

he was not seconded, the original motion passed without a division*. On the 9th, in consequence of a message requesting the house to settle a jointure on the queen, if she should survive the king; it was unanimously agreed that £.100,000 should be granted for that purpose. On the 17th, the king made a speech from the throne, in which, after thanking the parliament for this mark of attachment and affection, he gave another and a stronger sanction to the conduct of the ministers, and adverted to the flourishing state of the country. The parliament was then prorogued to the 29th of August, and soon afterwards dissolved. Thus was this short session of parliament conducted with an unanimity and zeal unexampled in the annals of this country.

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1727 to 1729

As the same men were continued in office, of course the same measures were pursued both at home and abroad. At home, to continue the public tranquillity, to counteract the schemes of the Jacobites, to promote commerce, to encourage agriculture and manufactures were the great efforts of administration, and in these Walpole took an active and leading part. The new house of commons, which assembled on the 23d of January 1728, was of the same temper and disposition as the last; and the members in favour of administration were soon found to exceed the complement in the former parliament. Sir Spencer Compton, who had occupied the chair, having been created a peer, Arthur Onslow was elected speaker, with an unanimity which could only be inspired by an opinion of his integrity and abilities, an opinion which his subsequent conduct fully justified, by an able and impartial discharge of his duty, during a period of thirty-seven years†. The speech from the throne was remarkable for an appearance of frankness and sincerity. The king first alluded to the uncertain situation of affairs abroad, to the difficulties which had attended the execution of the preliminaries with Spain, and to the unavoidable necessity of not discontinuing warlike preparations; and then, after the ordinary professions of frugality, and willingness to reduce the national expences, exhorted the commons to take into consideration the encouragement of seamen in general, that they might be invited rather than compelled to enter into the service of their country,

Meeting of
the new par-
liament.

King's
speech.

* It is a curious observation of Smollett (vol. 2. p. 131.) which must tend to shew with how much partiality and inaccuracy he compiled his history. That "to these particulars (namely, in the speech of Shippen) which were indeed *unanswerable*, no reply was made. Even this mark of decency was laid aside, as idle and *superfluous*." The fact was, that no reply was made, not because the arguments were *unanswerable*, but because no one se-

conded the motion; a circumstance of which Smollett takes no notice. Belsbam also observes (vol. 1. p. 172.) with no less inaccuracy, "The amendment was rejected *with a great majority*," which would lead the reader to suppose, that there was a division. But in fact, there was no amendment duly moved and seconded, and the original motion, of course, passed unanimously.

† Tindal.

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Address.

a consideration, he observed, worthy of the representatives of a people great and flourishing in trade and navigation. To this purpose, he proposed an addition to the fund of Greenwich Hospital, and concluded with recommending unanimity, zeal, and dispatch.

This speech was heard with general satisfaction. The address passed the lords without opposition; being presented to the commons for their approbation, Shippen proposed, with a view to cast a reflection on the ministers, after the words *disagreeable and uncertain state of affairs*, to add, *at his majesty's accession to the throne*. He then took occasion to launch out into the most bitter invectives, and particularly taxed the Squadron with being useless and insignificant, for not having rifled the galleons at Carthagena, and plundered Porto Bello. Sir William Wyndham seconded the motion with his usual energy, and observed, that the languid measures adopted by government, tended only to remove the negotiations from Paris and Madrid to Cambray, and would not assist in removing the difficulties into which this dilatory mode of proceeding had plunged the nation. But these declamatory objections did not accord with the temper of the house; they rather excited so much indignation among the independent members, that the opposition did not venture to call for a division, and the address was carried unanimously. In fact, this conduct of opposition, not only displeased the nation, but even hurt their cause in the only court, where it was likely to have any effect. For the great objection which cardinal Fleury had raised against the counsels of England, was derived from their precipitancy and violence; and Bolingbroke had laboured to impress this notion on his partizans. The ministers availed themselves of this circumstance, and in conformity to their instructions, earl Waldegrave, who in the absence of Horace Walpole conducted the affairs of England at Paris, represented with due effect to the cardinal, that the same measures to which he objected, as too prompt and decisive, were reprobated in England, as deficient in spirit and energy*.

Debate on
the Hessian
troops.
February 14.

The first question which met with much opposition, was that made by Horace Walpole, that £.230,923 should be granted for maintaining 12,000 Hessians in the British pay. In the debate on this motion, the minority seem to have first recovered from their surprise; the Pulteneys and Sir William Wyndham spoke with great weight and art on a question which has been so often discussed, and which still continues to agitate the public mind, concerning the expediency of taking foreign troops into British pay. The argument in favour of the question was, in substance, that the late king had thought fit to provide these troops, in order to obtain the ends of the

George Tilson to earl Waldegrave, February 2d and 5th, 1727-8. Waldegrave Papers.

treaty of Hanover; that they were ready at hand, and much cheaper than raising national troops; that a disappointment, from the defection of the king of Prussia, one of the contracting parties in the alliance, was a special reason for their being retained; that time had manifested this to have been a prudential measure, it having prevented a war in Germany; that the reasons for taking them into pay still subsisted, and therefore their continuance was necessary till the intended congress at Cambray was finished. 84 divided against 280*.

It was at this period, in which Walpole, confiding on the support of queen Caroline, took the lead in the administration, and became in reality the first minister, although lord Townshend still ostensibly retained the name, that the opposition began to form itself into consistency, and to compose a firm and compact phalanx, which resisted all the efforts and influence of the ministers to divide them, and which finally drove him from the helm.

The opposition.

Until the death of George the First, the component parts of this heterogeneous body, which consisted of a few disappointed Whigs, Tories, and Jacobites, did not cordially coalesce. Many of those Whigs and moderate Tories, who looked up to that event as a prelude to their own admission into the ministry; kept aloof from those who, as being professed Jacobites, or violent Tories, could not expect the same success. But no sooner had the continuance of Walpole in office annihilated their hopes, than the whole body became compact and united. In this respect, the Whigs became Tories, the Tories Whigs; and the Jacobites assumed every shape which tended to promote their views, by distressing government, and harassing the minister, whom they considered as the great supporter of the house of Brunswick.

