To those then who are not groveling in the dirt of ignorance or of low prejudice, beneath the reach of the influence of truth,
nothing

nothing can be more clear than that tugging into the quarrel the protestant religion is in fact the greatest injury that can be done to it, or to that great prince, in whose favor they imagine so false and exploded a pretence is of a nature to pass for a reason of our union with him, however emphatically it has been founded as such.

But if religion was evidently not even a pretext for Britain to make a common cause with his Prussian majesty in this quarrel, it may be safely averred that good policy can, in the nature of things, as little find reason to consider this alliance as a very great bargain.

The German empire, that very empire, in the delivery of which from the oppression of the house of Austria his P— M— declared he had taken arms, was not, it seems, in the least disposed to receive him in that light. His great exploits in Saxony had met with quite another interpretation than he had given it in his voluminous manifests. No laurels could cover the baldness of his apology. The princes of Germany imagined they had reason, in the fate of that electorate, to dread their own, when-

ever

ever they should unhappily become obnoxious to the displeasure of his P— M—. They had seen him proceed, without other form of trial than that of military execution, to drive an aged king out of his hereditary dominions: they had seen others of the princes of Germany over-awed with threats of the same usage, some of which were actually executed: they had seen him, in short, with all the brow of despotism, give his fellow-subjects of the empire, his will and pleasure for a law, his suspicions for proofs, his armies for pleaders, and his power for a reason.

If the laws of the empire, then, were not mere jests, of neither use nor significance, the diet could not possibly help, on the formal requisition of the parties aggrieved, to put his P— M— to the ban of the empire, and to appoint an army to carry it into execution.

At least, in all this, there was nothing but what was strictly authorised, nay, enjoined by the constitution of Germany. Even those who condemn this treatment of his P— M— have nothing better to say, than that the diet was under the undue influence

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of the house of Austria. But of this they do not furnish the least proof; and besides, that railing at one's judges is not of itself one of the most favorable signs of the goodness of a cause; it is certainly no more receivable, without proofs, before the great tribunal of the public, than it is before any other human one whatever. But even this undue influence must be a mere chimæra. It must proceed either from fear or corruption.

As to fear; Prussia was palpably much more capable of inspiring it than Austria; besides, that his power gave the princes laboring under it under a fair opportunity of shaking it off, by joining with him.

As to corruption, nothing can be clearer, than that Austria has not of a long time been, but rather in circumstances to sell herself than to purchase others.

Till the contrary then can be shown, and, as yet, it has not been so much as attempted to be shown, the sentence of the diet stands valid and unexceptionable, and not the less so for the want of strength in the empire to reduce to a submission that potent prince, who is fallen under it. If some princes,
either

either by their own intrinsic power, or thro' that of their foreign allies, have on falling under the ban, escaped the execution of it; such an escape was never considered as an abrogation of those laws from which that ban was an emanation. They were still understood to remain in full force; and the electorate of Saxony itself transferred from the elder to the younger branch, where it actually now rests, stands a proof of their not being always eluded.

But whether this sentence against his P— M— was just or not, or whether the Germanic constitution admits or not of an Elector's availing himself of the alliance of a foreign power in his defence against the effects of a ban, at least it must be owned, that whatever power openly aids or abets him, cannot, for the time, be but considered as an enemy to the empire. Let Austria, let France, let Russia, let Sweden thus combined be considered by us, only as a cowardly overmatch to that great prince, who has thus gallantly struggled with them all; let it consequently rather invite than deter us from succouring him against such a confederacy: but surely, the declaration of the

empire, totally changes the nature of the war, now become a domestic affair, in which the interfering seems not only beneath the majesty of the British people, but unbecoming its character of at least a well-wisher to the laws and liberties of other nations as well as to its own.

If France has pragmatically intermeddled, and poured her troops into Germany, under the triple character of Guarantee to the treaty of Westphalia, of auxiliary to Austria, and of an enemy to Britain, determined to wound her through the sides of Hanover; her example was rather a warning not to follow it, than an invitation. She has hitherto, thank God! made as miserable a figure there as we could wish. But it must be acknowledged, that the part she left this nation to play, if this nation would have embraced it, was a much more wise and great one, than what herself had chosen. It was that of a mediator, and a powerful, because an armed one. This character by the taking side with Prussia, became evidently forfeited. He cannot be a Judge, who has made himself a Party. But, besides that as a mediator, Britain might

might have eventually been in pafs to ferve the king of Pruffia much more effectually than as an open ally ; ſhe needed not have confined her good offices to ſuch a mediation. Amongſt all the powers leagued againſt him, France alone was our common enemy : the others were, if not friends, at leaſt indifferent towards us. A prince then ſo thoroughly governed by his greateſt advantage as he is, and who had only in one point, and that by pure accident, a common intereſt with us, could not well take it ill, that we ſhould conſult our own in all the reſt. Nay, in that very conſulting our own, we ſhould in fact have conſulted his.

Auſtria, on ſeeing that his B—— M—— gave no aſſiſtance to Pruffia, would have in courſe ſeen, that his firſt treaty with that court had no other object than what he had ſo ſolemnly profeſſed, the covering of Hanover, and the maintaining the tranquillity of the empire. This conduct would have been not only of a nature to calm her animofity, but to re-invite her confidence. Our influence then might have been reſtored, and made ſerviceable to his P——
M——,

M——, at the issue of the war. Russia and Sweden too, would have had no pretext of enmity to us as auxiliaries to the prince against whom they had declared war, and would have been the readier to receive our representations for putting an end to it.

It may be said, “ what ! should we have
 “ tamely stood spectators of the brave king
 “ of Prussia’s struggles with his adversaries ?
 “ would that have been a grateful retribu-
 “ tion for the great and successful diver-
 “ sion he has created, in our favor, of the
 “ French forces ? could it be for our in-
 “ terest to have that diversion abridged either
 “ by his ruin, or by the separate peace he
 “ might have been obliged to make, and
 “ of which we could, in such case, have
 “ no sort of reason to complain ?

To all these questions there is an obvious, and a rational answer. We were undoubtedly bound by all the ties of honor, of interest, of gratitude, to serve him : and to serve him even with more good will than he had served us, since that service was not only indirect and accidental, but even involuntary. France, it is perfectly well
 known,

known, he rather wished a friend than an enemy. But since, against both his desire and his expectation, she had taken a hostile turn towards him, and received from him those checks and defeats for which Britain stands indebted to him; to have proceeded with correct justice, her manner of acknowledgment might surely have been as undirect as his service, without his having the least room to complain. Since France was now happily our common enemy, the bending our whole force of war against that nation, could not but have proportionably disabled it from hurting him: and this might have been done effectually for his service, without our appearing to know there was such a person in existence as him, and consequently without entangling ourselves in a cause, of which we could not, for many reasons, keep too clear. The money, and men required by him, might, under a good direction, and employed effectually against France, have answered as valuable purposes to ourselves and to him, without our unnecessarily giving offence to powers with whom we had no quarrel, by openly sending them over to him; thus subministring supplies to
feed

feed the war with them, and engaging ourselves in a manner for him to withdraw us into a chaos of contention without bottom or end. No power, however at war with Prussia, or however sensible of the advantage to him from our operations against France, could have resisted them. She, and not they, was our natural enemy, and in acting against her we could have exceeded no bounds. All the powers of Europe would then have applauded our spirit, when they saw it so evidently under the controul of our justice.