The chief aim of the minister was to comprehend almost all the Tories as enemies to the government, by the name of Jacobites, or at least to give that stigma to every one who was not a professed and known Whig. With this view, his own administration being naturally supported on a Whig foundation, he endeavoured to attach to himself all those who had been dependent on Sunderland. With some he succeeded, but not with all; and of those whom he could not gain, several remained in their employments, because they were protected by the Hanover junto. This body of Whigs, small but of considerable eminence, remained his enemies to the time of the king's death, watching for every opportunity to ruin him; and from the accession of George the Second, commenced the opposition which became afterwards so troublesome and formidable†. Pulteney became the great leader of this

* Journals. Chandler.

† For the characters of the leading mem-

bers of opposition, see Onslow's Remarks, Correspondence, Period IV.

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body; under him were ranged his kinsman Daniel Pulteney, Sir John Barnard, Sandys, and afterwards lord Polwarth, Pitt, Littleton, and the Grenvilles. Sir William Wyndham was the great chief of the Tories, and William Shippen was at the head of the Jacobites, who did not form less than fifty members. Those who supported the minister were lord Hervey, whose character and talents have been scandalously depreciated by Pope, Henry Pelham, Sir William Yonge, whom Johnson calls the best speaker in the house of commons, Winnington, and his brother Horace Walpole, whose talents for negotiation, indefatigable assiduity in business, and acquaintance with foreign transactions, rendered him an able co-adjutor.

Debates on
the sinking
fund and the
national debt.

During this session, a very important question, on the state of the national debt, was brought before the house, in which the minister of finance was deeply engaged. In the debates which took place on this subject, the opposition had declaimed against the profuse expenditure of the public money. They declared, that although large supplies were annually voted during the last reign, and the produce of the sinking fund had been applied to the discharge of the debt, during a period of almost uninterrupted tranquillity, yet the public burthens were *increased* instead of being diminished; and they observed, that if the war with Spain should continue, and new troubles arise in Europe, fresh taxes must be perpetuated to the latest posterity, and that the nation must inevitably sink under such an accumulated load.

In proof of these arguments, Pulteney had published a well written pamphlet, "On the State of the National Debt." Many similar statements had appeared in the Craftsman, attempting to shew, that the sinking fund had been of no service to the purpose for which it was originally intended. Walpole knew that this position was defended by the most able pens, and ostentatiously supported by numbers, and laborious calculations, which the people could not comprehend. As these assertions raised great clamours at home, and had a considerable effect abroad, in decrying the credit of the nation, it became necessary to confute, or at least to contradict them, in the same positive manner in which they were advanced. With this view, the minister determined, through the medium of the house of commons, to make a solemn appeal to the nation against their statements; and his resolution was unwittingly forwarded by opposition, who did not know that in repeating their attacks, they supplied him with the very weapons of defence, which he could not so easily have acquired without their concurrence.

February 22.

In laying before the commons an account of the sinking fund, Walpole declared, that since 1716, it had discharged above six millions of the debt, but that as new debts had been contracted, the national burthens had upon

the balance been diminished about two millions and a half. Pulteney in reply asserted, that notwithstanding the great merit which some persons had arrogated to themselves from the establishment of the sinking fund, it appeared that the debt had *increased*, instead of being diminished, since the commencement of that pompous project. To this Sir Nathaniel Gould, an eminent merchant, observed, that he apprehended the gentleman had taken this notion from a treatise, intituled, "The State of the National Debt;" that if he understood any thing, it was numbers, and that he would stake his credit, to shew the fallacy of the author's calculations and inferences. Pulteney defended his calculations, and added, that he was not at present prepared to prove his assertions, but that he would do so in a few days, and would also stake his reputation on their truth. The minister supported the opinion of Sir Nathaniel Gould, and added, that he would also stake his reputation on the truth of what he advanced*. Walpole now exerted himself in preparing specific statements of the produce of the sinking fund, of the debts which had been liquidated, and of those which had been contracted since its establishment, with a view of submitting them to parliament on the first opportunity, which was soon supplied by the leading member of opposition.

On the 29th of February, the king's answer was given to an address, requesting a specific account of £. 250,000 which had been charged for secret services; that he trusted the house would repose the same confidence in him as they had reposed in his royal father; and declared, that a specific account of the disbursements could not be given, without manifest prejudice to the public. This message had no sooner been delivered by Sir Paul Methuen, comptroller of the household, than Pulteney rose: with great animation he inveighed against such a vague and general way of accounting for the public money, as tending to render parliament insignificant and useless, to cover embezzlements, and to screen corrupt and rapacious ministers: He again urged the increase of the national debt, and insisted on having that important affair debated in a grand committee. The minister opposed the immediate discussion of the question, but moved to adjourn the debate only to the 4th of March, when after the examination of the revenue officers, he should be ready to lay before the house, the state of the national debt. This motion was carried by 202 against 66 †.

Accordingly, on the 4th of March, the commons, in a committee of the whole house, considered the state of the national debt, and examined at the bar the proper officers of the revenue. At the conclusion of this exami-

* George Tilson to the earl of Waldegrave, February 22d, 1727-8. Correspondence.—
Chandler.

† Journals.

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nation, with a view to avoid all general cavils, and to reduce the assertions of the adversaries to a specific account, a motion was made by the friends of the minister, "That the monies already applied towards discharging the national debts incurred before Christmas 1716, together with £.220,435, which will be issued at Lady Day 1728, amount to £.6,648,762."

In reply to this proposition, the minority argued, that for the purpose of swelling the amount of the sums said to be issued for the liquidation of the debt, the minister had put down no less than three millions, which had been advanced in 1720, to make the irredeemables redeemables; and which could not properly be called a payment of debts. They also insisted, that he had omitted several large sums, particularly one million rated upon the credit of the civil list, and deficiencies of the land tax, malt, and other funds. They concluded, that these defalcations from the sums paid, and additions to the standing debts, would reduce the £.6,648,762, which, according to the boasts of the minister, was supposed to be liquidated, to less than one third.

Walpole, on the other hand, maintained with no less positiveness the accuracy of his own statements, expatiated on the state of the nation, and of the public debts, explained the operation and efficacy of the sinking fund, and supported the motion. The opposition then proposed that the speaker should resume the chair, but this being negatived by 250 against 97, the original question was then put, and carried without a division.

March 4th.

The minister having obtained this victory, resolved to bring forwards his public appeal to the nation, by presenting a report from the house of commons to the king, stating, in certain resolutions, the amount of the national debt, and the sums which had been liquidated by means of the sinking fund. With this view, four resolutions were submitted to a committee of the whole house, on the 8th of March; the first of which repeated, in the same words, the motion made on the 4th, that £.6,648,762 had been discharged.

The opposition, recollecting their former defeat by a large majority, and seeing that the house wholly differed from their representations, did not lay their wonted stress on the main question, but loudly called again upon the minister for an account of the sum lately employed in secret service. To these clamours Walpole made the usual reply, that it had been expended in negotiations too delicate to be specified. In the midst of his speech, an account was transmitted by lord Townshend, that the convention with Spain was signed at the Pardo*. Walpole availed himself of this information; and

See the conclusion of this chapter.

acquainting

acquainting the house with the news, added, "That the nation would be now relieved from the burthen of the late expences, and that he could assure the members who called so loudly for a specification of the secret service money, that it been expended in obtaining the conclusion of that peace, the preliminaries of which were now signed. The designs of those (he said) who had laboured to disturb the tranquillity of Europe, were thus defeated; and the purchase of peace, and the prevention of war, on terms so cheap, were highly beneficial to the public." This information spread general satisfaction through the house; the question was instantaneously called for, and the resolutions passed without a division *. On a subsequent meeting, these resolutions were formed into a report, which was drawn up by the minister, and laid before the house, to be presented to the king.

This is a very elaborate performance †, and deserves the strictest attention. After laying down the subject of the report, which was to examine how much of the additional debt incurred before the 25th of December 1716 had been discharged, and what new debts had been contracted since that time; it proceeds with making severe reflections against the arts which had been practised to mislead the people in this important inquiry, "by publishing and promoting, with the greatest industry, most notorious misrepresentations of the true state of our debts, and of the provisions made for the discharge of them; and by infusing groundless jealousies and insinuations, as if the produce of the sinking fund had been but little and inconsiderable, or that by wrong and imprudent measures, bad œconomy, neglect, or mismanagement, unnecessary expences had been made, and new debts contracted, that not only equalled, but exceeded by several millions, the amount of the old debts that had been discharged ‡." It then adopts a method that is plain, easy, and intelligible to the meanest capacity, by giving, in two tables, the amounts of the debts discharged and incurred since the 25th of December 1716, just before the establishment of the sinking fund :

April 8th.
Report on the
state of the
sinking fund
and national
debt.

Debts incurred since December 25th 1716, and since	£.	s.	d.
discharged — — — —	6,626,404	16	9½
Debts contracted and incurred since December 25th			
1716, and now subsisting — —	3,927,988	7	1½
Difference, or decrease of the national debt —	2,698,416	9	7½

* Lettre de Monsieur Le Coq, au Roi de Pologne, de Londres, 23 Mars, 1728. Also, a letter from a foreign minister, dated 17th March, 1728. De la Faye to earl Walde-

grave, March 11, 1728. Correspondence, Period III.

† Tindal, vol. 20. p. 24.

‡ Journals.

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It then gives the new debts under the proper heads of the services for which they were contracted; and after having related the beginning, establishment, and beneficial effects of the sinking fund, observes, that by reducing the interest of the greatest part of the debts from 6 to 4 per cent, there is a saving of one third of the interest, which is equal to a discharge of one third of the principal; and that as the annual produce of the fund was gradually raised from £. 400,000 to £. 1,200,000, the addition of £. 800,000, if valued at twenty-five years purchase, the current price of annuities, would give a real profit to the public of £. 20,000,000.

It concludes by saying, "This is the happy state of the sinking fund, taken separately, and by itself; but, if we cast our eyes upon the state of our public credit in general, it must be an additional satisfaction to us, that by preserving the public faith inviolable, by the discharge of the old exchequer bills, and the reduction of the high interest on all our standing debts, the whole credit that is taken on the annual funds, for carrying on the current service of the year, is and may be supplied for the future at £. 3 per cent. or less, for interest, premium, and charges, by exchequer bills, just as the occasions of the public require, without any loans, or being obliged to any persons, for money to be advanced or lent on the credit of them; and so far is the public from being under the former necessities of allowing extravagant interest, premiums, or discounts, for any money they want, that the only contest now among the creditors of the public is, that every one of them desires to be the last in course of payment."

"Permit us then, most gracious sovereign, to congratulate your majesty on the comfortable prospect we have now before us, if, notwithstanding the many difficulties this nation has laboured under since the happy accession of your majesty's late royal father to the throne, notwithstanding the unnatural rebellion which soon after broke out, and the many heinous plots and conspiracies which have since been formed and carried on for overturning the religion and liberties of our country, and the protestant succession in your most illustrious family; the many disturbances which have arisen, and the uncertain and embroiled condition of the affairs of Europe, not a little fomented and encouraged by the false intelligence, and malicious insinuations which have been industriously spread abroad by your majesty's and our enemies, of the uneasy and perplexed state of our affairs at home, as if that had rendered it almost impossible for this nation, effectually to exert themselves in defence of their own just rights and possessions, and for establishing and securing the public peace and tranquillity; if, notwithstanding these and many other difficulties which we laboured under, and while the sinking fund

was yet in its infancy, and so much less than it now is, we have been able to diminish the national debts so much already, what may we not hope for in regard to a more speedy and sensible discharge of them for the future, now the sinking fund is so greatly increased, and our public credit in so flourishing a condition *."