Germany, in that case, would not have had occasion to listen to the infamously false charge broached by the French against his Britannic M—, of his having fomented, nay kindled the war in the Empire, for views as foreign to it as they are in fact to Britain itself. Yes ! France, of whom it may be so justly averred that there has scarce been a drop of human blood spilt in war, in the remotest corner of Europe, but what was directly or indirectly owing to her cabals ; France, I say, has dared to impute to one of the most pacific, humane and best intentioned monarchs
that

that ever graced a throne, the guilt of lighting up that flame, in which Germany is at present involved, and in which his own dominions have so severely suffered. The truth is, that it were to be wished that the rightfull British cause had been pleaded before the Public of Europe, and at all the Courts of it by able negotiators, with the same eagerness and industry as the French have pleaded their most wrongfull one. We might then have had some of its Princes for auxiliaries that are now at best cool towards us, and their subjects for our partizans. But above all, the keeping aloof from the cause of Prussia would have absolved us from any concern in the present deep and deplorable misfortunes of Germany, wasted, plundered and desolated at it is, and by the most solemn authentic act of which its Constitution is capable, formally imputing all this to our ally, no matter how unjustly ; since as to the consequences, they are exactly the same from its opinion of our supporting, and enabling him to continue what Germany calls its oppression.

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Yet

Yet to do his Prussian Majesty justice, it does not at all appear that himself had the oppression of that country in view. His alarms for Silesia, which were certainly not groundless, though perhaps not sufficient to justify, at least, to the immediate sufferers, the extremities to which matters have been carried, were the only motive that precipitated him into the appearances of aggression. Himself knowing that his intentions went no farther than preventively to defeat the designs he had reason to think his enemies were hatching to wrest that province out of his hands, might possibly not see, in the remoter consequences, the tendency of his hasty appeal to the sword. Perhaps, even at this instant, he wishes that Rubicon, the invasion of Saxony, unpassed: at least, he has given undoubted proofs of his not being animated by the spirit of conquest or oppression, since even after his victories, he has of himself offered terms of peace, but terms of which the lengths he had gone, and the acrimony he had raised, opposed the acceptance.

He

He cannot but now see that the levelling the house of Austria to the dust is a task more dangerous than he might at first apprehend. It is a Colossus that, should it even fall by his efforts, must fall upon himself, and crush him with its weight. All Europe shaken to its foundations, and Germany especially enraged to see its system overturned, its laws trampled upon or derided, could not but unite for revenge on the author of all this ruin, and especially to obstruct the advantages he might presume from it. The contest would become desperate, and the issue of it, humanly speaking, cannot be supposed favorable to his Prussian M—.

But were it even to happen that he could, without these dreadful consequences, carry the point of destroying the house of Austria, is it very clear that Britain could be any gainer by it? Is there any reason to think that he would prove an ally to us, more to be depended upon, more tractable, less interested, or less burthen some than the house of Austria has been? Who knows how soon we should be embarked in another war, and with more plausibility, to restore it?

Nothing then can be more evident than that the benefit we reap from the continuance of the diversion Prussia occasions to the arms of France, is much over-ballanced by the disadvantages that must attend our conjunction with him. Nor is one of the least of them that enmity, which we excite by it amongst so many powers, with whom both our political and mercantile interest prescribes to us rather a cultivation of friendship.

Our war with France has a determinate object. Prussia has by his procedure put it out of his own power to have one. Our cause is a clear, a fair one. What his is, there is no saying. He is in a labyrinth, of which neither himself nor any one else have the clue. The difficulties he has to encounter are Hydra-headed: even his favorable issue out of those he has now before him, only presents the prospect of new and greater ones emerging *ad infinitum*. Peace is to him a horizon that flies before him: every advance his victories seem to gain him towards it, sets him, in fact, at the greater distance from it. Should even the Empress-Queen compelled by the pressure of circumstances

stances consent to a separate peace with him, which is not however very probable, it will hardly deserve the name of peace, since neither of the parties can reasonably trust to it. If peace then is, as it is always understood to be, the object of all wars, can it be for the interest of this nation miserably to pin its fair cause on a Prince so perfectly by chance on our side, granting even his cause was not a dubious one, and to whom peace has, humanly speaking, all the appearances of an impossibility? Should it be said that this union will terminate in forcing a peace on all the parties at war with it: not our greatest enemies can impute to us a more invidious undertaking. To say nothing of its improbability, it is directly contrary to the respect and tenderness Britain has ever manifested for the liberties of Europe, to the giving law to which she stands as averse as to the receiving law from it, or from any powers in it. Yet without such a supposition, what prospect is there of peace for us, if inextricably involved with a power, who himself plunged into a bottomless abyss of war, sees us fond of being dragged after him into it, and of supporting him, which is no very good office, in his ruinous pursuit of
it,

it, and all because one of the enemies he has so wantonly and surely undefignedly made, happens to be ours.

Whoever then will give the whisper of truth fair play against the roar of popular prejudice, may easily satisfy himself that France, yes France alone, ought to be pleased with our taking such a part. Nothing can more effectually answer her ends. The sending money and men to the continent, is sure to weaken us in proportion at home. The success is uncertain. France may however flatter herself with dealing to a much greater advantage with any opposition from us there, than if purely conducted on the foot of our insular situation. In the mean time she takes advantage of the general obnoxiousness of the cause to which we have thought proper to connect ours, and putting both undistinctly under one cover and superscription, would make both pass for having one and the same merit. But this is not all. Even our assistance to Prussia cannot but be at bottom agreeable to the politics of France, whose work it does, whilst we are saddled at once with the expence and the odium of it. No one can think that France was ever in earnest to crush Prussia. That Court
knows

knows its interest too well to harbour such a thought. It knows that keeping up the ballance in Germany, is of infinite importance to it: and that Prussia is the only power in it that can answer that its end in Germany. The game of France is undoubtedly the reduction of both, not the destruction of either. For this purpose it is that she cannot but be pleased to see the Germans cutting one another's throats, to which she graciously lends her hand, on either side, as either side requires her trimming the scales to that effect. Both Austria and Prussia are fully satisfied of this, and yet their private passions are so violent and so much preferred by them to the public good of Germany, and indeed of Europe, that both of them occasionally court and accept her baneful interposition.

What part had Britain then to play? What part? Once more, it is averred, a great, an honorable, and a wise one, a part, in short, of which the considerateness and reserve would have been pregnant with superior dignity, weight and advantage. The war pushed against France, *totis viribus*, and pushed upon purely a British footing unclogged with con-

nexions

nexions absolutely foreign for it, would soon have bid fair to have sickened her. It may be said that in such an event, she would have renounced her projects in Germany, and turned her whole force immediately against us. So much the better. Prussia would then have been relieved, and in the only manner that we, or he either, ought to have wished him to be relieved. For ourselves we had nothing to fear, or at least much less than France. Her ridiculous phantom of flat-bottomed-boats, had like other phantoms ceased to exist the instant it was denied, or vanished on the dawn of light. It was soon discovered that we had been the sport of a false alarm, and that we never had a real occasion for those Dutch troops, the asking of which, though the refusal of them was fore-known, paved the way for those troops being asked, where it was as well foreknown they would be graciously granted, on convenient terms of hire. In short, Britain began of itself to find out that deep secret to it, that France alone is not an over-match for it. The trade of that nation ruined, her navigation controuled in such manner that her naval squadrons can only get in and out by stealth, the channel

nel scoured, her colonies, at length, threatened with effectual attacks, not to mention how much more might probably have been done by a juster dispensation of our strength; all concur to prove that against France, at least, we are of ourselves sufficient, and stand in need of no ally, whom we are to pay for fighting his own battles, and for whose sake we must create so many more enemies, without the least prospect of where, when, or how *his* war with them will end.