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Such was the substance of this remarkable report, which was carried by 243 against 77 †. It was presented to the king, and drew a favourable answer, expressing his extreme satisfaction for the removal of groundless jealousies and apprehensions, for the happy effects to be derived from the flourishing state of public credit, for the provision made for the gradual discharge of the national debt, and concluded by observing, "You may be assured, it shall be my particular care and study to maintain and preserve the public credit, and to improve the sinking fund, and to avoid all occasions of laying any new burthens upon the people ‡."

April 8th.
April 11th.

The effects of the report, both at home and abroad, were incalculably beneficial to the credit of the minister. Whatever were the opinions of individuals, whatever might be the cavils of those who opposed government, the statement of the minister was approved by more than *two thirds of the national representatives, assembled in parliament, and was solemnly sanctioned by the king*. At home the discontents visibly subsided; abroad the national credit was established on stronger grounds than ever. It was proved, in opposition to the clamours of the disaffected, that the kingdom could support the expences of a war. France courted our alliance with redoubled ardour; Spain was confirmed in her wishes for peace; the Emperor and Russia shrunk from a contest with Great Britain; and the dispatches from Paris, Seville, and Vienna, sufficiently announced the weight and influence which the counsels of England had gained by the opinion, which now generally prevailed in favour of her finances.

In this session occurred one of those difficult and critical cases, in which Walpole was reduced to the necessity of complying with the will of the sovereign, contrary to his own judgment, or of resigning. Great complaints had been made of the deficiency of the civil list, and upon an examination of the revenue officers, a motion was made by Scrope, secretary to the treasury, that the sum of £. 115,000 be granted to his majesty, not as a deficiency, but as an arrear. It appeared that there was no deficiency, yet the house rejected a motion for a secret committee, and passed the act, by a majority of 241 against 115. In the lords, the bill met with strenuous op-

April 23d.

* Journals.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

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The king's
disgust
against
Charles
Stanhope.

position, and though carried, very strong protests were entered on the Journals, and signed by fourteen peers. This transaction gave great pain to Walpole: he is said to have used every effort of address and reasoning to dissuade the prosecution of the demand, so much as even to offend the king. The enemies of his administration were not ignorant of his resistance, and some of the leading Tories made secret proposals to the king, that if he would discard Walpole, they would not only obtain the sum required, but add to it £.100,000. Thus circumstanced, the minister reluctantly complied, and subjected his character to much obloquy*.

This inflexibility of George the Second, exposed Walpole not only to many difficulties in his public career, but to many unmerited reproaches in his character, as a man of veracity. Great embarrassment to a minister must be derived from the occasional reluctance of the sovereign to confirm the promises made to individuals of particular offices, either of honour or trust; and on such occasions, he naturally incurs the blame of either indifference, negligence, or duplicity. Thus he had not been able to obtain for his friend the duke of Devonshire the presidentship of the council, which high office was, by the interposition of Sunderland, conferred on lord Carleton, who, since his elevation to the peerage, had seldom voted with the Whigs.

But perhaps no failure affected him more, or caused more reproaches, than the refusal of the sovereign to make Charles Stanhope, elder brother of the earl of Harrington, a lord of the admiralty. The real cause of the king's non-compliance, arose from his aversion to Charles Stanhope, which was disclosed to the minister, under the strictest injunctions of secrecy. George the Second had found, among his father's papers and letters, a memorial from lord Sunderland, written in the hand of Charles Stanhope, highly expressive of strong dislike to the prince of Wales, and recommending the adoption of the most violent measures against him. The perusal of this paper excited the highest indignation as well against the memory of lord Sunderland, as against the secretary who had written it. In regard to Charles Stanhope, the king declared, that no consideration should induce him to assign to him any place of trust or honour; and he kept his word. For when Sir Robert Walpole espoused his interest with much ardour, he offended the king, who rejected the application, with some expressions of resentment against the minister for having recommended him †.

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal. Etough's Papers.—Geo. I. p. 16, 17.

† Lord Townshend to Stephen Poyntz, June 3d, 1728. Correspondence, Period IV.

When

When George the First left England, things wore the appearance of a general pacification. In virtue of the preliminaries signed by the Imperial and Spanish ambassadors, a courier from Spain was hourly expected to announce, that the siege of Gibraltar was raised, and the prizes restored. But the death of the king put a momentary suspension to these hopes.

Philip received the preliminaries on the 10th of June, and before he issued orders in conformity with his promises, the news of that event arrived. The accession of the new sovereign had been announced by the Jacobites abroad, as likely to meet with numerous obstacles, and at all events, it was supposed that the helm of government would not be directed by so steady a hand, when Townshend and Walpole were removed. Under these impressions, Philip, inspired with the hopes of breaking the strict alliance between France and England, and of again engaging the Emperor in his support, while he affected to agree to the terms accepted by his ambassador, delayed, under various pretences, to raise the siege of Gibraltar, and to restore the Prince Frederick, a ship belonging to the South Sea company, which had been seized under the pretence of carrying on a contraband trade.

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Foreign
affairs.

Wavering
conduct of
Spain.

The Emperor justified this conduct, by declaring, that the king of Spain was not obliged by the preliminaries to take those steps; and by his preparations, gave unequivocal signs of intentions hostile to England. The only method therefore of bringing Philip to reason, was to attack his ally in Germany, and to pursue such vigorous measures as might deter the court of Vienna from supporting Spain by invading the electorate and the United Provinces, the only parts in which the allies of Hanover were vulnerable, and which the English would be bound in honour to defend. This measure was still more necessary, because the conventions made by the Emperor with the electors and princes of the empire, and the subsidies which he was to pay with Spanish money, in virtue of those conventions, were not expired. The allies were, by the management of the courts of Vienna and Madrid, in the same state of uncertainty as to peace or war, as they were before the preliminaries were signed.

Among all these conventions made by the Emperor, none had a more fatal tendency than that with Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. The Emperor had already drawn the electors of Mentz, Cologne, Treves, and Bavaria, and the Elector Palatine, into his interest. His near consanguinity to the prince of Saxony, seemed to secure to him, at least, the neutrality of that protestant electorate; and he had found means to draw off the king of Prussia, by the promise of guarantying to him the succession of Berg and Ravenstein. In case

Treaty with
Brunswick.