In the mean time few who do justice to the depth of penetration, and to the solid way of thinking of his P— M—, can suppose him the bubble of all the popular acclamations and enthusiasm of admiration for him here. He has reason indeed to imagine they serve his own present point with us; but beyond that, he knows how to value them at no more than they are worth. He cannot but see with contempt Englishmen pluming themselves upon victories not won by Englishmen, and the public attention lacqueying all his motions, as if the fate of Britain was to turn upon them. He well knows, that if instead of being as he is fortuitously on our side, he had been, as he had rather wished, on

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that

that of France, the multitude here would have seen all his actions and procedure in a very different light, and have abused him as much beyond measure as it now extolls him. It would have been as compleatly blind to his virtues as it is at present to any defects that may be thought to tarnish the lustre of them, and from some, in the natural state of human imperfection, he can hardly be supposed exempt. Neither would this be any thing new to him. Whilst he was making a diversion in Bohemia, favorable to the French arms against the Queen of Hungary, at that time the idol of the public here ; what encomiums, what fulsome adulation did not that people lavish upon him ? Panegyrics, poems, pindarics in his praise, were poured out with profusion. *Ab le grand Roi ! ab l'invincible Hero !* was the cry of the French public. No sooner had he deserted the cause of France, but the torrent ran instantly the contrary way : he was at once displumed of all that applause : satirs, indecent libels, the rankest scandal took place of it : the *Pont-neuf* rang with the bitterest ballads against him : then it was *Quel Roi ! il n'a ni foi ni loi.*

Even

Even his courage was become problematical.—The mob is the mob every where.

There was probably too another co-operating cause to all that eagerness with which the public here embraced any successes of that monarch, and hailed them as those of the nation. A cause that may be now mentioned with the less repugnance, for that having ceased in a great measure, the reproach it conveyed ceases with it; and that is the prodigious indolence which not long since seemed the epidemical disease of the times; with which all orders and conditions were infected, and which was but too much flattered, at seeing the work of the nation doing by others to its hand. Perhaps even this sight contributed at length to raise a spirit of emulation. If so, it cannot be ranked amongst the least obligations of this country to his P—— M——. May that spirit fall under a direction equal to its merit; nor be spent in waste and consumed upon crude, undigested, uneffectual operations, or unnational measures!

*Parva sunt foris arma, nisi est consilium
domi.* TULL.

But if mistaken selfishness, or impetuous ignorance, were excluded all judgment on a prince intrinsically too estimable to be much honored by their estimate ; cooler common-sense would not perhaps represent in vain, that nothing so transitory as the greatness of his personal character ought to influence that political conduct of ours, which should have more permanent objects, and that the glare of his successes ought not to dazzle us to the point of not seeing that they are misleading him, or to the point of our being misled by them ourselves. As things are, he is one of these very rare princes that reflect more honor to a crown than they receive from it. But even himself would probably now subscribe to the truth of what is here advanced, that, so far as conjecture can approach to probability, he would have still been much greater, and much more secure in that greatness, if with those excellent troops of which he was at the head, he had waited events tranquilly in his own dominions ; if untempted by the conveniency Saxony offered him of laying her under contribution to the war he was meditating, he had abstained
from

from giving his enemies the advantage of having those laws of the empire on their side, which it is either such profound ignorance or so false reasoning to suppose only a vain name.

He has been compared to Cesar. The comparison is just in many points ; but well examined has more in it of an invidious admonition, than of the delicacy of true praise. Cesar found the constitution of his country shaken by civil dissensions. The laws of it were like a fair tree, by storms bent towards the earth. Instead of applying his admirable parts to the setting it upright, and making it flourish again, he felled it, and by felling it, deprived himself of that shelter, under the shade of which his country, himself, and family, might have long sat happy. Their contrary fate, who does not know ? or who can call his success a desirable one ?

In the mean time, how truly deplorable is the dilemma to which so many of the princes of Germany are reduced ! If when summoned in form by the laws of the empire, they refuse to send their contingent towards forming an army of execution, they incur a
severe

severe penalty. If they furnish that contingent, his Prussian Majesty sends them a cavalier message, that he shall treat them as Hanover and Hesse had been, as if their case, as to him, was not essentially different.

But if this continental connexion carries with it that great merit for which its advocates contend, at least they must allow no small share of it to Hanover, without which, it is not very probable, that Great Britain would have so eagerly sued for an alliance to a power, of which not many years ago it scarce knew the name, till the Germanism of our politics had made it so familiar to us.

This naturally leads to a discussion of the present state with respect to Britain, of that electorate now so closely united to it, in virtue of the identity of their sovereign.

There have been, and perhaps still are, two opinions concerning it, both opposite, and both false, in their different extrem.

The one excluded all consideration of Hanover; all sufferance of its entering into our councils for any thing, or for scarce more than if, as to us, it had disappeared from the face of the earth. It was, in short,

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to be treated as a dominion, that was purely a province of Germany, absolutely foreign to Britain, and with which all political connexion was industriously to be avoided. But it must be confessed that much the greater number of those who affected this opinion, affected it from party-views, from the captiousness of disaffection, or as a text for factious declamation, rather than from the suggestions of sound policy, or clear-spirited patriotism. This being penetrated by the public, weakened to it the influence of a doctrine, that if somewhat moderated, for its tendency to the good of both dominions, not the Hanoverians themselves could have too strenuously urged.

The other opinion, and the most ruinous one, since it assigned to Hanover the part that belonged more properly to Britain, was the opinion that unhappily prevailed in practice, sometimes so insensibly, that even those with whom it did prevail, did not perhaps so much as know it. To this opinion however, but for the obviously preposterous policy of it, even the name of virtue might be granted in a native of that electorate. But what name shall be given to it in a Briton ?

ton? What name can be given to those personages here, who regardless of their own dignity, to say nothing of that of the nation, regardless of their own welfare so intimately connected with that of their country, submitted to make their court by adopting and co-operating to the systems built on so false a foundation? Who did not, in short, feel that power held by such a tenure was beneath acceptance? To say that they did not foresee the consequences such or nearly such as they have come out, would do too little honor to their reach of penetration not to be considered rather as an affront than as an apology.

After all, what could be a clearer rule of judgment than the knowledge of the true state of those foreign dominions? They had been lately indeed raised to the dignity of an electorate, but had been long so inconsiderable, that till within these few years history had hardly deigned to take charge of the name of them. Nor had they so much weight as to claim the least share in the system of Europe, but remained involved and undistinguished amongst the other little states of the empire.

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The epoch of their first emerging into importance enough to have any thing of a name amongst nations, was the accession of their sovereign to the throne of Great Britain, especially after that electorate's pecuniary conquest of Bremen and Verden. These provinces were part of the spoils of Charles the twelfth of Sweden, purchased by the elector of Hanover, as it has been invidiously and perhaps falsely said with British money. However that may be, the Swedes, whose weakness, just after that period, was such that they could not hope to recover them by force of arms, and whose necessities were so urgent, that they could not refuse a sum of money for their ratification of the sale by Denmark of them, though transacted at a time that we were in profound peace with Sweden, could never heartily digest this advantage taken of their distresses, nor look on that bargain as thoroughly valid in equity. Thence the alienation of that court to Britain, for a reason so foreign to Britain, which has thrown the Swedes so much into the arms of France. And here be it digressively remarked, that France is now seen with its usual versatility

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wherever its interest is concerned, affecting to stand by even the cause of liberty in Sweden, and to approve of the sacrifice made to it with a truly British spirit of some of the noblest blood on a scaffold, for a conspiracy to rob that nation of its freedom, and to restore that arbitrary power by which it had so recently been brought to the brink of ruin.

But to return to the subject: Hanover thus aggrandized by the accession of those two provinces, and pampered with all the cherishment of a fond father to his darling child, lost its mediocrity, but its safety with-all. Besides that its co-estates in Germany saw, with an eye of envy, both its growing greatness, and the preference constantly given to it, as well as to those provinces in more immediate relation with it, in all those bargains for which the princes there trading in the blood of their unhappy subjects, are so ravenous; those powers occasionally, in enmity to Great Britain, who knew how much its insular situation rendered it inaccessible to them, knew they could not wound his Britannic Majesty in a more tender part than his electoral dominions. That affectation

tion of dragging them for ever tacitly or expressly into negotiations, transactions and treaties, where they had as little to do as Lilliput or Blefuscu, had not also a little contributed to place that vulnerable part in too conspicuous a light for it to be missed. Of this the French have lately taken the unfair advantage. But whatever Hanover may have suffered from an invasion, it is granted, might never have taken place but for its connexion with this nation; not to that connexion but to the abuse of it, should that electorate impute its misfortunes. And who was the cause of that abuse? most certainly not this nation. The sound part of it constantly protested against it. It must be sought for then in that overfondness for it, so highly disgustful and so pernicious to this country, in that humor of which the electoral counsellors were either not clear-sighted, or not sincere enough to remonstrate effectually the consequences, and to which, with yet greater guilt and folly, there were too often found personages here not ashamed to sacrifice their duty to their country and to their king: and instead of

opposing, to flatter it by the most disloyal of services.

In all this however, Britain itself was perfectly innocent, and even injured by it ; yet she loves her sovereign too well not only to lament on his account her own sufferings by so false a policy, since they must proportionably affect that interest and dignity of his so inseparable from her own ; but even the sufferings of that electorate, which is so dear to him. She would see with pleasure its wrongs revenged, but revenged in the most effectual manner, by her operations against the common enemy, entirely on a British plan, without any such entanglement with the continent as can only weaken them. So far from thinking that Hanover deserves no consideration from us, justice, loyalty, and even the honor of the nation require, that a reparation of the damages it has sustained on our account should be indispensably made one of the conditions of a future treaty of peace. Any other way of considering that electorate, would only unprofitably to it, rob, at every turn, this nation of the inestimable advantage

tage of its insular situation. In this view it was that our ancestors reputed the loss of Normandy to this crown, a clear gain to the nation: and in this sense it is, that every continental accession of dominion in Europe to this country, already sufficient to itself, would be rather a weakening than an advantage to it. It is this opinion, of the justice and good policy of which all Europe is satisfied, that does or ought to invite its thorough confidence in a nation from which all spirit of conquest is so naturally excluded. Can the French say as much?

An admission then, especially in such an over-dose of so heterogeneous a mixture, as that of the interest of a province of a foreign state, into the British system of politics, could only spoil both. It could only produce, what it has done, essential faults and measures destructive to both. This was so glaring, that our natural enemies even affected to pity us whilst they took the advantage of it. Our natural friends grew shy, and distrustfull of us; and, in truth, how could they but desert us, when they saw us manifestly deserting ourselves, or at least subordinating our measures to interests not our own? Nor need we look out for
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another cause, why we saw ourselves, without proper friends and allies, at our greatest need of them. For certainly the disclaiming of improper continental connections, does not imply any thing so absurd or so impolitic as an undistinguishing condemnation of all, or of such as are not liable to superior objections. It rather means the contrary; or at least no more than that the utmost discernment and reserve should be observed in contracting any. A circumspection of which England was so happy as to have one admirable Queen that left us the standard and example.

Unhappily there are times when reason and even experience put in their pleas in vain; when the grossest errors are thought to be best defended and repaired, by an intrepid perseverance in them; when, in short, those who give motion to things, determinately and bravely prefer momentary points of private interest, of power, and even of a petty partial humor, to the permanent system of national welfare.

How far this is, or is not the case with respect to Hanover at present, is submitted to whoever, on examining certain facts impossible, from their notoriety, to be misre-
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presented to him, may think his reason put to a nobler use in getting rid of a prejudice than in defending it, right or wrong ; or shall dare to treat a false opinion, like a false friend, discard it the instant he discovers it.

D'Etrees, the French general, having been sacrificed to a court-cabal, had quitted his command, and delivered up his army to his successor Richelieu. The military reputation of this man had been but very little raised by the surrender of Minorca to him, amongst the French especially, to whom the defence of that place had not appeared in quite so high a light as the title and the ribbon conferred on the person who lost it, attested here. The current opinion of his being less the officer than the courtier, he verified by carrying into his command all the rapaciousness of his court, of which the edge was yet the keener for the instigation of necessity to repair the ruins of his private fortune. At once to make himself popular with the soldiers, and to cover his own avidity for pillage by indulging theirs, he set the door open to the utmost licentiousness. By this means, he broke that admirable discipline under which D'Etrees
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had left him the army, and which is ever the greatest strength of one. This soon made him detested by the Hanoverians, powerless over the soldiers, and contemptible to both. It was the conduct of this bashaw of the Sultan of the West that paved the way for the revolution that followed, by that army of observation's taking up arms again, which the convention of neutrality at Closter-seven had made it lay down. But it was not till just after that rout of school-boys at Rossbach, when the pitifull run-away figure the French made, might have rendered them almost suspected of a collusive game with Prussia, that this spirit of the Hanoverians and Hessians declared itself.

Yet however infamously or grossly the French might have been originally the violators of that convention, certain it is that their defeat at Rossbach being the epoch of the Hanoverians, &c. breaking out into action, was not favorable to the opinion it were to be wished that Europe should entertain of the justice of this step. The French, at least, made a handle of the share they attributed to Britain in it, to make every

every court in it resound with complaints of the perfidiousness of this breach, and with insinuations that nothing was sacred to this nation that should stand in competition with a point of interest. This was one more consequence of our interfering with Hanoverian councils.

Many indeed here thought this resumption of arms a master-stroke of policy in whoever were the authors of it. If they were Englishmen, it is to be supposed they were thoroughly satisfied of the fairness of that procedure, without which they could have so little right to be vain of their share in it, since nothing on earth can be more certain than the ruin of that nation which should prefer its interest to its honor. Allowing then the justice of this measure to be out of the question, it still admits of a doubt, whether there even existed that interest to which that honor was so falsely said to have been sacrificed; whether any thing could be more indifferent to Britain than this breach of the convention; whether, in short, the fairest of occasions was not missed of her untwisting with a country, the connection with which had never but cost her more than it was worth.

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The army of observation might, with some shew of plausibility, be in the pay of Britain to defend a state attacked purely on her account, and in consequence of that entanglement to which she is so fatally obnoxious from their unity of subjection to the same sovereign. But when that convention was made, which it will be confessed by all parties was better never to have been made, or never to have been broken, on which ever side it was broken, it was notoriously made without the approbation of the British government. At least the regency of Hanover took that step entirely upon itself; and since it had so, the consequences were all its own. Britain had no farther to do with it; and notwithstanding all the mighty merit pleaded of engaging those troops to resume their arms, and accept the sweets of British pay; the advantages redounding purely to Britain from that measure, are not perhaps so prodigious as they have been founded or believed.

This point the more requires examination, for that nothing is more common, than for little superficial statesmen to be caught by the bait of a present seeming advantage ;
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their eagerness to seize which blinds them to the insidiousness of it. In their hurry to enjoy a false reputation of vigilance and activity, they rush headlong into the tempting error, and it is much if their power and popularity do not make it the error, as well as the misfortune of the nation.

Facts will best explain how far this observation is applicable or not in the present case.

Whilst the convention remained yet in force, if the Hanoverians, &c. instead of being excited by us, as it is to be hoped they were not, to break it, had of themselves consulted our ministers on what they had to do; might not an answer have been given them with great justice and propriety to the following effect? "That since they had made the convention without our participation, though even in our pay, they might just keep it or break it, as they pleased: that whatever they did was, and ought to be, perfectly indifferent to this nation." If it should be replied, that in fact it was not indifferent, but that the breach of the convention was useful to us. So much the worse. The honor of

the nation, so superior to every other consideration, must proportionably incur suspicion. Europe might then impute the breach not to its justice, but to the advantage of it to us; and that advantage, alas! how questionable?