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of a rupture, he had secured Mentz as a place of arms, which gave him the command of Suabia, Franconia, and the Rhine.

The Elector of Mentz had already permitted him to put a garrison into Erfurt, which, by its situation, made him in effect master of Upper Saxony: but still Lower Saxony, in which circle the dominions of Hanover are situated, remained inaccessible, till he found means to make a treaty with the duke of Brunswick Wolfenbittel, by which he was to grant that prince a subsidy of £.200,000 florins a year. In a secret article of that treaty, it was farther stipulated, that the conjuncture of affairs requiring it, closer engagements should be entered into between them, as well for augmenting the duke's subsidies and troops, as in relation to the town of Brunswick. In consequence of this convention, another subsidiary treaty was opened between the court of Russia and the duke, under the influence and direction of the Emperor. Had he been permitted to garrison Brunswick, not only a fatal disunion would have been produced between the branches of the king's family, but the situation of that place would have enabled the Emperor to pour into the electorate his own troops, as well as the 30,000 men which, by the treaty with Russia, were to have been introduced into the empire, under pretence of recovering Sleswick for the duke of Holstein; the greater part of Westphalia would have been laid under contribution, even to the frontiers of Holland; and the kings of Denmark and Sweden would have been kept in awe, by being forced to provide for the safety of their own possessions on the side of Germany.

In this dangerous situation of affairs, when the king's German dominions, and through them the United Provinces, were threatened by the combined arms of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, and when the possession of Brunswick, as a place of arms for the allies of Vienna, would have enabled the Emperor to penetrate into Lower Saxony, and bring on a general war, a treaty was negotiated and concluded with the duke of Brunswick Wolfenbittel, which put an instant check to the views of the Emperor, and to the hopes of Spain. This treaty, negotiated between lord Townshend and count Dehn, the confidential minister of the duke of Brunswick, was signed at Wolfenbittel, on the 23d of November 1727. It stipulated a renewal of the family compact, according to the treaty of the 6th of May 1661, by which Brunswick was to be kept for the common safety of the house of Lunenburgh, and not delivered up to any other power; a mutual guaranty of dominions; mutual assistance in case of attack; a subsidy of £.25,000 a year, during four years, to the duke of Brunswick, who was to furnish at least 5,000 men. This treaty, if considered in its general effects and tendency to the pacification of Germany, was a master-piece of policy: it united the two branches of the house of Lunenburgh, who had been long at variance; and

by

by preventing the progress of the Imperial arms, saved the electorate of Hanover from hostile inroads.

These prudent and vigorous measures had the effect for which they were designed. The Emperor was reduced to a state of inaction; and Spain, unable to maintain an unequal contest with the allies of Hanover, submitted with reluctance, and ratified the preliminaries of peace at the Pardo, a royal palace near Madrid, in conformity to a declaration settled between Horace Walpole and cardinal Fleury, and made by count Rothembourg, the French minister in Spain. In consequence of this act, the congress of Soissons was held, where the plenipotentiaries of all the powers concerned in the late troubles were assembled; and although nothing material was transacted, yet the negotiations were managed, on the part of the Hanover allies, in such a manner as to create a division between the courts of Vienna and Madrid. The project of a provisional treaty, negotiated between the Imperial, British, and French plenipotentiaries, had so alarmed the king of Spain, and created so much uneasiness in the queen, that they required from the Emperor a positive declaration on the subject of marrying the two archduchesses to the two Infants of Spain, and his refusal to explain himself, excited their resentment to such a degree, as to give England and France an opportunity of detaching them from the Emperor.

The breach being now made, a reconciliation speedily took place between the allies of Hanover and Spain. Philip sacrificed the Emperor, as the Emperor, by declining to co-operate in the siege of Gibraltar, had sacrificed him, signed the preliminaries at Pardo, and concluded, at Seville, the 29th of November, with Great Britain and France, a treaty of peace, union, and mutual defence. This treaty, besides the restoration of peace, and the renewal of all former treaties between Great Britain and Spain, stipulated the introduction of six thousand Spaniards, instead of neutral troops, as specified by the quadruple alliance, into Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, for securing to Don Carlos the eventual succession to those duchies, in case the reigning sovereigns should die without issue male; and if the Emperor would not acquiesce, forcible means were to be used for effectuating the introduction.

In return for this single article granted to Spain, Great Britain obtained immediate redress of some grievances, the promise of redress in others, new guaranties of all her possessions, and of all her rights of trade, and a tacit exclusion of any claim to Gibraltar, upon which to be silent, after the clamorous demands made by Spain, was the same as a public renunciation*.

* The contents of the part of this chapter which relates to foreign affairs, have been principally drawn from the various dispatches of Horace Walpole and William Stanhope, in

the Walpole and Stanhope papers, and from the state of the negotiation, from June 1728 to June 1730, drawn up by Mr. Robinson, the minister at Vienna, in the Grantham papers.

Although

Chapter 33.
1727 to 1729.

Act of the
Pardo.

Treaty of
Seville.

1729.

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.
Walpole
promotes the
peace.

Although Walpole suffered the negotiations to be ostensibly managed by Townshend, and seemed to take no part in the various transactions, yet he watched with a jealous eye the progress of the business. In the secret correspondence which he constantly held with his brother Horace, whose opinion had a great influence over Townshend, he directed all his advice and views to the final establishment of peace. He was on the one hand equally studious not to offend the Emperor beyond hopes of recovery, who he well knew, in case of a reconciliation between France and Spain, could alone in future prevent the aggrandisement of the house of Bourbon, and on the other side, was equally anxious to facilitate an accommodation with Spain, for the sake of restoring the British commerce, which had received a deep blow from the rupture with that country. The treaty of Seville, was indeed principally owing to his interference or directions; and Townshend's repugnance to this plan of pacification, was over-ruled by the prudence and discretion of his colleague.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH:

1727—1729.

Debates in Parliament on a supposed Promise of George the First to restore Gibraltar to Spain.—Mistakes generally entertained on that Subject.—True State of Facts.—Conduct of the Regent.—Of the King and Queen of Spain, and its Consequences.