Just at the time the convention was on the point of being broke, the French were, it is true, in a condition to invite that breach. Nature, which seems to have set those bounds to the ambition of the French, which their restlessness of spirit has refused them, had upon them her usual effect, whenever they attempt enterprizes at any remote distance from their frontiers. There they have often had the climate to conquer, when they had conquered every thing else. Italy and Germany, as all history attests, are in possession of the title of French burying-grounds. Hanover has, on this occasion, proved no exception to this general rule. Diseases had already thinned their army in Hanover, more than the sword had done before, or since its expulsion. The usual consequences too of licentiousness and indiscipline had rendered ineffective those soldiers that remained. The Hanoverian sub-
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jects, who had begun by dreading them, were from a nearer inspection and familiarity with these disorderly rag-a-muffin guests, grown to despise them. This rising spirit, they naturally communicated to those of their countrymen, who had only grounded their arms, but were still masters of them, and who were too brave to continue any longer tame spectators of the sufferings and groans of their country. Had the French even not broke the convention, such a toleration could not well be expected from men of courage. The common soldiers especially, carried away by their feelings for their families and friends, could not but be in a mood to break alike through the restraint of treaties or of officers. The fault then, if any, was Richelieu's, who ought either to have held a better conduct, or not have left them their arms in their hands.

Thus the Hanoverians scarcely needed the super-inducement of British pay to take the advantage of their enemy's actual condition, and to drive him out of the heart of their own country. But as to Britain, where was the advantage, unless the pleasure

sure of seeing Hanover get rid of such irksome inmates? otherwise the best office that could possibly be done that army was to hasten its retreat, and that retreat particularly to its own country. For no army, could it have joined, but it must have weakened, or even endangered it, by the double contagion of its maladies and licentiousness. To recruit, to recover it, to restore its discipline, it was absolutely necessary for it to fall back upon the French frontiers. Ask the French then of that army, they will tell you they would not have staid in Hanover, had they been paid as much for staying there, as the Hanoverians were paid for driving them out: and in this they may for once be believed, because it could not be otherwise. They had exhausted all those parts, of themselves not the most fruitful, to a point that they could no longer furnish subsistence to them, or even to the poor plundered inhabitants, who were reduced to streights scarce short of famine. As to the harassment they met with in their retreat, it was no more than they could well lay their account with from a prince so gallant, and so active as the prince Ferdinand

dinand at the head of troops actuated by all the incentives of revenge, of honor, and of justice to the British nation, for the pay they received from it. In their way home, however, they took care to drop a strong garrison into Wesel, that place so dangerously flighted by Prussia. But in all this, what was there done, that could affect us? The retreat of the French was evidently matter of course; the ridding Hanover of them, might be a merit to Hanover; the quickening their march, and seeing them safe home, was not of much disservice to the French; but in what could Britain benefit by the return of those forces so much nearer home, where their re-collecting their strength must be so much more convenient than at that distance, that they were rotting and mouldering away of themselves, in a manner to spare the sword the trouble of exterminating them?

The diversion, however, caused to the French by this army of Hanoverians, Hessians, &c. has doubtless some weight; but whether that weight over-ballances the expence to Britain of them, and whether that expence might not be appropriated to more direct,

direct, more necessary, and more effectual plans of operation, is well worth a fair and impartial consideration. Even the tenderness due to the Hanoverians, requires a discussion, whether their present subserviency to the Prussian and British measures, can answer any valuable end to themselves; especially since their country is out of all condition to invite the renewal of an invasion; from which, if even the fear of it existed, it would be perhaps better defended by our doing, with more honor to ourselves, something to divert and disable the French, than by any opposition in the very part where they ought to wish an opposition to be made, since it must be made with the least effect, and at the greatest cost to us.

The authority of the greatest generals, supported withal by common sense and experience, invincibly attests, that any attack on the French at home, or on their frontiers, cannot but be fruitless, without such a paramount force as may at once face all the demands of war for battles and for sieges. Any force inferior to that point of strength, is only a force thrown away, without

out any rational prospect of success. It is the very game the French desire, who can then wage the war at all advantages. Always the bravest on their own dunghill; they can fight, or let it alone, just as they please, or as they spy the favorable moment. The supplies for their forces are as easy, as they are difficult for their enemy. In case of a defeat, they have not only re-inforcements ready at hand, but a secure retreat under the number of fortified places with which their frontiers are bristled. In short, for baffling, for tiring out, for destroying an enemy, they desire no better than to have him come home to them, and spare them the fatigue, the expence, and the risk of seeking him, at a distance from their frontiers, when they rarely but make the worst of figures.

One would imagine that the retrospect of the enterprizes made of late years, on those frontiers might sufficiently establish the improbability of making any considerable impression on the French territories. Even two or three battles won by the Hanoverians, &c. could but weaken themselves, and bring them no nearer any point worth their hav-

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ing in view, whilst their own loss, however less than that of the French, must hurt themselves more, and be more irreparable. The sum of things would, at the same time, be little or nothing affected by it.

There is no-one can deny that the advantage gained by the gallant Prince Ferdinand, at the affair of Crevelt, was great enough to deserve the proclamation of it by the mouths of the Tower-guns, and by a solemn thanksgiving. Otherwise it would have been mocking both God and man, and that palpably to no purpose, but to make the sending of troops from here to Germany go down the more glib, with soldiers and people, under all the smoke and flash of that recent success. Be it then granted that it really was as great as so great a celebration requires it to be thought, and that no statesman could descend to so poor a state-trick, as the exaggeration of it would have been. But even our most authentic gazette gives permission for not thinking that action any ways a decisive one. This allowed, the consequence proceeds unshaken, at least, by that instance, in favor of the established maxim of declining war with the French,

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on their own frontiers, unless with such a force as amounts to much more than what is already employed there, or can be sent from hence to join it, and which could therefore be only unnecessarily thrown away.

Such at least was the well-known sense of the great Duke of Marlborough, than whom no man, since the days of Henry the fifth, had done more than himself to level the power of France in the dust. Happy would it have been for this nation and for Europe, if a little, dirty, jealous, power-hunting Court-cabal had not snatched the sword out of his hands just as he was on the point of giving that nation the finishing blow. France was then exhausted by a long war, and an humble suppliant for a peace that ought never to have been granted her but on the original terms of the grand alliance; and yet the Duke did not conceive it practicable to overwhelm her without the whole force of it. He was much too great a man to give into gasconades, or into crude visionary projects, and yet less capable of despising an enemy, or of dishonoring himself and his nation, by acting a subaltern part under the greatest power in Europe. And
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here let an Englishman stop but for an instant, and compare the state of things as they *then* were, to what *they now are*. Our nation was then plainly at the head of the greatest powers in Europe combined against the ambition of France : her cause was no less than the liberties of mankind : she was the life, the support of the whole confederacy, as it evidently appeared from that instant she, fatally for herself, and for the cause she had so nearly brought to the wished for issue, withdrew her aid and influence. At present, behold her renounced, or at least coolly regarded by all her ancient allies, and glad to throw her alliance at the head of a prince, never over-favorable to her, and actually under the ban of the Empire, to whom she thinks herself obliged humbly to sue for his gracious acceptance of her subsidies and troops, not without all the appearances of being content to act a subaltern part. This disposition of things was reserved for these honorable times. Nay, some here have so thoroughly forgot the dignity of their own nation, as to contend for its being no degradation for a British commander, not to be commander in chief, as if it was possible

possible to find one so lost to all sense of his own honor, or of that of the nation, as to stoop to sub-general it even to so renowned and to so great an officer as the gallant Prince Ferdinand. Many nations have indeed employed foreign generals : with the Venetians it is even a standing state-maxim to employ none but them. But for a nation so great, so powerful as ours, a nation that may dispute rank with the first in Europe, to pay such a deference to another as to suffer her generals to receive plans of operation or orders from any but their own immediate sovereign, would be, perhaps, without example. It is not therefore credible. Even the Prince who should avail himself of so wretched a complaisance, could not but, in the course of things, and with his excellent sense, repay it with the most cool and determinate contempt. It cannot then be but supposed that some expedient, some salvo has been found out for the adjustment of rank and precedence : but granting what it must be so grating to grant, that Britain no longer breeds generals capable of supporting the honor of her arms abroad, which she must therefore give into keeping to a
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foreign one, the question will but occur the stronger, whether there is any absolute necessity for thus showing her nakedness, or for sending any forces at all to the continent? It may still be asked, if it is so very eligible a measure, in forfeiture of the advantages of our insular situation, to transport our countrymen in so disgraceful a manner, and in so incompetent a number, to encounter the French, precisely where it is so convenient for the French to encounter them? where their preferable wish must be, that we should send and sacrifice as many more to them as should be just not sufficient to do any thing material for the honor or advantage of the nation. The most sensible alternative would perhaps be either to send a royal army fit to command success, or if that is neither convenient nor practicable, not to send a single troop of horse, even though the Hanoverians, &c. should be deficient in cavalry, and require ours to supply that deficiency, since, humanly speaking, it would only serve to shew, what has been already but too much shown, how wrong we can take our measures. Nor will it hardly be otherwise, till all our Germanism

nism is happily eradicated out of our politics, or at least suffered to retain no more share in them than it ought to have.