Parliamentary proceedings respecting Gibraltar.

IN the midst of these transactions, an outcry was raised, against administration, for having degraded the king, and disgraced the nation, by breaking a promise made to Philip the Fifth, for the restitution of Gibraltar, which, it was urged, had induced that monarch to accede to the quadruple alliance; and therefore the war was unjust on the part of England, because he only claimed his right in virtue of that promise, and offered to commence a negotiation for peace, when it was fulfilled. To these assertions Walpole replied, that the promise having been given when he was not in administration, he was in no respect answerable for it; but that

if

if it had ever been made, he durst aver, that it was conditional, and rendered void by the refusal of Spain to comply with the terms on which it was founded, and that whenever the performance of that agreement was mentioned to him, he always maintained that Gibraltar should not be granted without the consent of parliament *. When Sandys moved, "for addressing the king to communicate to this house, copies of the declaration, letter, or engagement, on which the king of Spain founded his peremptory demand for the restitution of that fortress," he was seconded, and strenuously supported by Sir William Wyndham, Hungerford, and Pulteney, who took notice of a letter written in 1721, to one of the Emperor's plenipotentiaries at Cambray, wherein a promise of ceding Gibraltar was expressly mentioned; but they were opposed by Henry Pelham, Brodrick, Horace Walpole, and Sir Robert Walpole, who said, that the communication of the declaration or letter was altogether impracticable and unprecedented; the private letters of princes being almost as sacred as their very persons †.

Chapter 34
1727 to 172

February 6,
1727.

But although this remark at that time imposed a respectful silence on the house of commons, yet the question was again revived in the upper house, and the letter being produced, some of the lords in opposition moved the resolution, "That effectual care be taken, in the treaty then in agitation, that the king of Spain do renounce all claims and pretensions to Gibraltar and Minorca, in plain and strong terms." But the motion being overruled, another was carried, "That the house relies upon the king for preserving the undoubted right to Gibraltar and Minorca." This resolution being sent down to the commons, lord Malpas proposed and carried an address for a copy of the letter to the king of Spain; which being laid before the house, a warm debate ensued. Many severe reflections were levelled at those who advised the king to write such a letter, as implied, or at least was considered by the Spaniards as signifying a positive promise of giving up Gibraltar, and was therefore the principal occasion of the king of Spain's resentment, and of the difficulties in promoting a pacification. To these insinuations, Walpole replied as on the former occasion, and added, that the letter did not contain any positive promise; and that effectual care had been taken in the present negotiation to secure the possession of Gibraltar. But the party in opposition declaring themselves dissatisfied with this explanation and answer, moved an addition to the resolution of the lords, that all pretensions on the part of Spain to Gibraltar and Minorca, should be specifically given up; but the

March 18,
1727.

March 21.
February 1.

Chandler.

† Chandler, vol. 6. p. 384.

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R r

question

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1727 to 1730.

Errors of historians.

question being negatived by a large majority of 156 voices, the resolution of the lords was carried without a division. Thus ended this business in parliament, which had created so much ill-will, and occasioned so many false reports at the time, and which has since been misrepresented by those who inculpate the minister for breaking a promise which he never made, and for violating the national honour, when, in fact, he defended and supported it.

Although the business was thus concluded in parliament, yet the assertions of the minister did not satisfy opposition, and as the affair was again renewed in the *Craftsman*, and other periodical publications, with increased rancour and exaggerated invective, to which Walpole never condescended to make any reply, these invectives have been adopted by subsequent historians with no less asperity, and have been considered as authentic facts. Nor is this misrepresentation confined to the authors of this country: Many of the French writers are totally mistaken in the account of this negotiation, in asserting, that George the First promised unconditionally to restore Gibraltar.

Thus, particularly, Anquetil presumes, that in the peace which Spain concluded with France and England in 1720, there was a secret article by which the king of England promised to restore Gibraltar to Spain; and he grounds this presumption, not unfairly, on the two following passages from the *Memoirs of Villars*. March 10, 1727: The pope's nuncio at Madrid, wrote to the nuncio in France, that the king of Spain offered to agree to the suspension of the trade from Ostend, and at the same time demanded Gibraltar, insisting that the restitution of it had been promised by the king of England. November 2, 1727: Count Rothembourg, the French ambassador at Madrid, relates, that the queen of Spain complained of the English, and speaking of Gibraltar, took out an original letter from the king's cabinet, in which George the First promised the restitution of Gibraltar *. As therefore the accounts given of this transaction are in general erroneous, and as the inquiry itself is not uninteresting, I shall state a narrative of the negotiations relative to the restitution of Gibraltar, drawn from authentic documents.

Correct statement of the fact.

In 1715, George the First, for the purpose of avoiding a rupture with Spain, gave full powers to the regent, duke of Orleans, to offer the restoration of Gibraltar; the hostilities which followed, annulled the promise, and afterwards the king of Spain acceded purely and simply to the quadruple alliance, without stipulating the cession. The regent, however, with a view to ingratiate himself with the king of Spain, and to promote the double marriage between the two infants and his two daughters, repeatedly renewed

* Vol. 2. p. 411. See also Belfham's History, vol. 1. p. 251.

the offer in the name of George the First, and inspired Philip with the most sanguine hopes of recovering so important a fortress. These expectations being urged by Philip with great warmth, and with little discretion, obliged the king to declare that he did not consider himself as bound by his former conditional promise. The regent being reproached by the queen of Spain with a breach of his word, dispatched the count de Saneterre to England, to represent the danger and delicacy of his situation. He declared, that he considered the king's promise as full and positive, and that he would as soon consent to his utter ruin, as to the dishonour of failing in so public an engagement. These strong expressions from the regent, who had proved himself so faithful an ally, and whose assistance in discovering and counteracting the schemes of the Jacobites was so necessary, perplexed the king, and induced him to use his utmost endeavours to gratify him and the king of Spain. With this view, earl Stanhope founded the disposition of the upper house, by insinuating an intention to obtain a bill, empowering the king to dispose of Gibraltar, for the advantage of the nation. But this hint produced a violent ferment. The public were roused with indignation on the simple suspicion, that at the close of a successful war, unjustly begun by Spain, so important a fortress should be ceded. General murmurs were at the same time excited by a report industriously circulated by opposition, that the king had entered into a positive engagement for that purpose; virulent pamphlets were published to alarm the people, and to persuade them rather to continue the war, than to give up Gibraltar. The ministers were compelled to yield to the torrent, and to adopt the prudent resolution of waving the motion, lest it should produce a contrary effect, by a bill, which might for ever tie up the king's hands. The interference of France in this affair, and the extreme eagerness to obtain the restitution, was of great detriment. The alarm was indeed so strong, that suspicions were entertained that the regent was meditating the desertion of the alliance with England, and made Gibraltar a pretext to justify a change of system. These apprehensions induced the king to send earl Stanhope to Paris, with a view of representing the true situation of affairs, and to state the unpopularity of the measure, and the impracticability of carrying it against the general sense of the people. The letter which Stanhope conveyed from the king to the regent on this occasion, was firm, discreet, and satisfactory. He acknowledged that he had made the offer of ceding Gibraltar, solely with a view

March 9,
1720.

Earl Stanhope to Sir Luke Schaub, Paris, March 28, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.

of preventing the rupture, and that Spain might have obtained it, had she then acceded to the proposed conditions. But it was now too late to revive the demand, as the king of Spain had proved himself the aggressor. It never could be understood that a voluntary offer of this nature, to prevent a war, was binding as a preliminary of peace. He concluded by observing, that he had never given his consent, since the rupture, to the renewal of the offer, and had received no communication from the regent of any intention to bring it forward*. The duke of Orleans was fully satisfied with this representation. He owned, that although he could not avoid continuing to press for the restitution which he had so solemnly promised in the king's name, yet that he would employ every indirect means in his power, to prevent its being indiscreetly and improperly urged, and testified his resolution to make a separate peace with Spain.

Equivalent
proposed.

October 1,
1720.

The king, however, being still inclined to gratify the regent, if he could do it without disobliging his subjects, referred the object of dispute to the congress at Cambray, hoping that in the course of negotiations, the Spanish plenipotentiaries might urge such motives and arguments in its favour, as would influence the parliament and people†. Under the same impressions, he made another effort. By his order, earl Stanhope wrote to secretary Craggs, to lay before the lords justices the advantages which would result from ceding Gibraltar for Florida, or the eastern part of St. Domingo, and for certain commercial advantages. This proposal being laid before the council, lord Townshend at first warmly opposed, but finally agreed, if a suitable equivalent, particularly Florida, could be obtained. Accordingly, the session seemed ultimately determined, if it met with the approbation of parliament. But the obstinacy of the king of Spain, rendered this proposal ineffectual. He declined yielding Florida in exchange, and insisted on Gibraltar without giving any equivalent‡. This claim on his part was so warmly, and repeatedly insisted on, as the indispensable requisite for acceding to the terms of pacification, that it was deemed a prudent art of policy not to retard the conclusion of peace, by a positive denial. Philip having requested, as an ostensible vindication of the peace, which was reprobated in Spain as highly dishonourable, a letter conveying a promise of restoring Gibraltar, George the First complied, and expressed himself with great discretion on this delicate subject. "I no longer balance (he observed) to assure your

Rejected by
the king of
Spain.

The king's
letter.

* The king to the duke of Orleans. Walpole Papers.

† Sir Luke Schaub to Grimaldo, Madrid, June 17, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

‡ Secretary Craggs to earl Stanhope, August 2 and 26, 1720. Stanhope Papers. Earl Stanhope to secretary Craggs, Hanover, October 1, 1720. Hardwicke Papers.

majesty.

majesty of my readiness to satisfy you with regard to your demand, touching the restitution of Gibraltar, *upon the footing of an equivalent*, promising you to make use of the first favourable opportunity to regulate this article, with consent of my parliament." When the British minister delivered this letter, both the king and queen of Spain made so many objections, particularly to the word *equivalent*, that at his suggestion the king consented to write another letter, in which those words were omitted, under the full conviction that the letter, even in that mutilated state, left the affair entirely to the parliament, who might refuse to part with Gibraltar upon any terms; or if they agreed to the cession, might equally insist upon an *equivalent* *.

This was the memorable letter †, which was the cause of so much obloquy. Philip considered it as a positive promise, and his minister insisted upon a pure and simple restitution, without any equivalent. The king of England, on the contrary, asserted that the cession must solely depend on the consent of parliament, which would not be easily obtained. In the midst of these claims on one side, and counter declarations on the other, which agitated the plenipotentiaries during two years, the dissolution of the marriage between Louis the Fifteenth and the Infanta, occasioned the rupture between France and Spain. Philip broke up the congress at Cambray without having agreed to the preliminaries, and the question of Gibraltar remained undecided. After ineffectually endeavouring to detach England from France, and whilst he was secretly preparing for a reconciliation with the house of Austria, he renewed his claims, and accompanied them with bitter reproaches.

In the midst of these altercations, Ripperda, having publicly declared at Vienna that England would be compelled to restore Gibraltar, colonel Stanhope was commanded to obtain an immediate acknowledgment from Madrid, whether this declaration of Ripperda was made by order, or simply on his own authority ‡. The king of Spain, and his first minister Grimaldo, both replied, that Ripperda had surpassed his orders, in saying that a rupture with England would ensue, unless Gibraltar was restored; and Stanhope was desired to acquaint his court with this declaration. Stanhope prepared his dispatch, and the courier was on the point of taking his departure,

Chapter 34.
1727 to 1729.

April 29,
1721.

June 1, 1721.

Haughty and
unreasonable
conduct of
the king of
Spain.

* Dispatch from William Stanhope to lord Carteret, Aranjuez, May 29, 1721. Hardwicke Papers.

† This letter is printed in the Journals of the lords and commons, in the Political State

of Europe, Historical Register, Chandler, and Tindal, with an omission of the words marked in Italics.

‡ Letter from Colonel Stanhope to lord Townshend, July 14, 1725.