In the mean time what must all Europe think of our cheapness and conduct ? What must the Dutch especially ? And can we be surprized at their not being forward to connect with us ? Can they be supposed to have forgot the peace of Utrecht ? or have our politics been so admirable since as to tempt them to embark once more on so crazy a bottom as ours ? Is it any wonder that the French party should prevail there, when it has so many popular topics of declamation against us ? The restoration imputed to us of the Stadholderate, so solemnly abjured by the Burgomasters, on whose authority it so sensibly intrenches ; the usage of their merchantmen by our privateers, who, if not encouraged, are perhaps not enough controuled ; and above all that doubtless false charge against this Government of stirring up a sedition in their dreadfull mob against the magistrates, are points in which the French have all the scope they could wish to display their insidious rhetoric and disrespect to truth. The people there are but too apt to listen to any sug-

suggestions against a nation that must have long appeared to them in so contemptible, so ridiculous a light. If we would have them or others do justice to us, we should begin by doing justice ourselves.

But how little has that spirit in general prevailed amongst us ! How cruel an injustice have Britons done to themselves in triumphing when they had so little occasion ! For, after all, what has been done, or great or material by them since the commencement of the war ? A few straggling French men of war, the captures of squadrons, or what is near the same thing, in the fight of squadrons : the success in Bengall, to which we must wait for its epithet of favorable or unfavorable, according to the turn it may take in that unsettled country ; the taking a small fort in Africa ; the damage done to the French trade by our cruizers ; the burning of the ships before St. Maloes ; are all objects, which however detrimental to our enemy, a true Briton would disdain to lay a stress on, much more to exaggerate, since they are all, from the nature of them, infinitely beneath the just pretensions of this nation to
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valor and strength. At least, such sentiments can be no offence to the nation.

To say the truth, the loss of Minorca alone is perhaps a more than counterbalance to all our gains hitherto : to say nothing of Braddock's defeat, or of the scurvy figure we have made in America, notwithstanding our so incomparable a superiority of forces there to those of the French. May the taking of Cape-Briton, which is hardly to be missed, if the attack is, as it is not to be doubted but that it is, in good hands, give us a real occasion for saying *something* has been done ! May the people of this nation have that opportunity of congratulating themselves on the success of a measure that is all their own ! and may it never again become a sacrifice to continental respects !

But in pleading for justice to ourselves, let not that owing to our enemies be forgot, even for our own sakes ! Nothing, in fact, can be more pernicious to our interest, than the taking false measures of the state of France ; and nothing has been oftener the case. To compleat all the ridicule and nonsense of the times, it was, till lately,

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wanting that the very same personages, who not long since, from the usual effect of fear to magnify objects, had exaggerated the power of France beyond all measure of truth, and represented her as a tremendous over-match for Britain, should on the flattering gleam to us of a few events unfavorable to France, and those more owing to herself than to Britain, all of a sudden change their note, and depreciate the force of France with as little reason as they had before exalted it.

The truth is, that at her highest, whilst we preserve our ^{superiority}, keep a competent army, and especially an effectual militia, Britain, if she but knows her own strength, and is happy enough to have it ably directed and administered, has less to dread from France, than France has from her. Much has been said of her populousness, and of the ease with which France can raise numerous armies. But this was ever much exaggerated, and is at this time entirely false. She is greatly deficient in able men for the military service. The generalities on whom the levies are imposed, have long complained of their incapacity to furnish

furnish them. In this, her weakness is avowed, but whilst just notions are formed of that weakness, nothing can be more ridiculous, nor even more dangerous, than to under-rate her actual strength. In the first place, if the very nature of her arbitrary government, so unfavorable to public credit; if the late checks she has met with in Germany; if her trade overwhelmed by our captures, have created her difficulties in raising money, she has still great resources, and is not at least crouching under a burthen of near a hundred millions of debt: a burthen which though it sits so light and easy on our shoulders, would probably sink her. That interruption to her trade too is not so deadly a blow as it would have been, had she not been so wise too leave herself nothing but her commerce to trust to, and to let her military spirit be entirely sacrificed to a mercantile one. Her government saw the great advantage of bringing trade into the kingdom, and steddily pursued it; but not to such a pernicious excess as to throw the whole kingdom into trade. So far from affecting or founding emphatically the title of a trading nation,

she appears to despise it as much as she would that of a nation without trade. Money has all the weight with her that it ought to have, but is not preferred to every thing that is great, noble, and sacred. It is not made the common measure of every thing, and even of those things with which it never can but ruinously and infamously be suffered to mix ; such as honor, personal merit, talents, patriotism. In short, that nation is not yet degenerated into a vile collection of mercenaries, jobbers, and idlers, as incapable of honoring as of defending their country. Her military spirit still preserved will probably preserve her. Her politics, dangerous as they are to the liberties of Europe, are not only masked under that art of fair appearances, in which she excels, but the spirit of them steddily proceeds even where the blunders and follies of her court sometimes counter-act, and defeat its suggestions. Even in that land of slaves they have found a better way of manning their navy, than the infamous manner of pressing, in practice upon free-born men here : men who must consequently carry on board with them all that disgust to the service, all that refractoriness natural
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for them to feel, on being obliged to defend the liberties of those who have robbed them of their own, and to fight for a country it would be but a virtue in them to look on no longer as their country, since as to them, it is not a free one : whilst it must gall them but the more to find themselves the only slaves in it ; they who from their superior usefulness so little deserve such treatment. Of that, to us, invaluable island of Minorca, France is already in possession. She has two cautionary places in the Austrian Netherlands, of which she will hardly dis- seize herself without an ample consideration. With all our vigilance and superiority at sea, she has found means to smuggle supplies into Canada and Cape-Breton, it is to be hoped, much in vain. She has not neglected even so remote, but so infinitely important a concern as that of the East-Indies, where she has sent Lally (said to be dead) with three thousand choice men, not the sweepings of streets and jails, with ships in proportion, before that force sent from hence could well arrive in time to defeat their effect. Is the force too we have opposed to them there sufficient ? She is repairing,

repairing, with her usual activity, her losses in Germany, and may perhaps not imitate us in disdaining to be the wiser for the blunders she has committed there, and of which we have lost the advantage by the part which we have taken. These truths may be ill received, or even rejected by those who would have every thing to be false, that is not true to their liking. But the seeing them fairly stated, cannot but be acceptable to all, who prefer the charm and safety of truth to the dangerous illusions of error, especially where the taking just measures against a mortal enemy depends on the undeception. And surely nothing ought to be more execrable to a Briton, than the lulling him to sleep with flattering or soothing impositions ; not only as they imply a mean opinion of his understanding, and as they affect his welfare so intimately connected with that of the nation, but as they tend to make even himself so unnaturally the instrument of the ruin of both. For the opinion of no Briton is absolutely indifferent to the conduct of things, since every Briton, by the happy constitution of his country, enjoys, by himself or his repre-

representatives, some share in the public authority ; to the support of which he must pay with so much the more chearfulness, if he has reason to be satisfied with its administration. To say the truth too, the bulk of the people is always well-intentioned, as having none of the by-views, and pitifully false distinct interests, that influence the men of power, to drive it off its natural byas to self-preservation, and to the maintenance of the national honor, in which the meanest individual in the nation so justly claims a share. In short, it is rarely wrong, but when it is artfully mis-guided, or mis-informed : and even then it still retains a smothered spark of justice and common-sense, that is sure to break out again, and does not suffer it long to continue under the illusion.

But of all the opinions that have prevailed in practice concerning France, not one perhaps more obviously admits, at least, of a doubt of its justness, or more deserves examination, than that on which the late expeditions against her have been founded.

Of the one against Rochfort, it would be vain and superfluous to say any thing here. Those who still admire the plan of
it,

it, will hardly change their minds for any thing that can be said of it now, which could only be repetition. Those who heartily despised it, can as little be liable to alter their opinion, especially with so much reason to be confirmed in it, by the return of the forces on the last expedition, after doing no more than what forms so admirable an apology for the commanders on the first one. For as to the burning of the vessels before St. Maloe, though all the merit should be granted to that exploit, that it can justly claim ; though it must have done a considerable, and not easily reparable damage to the enemy ; though it was cutting the very sinews of their power to annoy our trade ; tho' to observe it was a pure accident that those vessels were destroyed, which was owing to the over-precaution of the French ; and that being mostly private property, the consequence, was throwing a number of hands into the French navy, should be pronounced a merely invidious detraction ; still it may be said, and said rather as a just compliment, than injuriously, to the first lord of the Admiralty, and to one of the greatest military *names* in Britain, that such

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an operation, not being of an over-heroic or indeed very military nature, could not, alone, do either the nation or them any honor proportionable to the expectation raised by their being employed in it, especially in those who did not know how little it was possible for them to do.

But there has been one objection made against this kind of expeditions, which certainly deserves for its falsity to be exploded, even by those who do not admire them. For truth is above every thing. That objection is the expence. But those who make fair estimates of things, must allow that of all the expences incurred in the pursuit of the war; this is not the least plausible one, since the whole of it may be said to be kept in the nation, where it becomes a general benefit, diffuses life and spirit through the land, encourages a number of valuable trades; and ultimately in a great measure re-circulates, in form of taxes, into the treasury from whence it issued. At least, how preferable is this disposal of the public money, to its being, absolutely for not one valuable or sensible purpose ingulphed in a country "from whose bourn no travelling
" guinea ever returns !

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No !

No! the true objection to these expeditions, is much superior and quite of another nature. It is their utter insignificance, and the ridicule that always attends the employing of means, or disproportioned, or foreign to the ends apparently proposed.

If the point of view was making a diversion in force of our dear friends and allies in Germany, one body of whom, perhaps, it would be still better to wish well re-passed the Rhine again ; there could not be a more unjudicious one. Though some here might be ignorant of the French coast ; or be carried away by the impetuosity of that vulgar spirit of persistence in measures, of which themselves were the fond fathers, it cannot be supposed that the French themselves did not know all that they had to fear from all the force they knew we had to employ on that mission. They could not but know, that penetrating into the interior of the kingdom, was no part of our plan, and that as to the sea-coast, which could alone be the object of our operations, those fortified places of theirs worth attacking, were all proof against what we are pleased to call here a vigorous impression,

pression ; that their harbours are even from their badness inaccessible to our naval force, and that as to our land-one, it could be but too inconsiderable to attempt sieges. What then was there in such an armament, that could alarm or deter them from sending a single file of musqueteers less to Germany, than they originally intended ? Even their militia might be sufficient to guard their coast, as much as it was necessary to be guarded against those, whose object could not be an invasion, or but at most, a descent, the transient damage of which could not have the least effect on the more permanent and greater points of their political system. When our troops were actually landed, and the burning of the ships at St. Maloes, could not but be in view ; the duke d'Aiguillon wrote to court, that it might be perfectly easy on that account, for he would answer for it they would soon re-imbark again. They did so, very happy, not only in the enemy not treading on their heels, but in that the generals, who had not let the troops have above two or three days provisions with them, had not trusted in vain to the weather, which had it proved too

boisterous, or contrary for boats to have been sent ashore, they must have eaten one another, or surrendered at discretion, rather as the prisoners of famine, than of the sword. " But what then? must not some risks be run?" says one with a fighting face. Even that little place, Cherbourg was afterwards attempted by them. In short, whatever terrors some were so weak or so mis-informed here, as to attribute to the French, on the occasion of these armaments, nothing is more certain, than that they knew the utmost they could do, too well not even to take the liberty of laughing at them. And after all what could our forces do, or be expected to do? Every one knew before, that withal the fortifications, along one of the foulest coasts in the world, there are still many spots on it, where our troops may easily land, if landing was all. But when landed, what then? They may frighten a few peasants along the sea-side, from their brown bread and onions, or destroy their fallad, and the hopes of their soup-maigre. But when they have done that, what remains for them, but on the first alarm of the national forces coming down,

down, to scamper back on board a ship again: a circumstance fitter to teach our foldiers the art of running away, than the art of war. As to any harraffment the alarm of an impending defcent may caufe along the coaft, the French have rather to thank us for it. They are wife enough to have a militia on foot, and it is very kind in us, at our own expence to keep the forces of it in breath, to find them them in exercife, to inure them in fome meafure to fatigue. They will not make the worfe foldiers for recruiting their armies. But after all, is not this literally, incurring the ridicule of what M. de Mirabeau, not without reafon and humor calls “ pretending “ to frighten mankind by packing up men “ in wooden boxes and fending them to spit “ on an enemy’s fhore?”

But if this plan of defcents is fo excellent as its admirers are fo thoroughly welcome to pronounce it, it muft be owned withal, that the beauty and advantages of them, efaped thofe poltroons, your Edwards and your Henry’s. They were afraid to venture Englifhmen over to France, but in fuch a body as might ftand, and not
run

run away at the approach of the enemy, whose superiority of numbers in those rude times, they never stood to calculate very nicely. They were not content with having the flower of the nobility give grace and animation to the enterprise, but went over in person, and shared the danger. In short, their object was an effectual invasion, not a scampering scheme of descents that could answer no one purpose of honor or advantage. Yet France was then an open country to what it now is. Most of their fortified places were rather refuges against the oppression of their own kings, than intended to repel a foreign enemy. Consequently the less force might have served to penetrate more safely into the interior of the country, or to make a vigorous impression. So much greater men are we than our ancestors, in spite of all that has been said of our degeneracy.

But if France well-considered offers, at least, to this nation in its present circumstances, no hold, no promising overture of attack, either on her inland frontiers, or on her sea-coast; the following question, may possibly occur to well-meaning people.

“ What!

“ What! would you then have nothing
 “ done against France? Would you return
 “ to the former scandalous times of sloth
 “ and inaction, when our navy seemed
 “ maintained more for parade than for use;
 “ when our land-forces were rather a ridiculous
 “ burthen to the nation, than of any
 “ service to it, either in point of defence
 “ or offence? When the post of a military
 “ officer, was big with no more danger or
 “ fatigue, than that of a prebendary lounging
 “ in his stall? When the whole nation,
 “ in short, appeared to have lost that martial
 “ spirit for which it once out-vied all Europe;
 “ and when even fordid interest itself,
 “ with all its keenness, seemed to have lost
 “ sight of that maxim so essential to it,
 “ that neither trade nor wealth are valuable,
 “ but in proportion to the means and
 “ spirit of defending them?”

To those questions, the answer is however not very difficult, nor can be thought a very irrational one. The objection to improper attacks, does not most certainly exclude the recourse to proper ones. On the contrary, it implies the recommendation of them. In single combat no one chooses to aim

aim at those parts of his enemy's body, that are defended by proof-armour: he rather feels out for the weak or unguarded places, where his sword may best enter and wound to most effect. The same rule holds exactly between nation and nation, when once they enter the lists of war. The distressing of the trade and navigation of France, is a blow that cannot be too closely followed. It might of itself almost soon make her sick of the contest. But there are so many points besides, where she lies open to wounds, that it must be inexcusable to consume that strength which might be so effectually employed in inflicting them on her, upon others, not only impossible, but ridiculous.

Both the Indies, America, and even some of her Islands in Europe, Minorca yet unretaken, afford so large a field for action, that, so far from sloth or indolence, being necessarily the alternative, on dropping the wind-mill schemes of descents, or inland attacks, there remain draughts upon the nation for funds and men, for solid and essential enterprizes, to the full as great as it can well answer. No, not even the millions sunk upon

upon foreign connexions would be more than a sufficient supplement to our own exigencies for those purposes on which they could hardly be expended to less effect, than on the continent, as the actual state of things there so clearly attests. Our troops would then act with the more spirit from their being assured of the quarrel being purely that of their own country, and not a mere diversion, and that diversion an unavailing one, in favor of another. The superiority of our navy, palpably enables us to transport our land-forces to any part of the world, in which the French may be opposed to advantage. A competent number of regulars, left at home, when seconded as they soon might be by an effective, general, and constitutional militia may, whilst the rest would be usefully employed abroad, might smile defiance at the power of France to hurt us by any invasion, even should our fleets by some of those accidents, against which all human providence is so defective and unavailing, not be at hand to bar them the way. At least, a considerable part of our army might well be spared on distant service. It might then, without a gasconade, be said, that the

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existence of the French in Canada, must take an end as soon as it should be vigorously undertaken. The cutting off the supplies to St. Domingo, to Martinico, and to their other islands, from their mother-country, could not but have the effect on them, that a strong ligature has on any member of the body, causing it to wither from the intercepted circulation. At least, it would greatly facilitate any attempt of ours upon the most convenient of them for us to attempt. Would it not too be a great and shameful reproach to the nation, if, from its remissness, or miscalculate of time, or of the enemy's force, the French should in the East-indies have obtained such an actual superiority as must infallibly, in that case, give a deep, and perhaps incurable wound to the honor of our flag in those parts, as well as to our national interests ? How can it sound to Europe and posterity that in the face of so much greater a maritime strength than theirs, they should unmolested, or unopposed in time, provide for the transportation of their troops by sea to parts so remote ; and thus multiply, as it were, their naval forces, by their superior art of employing them ? In short, can it be said, with the least shadow of

of foundation, that there is not enough for Britain to do, not to be obliged, for want of occupation, to relapse into that state of supineness and inactivity which is so justly exploded, and to which however all the bluster and parade of an absurd and insignificant activity are hardly preferable ? What great difference does it make to the interest or the honor of the nation, whether the character of the Fribble or the Flash predominates in her Councils ? The latter is, perhaps, the most dangerous and assuredly the most ridiculous of the two.

Indolence and luxury may for a while, and always dangerously, soften and enervate those who are plunged in them. The greatest conquerors, the most martial spirits, have occasionally felt their baneful influence ; some of whom severely suffered for it. But there is such a thing as flouncing out of the slough ; the languor of them is not always proof against the calls of duty and the excitements of honor, where there is constitutional courage at bottom. Whereas it is the nature of disappointments from silly or inglorious enterprizes to strike a deadly damp to the heart, and to destroy in future the necessary confidence in the proposal of those

effectual ones, for which the lives so often wretchedly thrown away upon the others, might be so much better reserved. The officers employed in them are lost to the public who takes a prejudice to them, the more difficult to retract from that retraction, implying the confession of a mistake : and how few are there capable of that greatness, that even heroism of the mind, of which there cannot perhaps be a stronger proof than such a confession ! Thus the service of many a gallant man perishes to his country without his being in fault to it : or at at least his reputation is sunk by having been employed in the execution of measures, of which the obvious nature, as well as foresight of the event, left no room either to arraign fortune, or to excuse any fondness for the commission. But thus it cannot but be when men of flashy parts carry into power the weaknesses of their personal character, with influence enough to make them the national ones : when giddy with those successes of their nothingness, that only prove the littleness of the times, and without the least spirit of business, or but the common knowledge of it, they presume themselves equal to the manage

nage ment of every thing ; and cannot be long admitted to it, before they furnish the proof of their being infinitely beneath any confidence placed in them. In the mean time the enemies of a nation, where such such men should bear sway, would have the finest opportunity imaginable, for pushing their projects against it, sure of not being very materially counter-acted, by those their plans and execution, which must be rather matter of mirth than of terror to them. What would they have better to wish than long life to such personages, and their continuance in power to the end of it ?

That this however is not the present condition of this nation any one may easily satisfy himself from a candid review of the present smiling, and not in the least hollow aspect of things. He may, from his own knowledge and observation, feel that the great days of Britain are bidding fair to return under the auspicious influence of the present depositaries of the power, honor and welfare of the nation. The delightful harmony in the conduct of the state-machine, between characters imagined so jarring and so opposite, reminds one of the poetical golden age
when

when the wolf and the lamb drank promiscuously and peaceably together at the same clear unpolluted stream.

Corruption no longer rears her hated head, but hides it in the lap of Patriot-purity, that seeks, by lovingly fostering and suckling it, to change its foul complexion, and assimilate it to its own so fair one.

No longer are to be seen those eye-sores, the non-expletives of poets, who, if they robbed the nation of no more than the service of abler men in their room, would rob it of a great deal.

Merit, in arts and arms, after so long a neglect, begins, under all the encouragement so sensibly bestowed on it, and so discerningly distributed, to re flourish in the land, of which it can never but be the ornament and defence.

Our men of power, have, at length, found out that profound secret to their predecessors, that ideots and triflers could not be the best of servants to the public, nor even to themselves, though congenially chosen by them for being such. The present Great more wisely, and even in honor to their taste and discernment, call in men of abilities
to

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to their assistance, nay, sue to them for it, as is their duty and most certainly their interest.

We have now such able negotiators at all the courts of Europe, as are an ample overmatch to the French ones, and are, literally speaking, the representatives of the ministry.

The due, the much wanted care, is actually and evidently taking to form great men for the service of the nation, before the immediate need of them shall make it too late to think of forming them ; and to remove that wretched excuse for not employing proper subjects, there being no better to employ ; to take away from our enemies, in short, the encouragement they might have, from seeing councils without statesmen, and armies without generals.

The stale over-acted farce of resignations seems suspended, and will, it is to be hoped, never again come into play, in the shape of a recoil, only to come on the surer ; or to give the public no other satisfaction than the silly one of seeing rather other men than other measures take place ; or what is sillier yet, the same men, with the same measures, dancing the political hays ; sometimes

times eclipsing, sometimes eclipsed by one another.

The sense of the enlightened and impartial multitude begins to look with an equal eye on the veterans of corruption, and the pretenders to patriotism, on the worn out tool of a court, and the mushroom of a much abused popularity, ridiculously shot up to a cedar-height. It now judges of both, by the tenor and tendency of their conduct; and does not pass its opinion on them without first asking itself that most essential question, "*What have they actually done, or what are they capable of doing?*" To which the fair obvious answer would so often be "*No-thing, or worse than nothing.*"

In short, if this is not the true representation of our present condition or of *Things as they are*, it may, at least, be hoped that to no Briton will it be imputed as a very high crime or misdemeanour, that he should devoutly wish that *they were so*.

P O S T-

P O S T C R I P T,

THE reader will be pleased to observe that the sheets relative to the K— of P—, were printed long before the news arrived of the check his arms are said to have received. Nothing could indeed be more mean, more unmanly than any reasoning against his conduct or our union with him, from that event. But surely those who were never dazzled with his successes at their height, and even argued on a presumption of his continuing to push his victories beyond the walls of Vienna, can little be supposed capable of that wretched vulgarism of judging him by his fortune and not by the nature and truth of things. So far too from their exulting in any calamities that may befall him, none would perhaps be more sincerely afflicted for them than they would be, and that on the very British principle for which they differed so widely from the popular opinion for connecting the cause of Britain with his. To fear a bad success and to wish it are certainly sentiments that far from imply one another.

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