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1727 to 1730.

when he received a letter from Grimaldo, informing him that the continuation of the friendship and commerce between England and Spain, would depend on the speedy compliance with this demand. On inquiry, he found that the cause of this sudden change in opinion, proceeded from the news just brought of the ratification of the treaty of Vienna. In fact, both the king and queen of Spain were so little acquainted with the constitution and temper of the English nation, that they insisted on an *immediate* restitution of Gibraltar as the only means of avoiding a rupture. Against this extraordinary demand, Stanhope remonstrated in an audience with the king and queen of Spain; he declared, that they insisted upon an impossibility, since what they required could not be effected without consent of parliament; whereas there was then no parliament assembled, nor could possibly be assembled, before the king's return to England in the spring. "No," said the queen, "Let then the king your master return presently into England, and call a parliament expressly for this purpose, it being no more than what we might expect from his friendship for us; and I am assuredly and positively informed, that the matter once fairly proposed, would not meet with one negative in either house: let this short argument be once made use of; either give up Gibraltar, or your trade to the Indies and Spain, and the matter, I will answer for it, won't admit of a moment's debate *."

Its consequences.

The consequence of this insolent and peremptory demand being a refusal on the part of England, Philip commenced the siege of Gibraltar, and alleged as an excuse for the aggression, the breach of promise on the side of George the First. When the desertion of the Emperor compelled him to accept the preliminaries of peace, he clogged the negotiation by renewing his claims on Gibraltar, and furnished the opposition in England with matter of reproach to the minister, who justified himself in parliament. The object of Philip was to bring the dispute before the congress of Soissons; that of the English plenipotentiaries was to prevent it. The prudent manner in which they succeeded in that design, does honour to their diplomatic abilities; and the treaty of Seville was, as I have already observed, concluded without any stipulation or mention of Gibraltar.

* Letter from W. Stanhope to lord Townshend, August 6, 1725. Stanhope and Harrington Papers.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH:

Chapter 35.

1728.

1728.

*Rise, Disgrace, Imprisonment, Escape, and Arrival of Ripperda in England.—
Reception and Conferences with the Ministers.—Dissatisfaction and Departure.
—Enters into the Service of the Emperor of Morocco.*

THE arrival of the duke of Ripperda in England, his clandestine reception, and temporary concealment under the protection of Townshend and Walpole, form a remarkable event in this year. The papers committed to my inspection, contain several curious particulars of this extraordinary man, who negotiated the treaty of Vienna, and who afterwards betrayed the secret articles to the court of London.

Ripperda in England.

William, baron and duke of Ripperda, was descended from a noble family in the lordship of Groningen, one of the United Provinces; he received a learned education, and acquired an intimate knowledge of the French, Spanish, and Latin languages. He served as colonel during the war of the Spanish succession. In the midst of his military occupations, he applied himself with indefatigable industry to the study of trade and manufactures; and being no less distinguished for his insinuating address, was deputed, soon after the peace of Utrecht, envoy to Madrid, for the purpose of settling the complicated commercial disputes between Spain and the Dutch republic. While he was labouring to adjust that difficult business, contributed to promote the conclusion of a commercial treaty between Spain and England, for which service Townshend commends his good offices in terms of high approbation*.

Memoirs of Ripperda.

Envoy to Madrid.
1715.

During his residence at Madrid, his ardent imagination, consummate address, and extreme facility in writing dispatches and drawing memorials in various languages, recommended him to cardinal Alberoni, who employed him in affairs of a most secret and delicate nature. The services which he performed, and the grateful acknowledgments of the minister, inspired him with the most sanguine expectation of obtaining a splendid situation in a country where, since the accession of a foreign king, aliens had been frequently promoted to the highest offices of government; and as Alberoni alledged as an excuse that he could not be promoted on account of his religion, he made a public abjuration, and was admitted into the Roman catholic church. He was then appointed superintendant of a cloth manufactory,

Noticed by Alberoni.

Changes his religion, and settles in Spain.

* Townshend Papers.

recently

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recently established, by his own suggestion, at Guadalaxara, and received the grant of a pension and an estate. During this period of his life, he was pensioned by the Emperor, and seems to have received occasional presents from the English court. He was so unprincipled, that he had even the assurance to call upon the envoy Bubb, afterwards Doddington, for 14,000 pistoles, in the name of cardinal Alberoni, which he appropriated to his own use *, and this transaction probably contributed to his removal. Having brought the manufactory to a high degree of improvement, and enjoying frequent opportunities of conversing with the king and queen, he excited the jealousy of Alberoni, and was removed from the superintendence. Ripperda, however, dissembled his resentment, while he still continued in public on terms of amity with the prime minister, secretly represented to Daubenton and Grimaldo, who were disgusted with Alberoni, many errors and instances of mal-administration, which the confessor laid before the king, and persuaded him to consult Grimaldo, through the channel of the postmaster-general.

In the course of the difficult and complicated transactions in which Spain was involved with the Emperor, France, and England, the opinion of Ripperda was also demanded. He accordingly drew up a report, in which he declared, that the king could never succeed in his designs against the Emperor, unless he could obstruct the operations of England. With this view, he recommended that the troops destined to invade Sicily, should be landed, with great stores of arms and ammunition, on the coasts of Scotland or Ireland, to assist in replacing the Pretender on the throne. If that event should take place, the prince would in gratitude restore Gibraltar, Minorca, Jamaica, and all the American settlements wrested from Spain by the English, and the Italian provinces would be easily recovered. This advice, though rejected by the influence of Alberoni, who persevered in the reduction of Sicily, made a deep impression on the king's mind, and gave him a favourable opinion of Ripperda's genius and spirit, which was increased, when the repeated predictions of Ripperda, that the rash and ill-concerted measures of Alberoni would fail, were verified by the event. The disgrace of the cardinal being the consequence of his ill success, the superintendancy of the manufactures at Guadalaxara was restored to Ripperda, and his influence over the king and queen was promoted by the strong recommendations which the duchess of Parma, at the suggestions of the Imperial court, made in his favour, to her daughter the queen of Spain, and by the orders given to marquis Scotti, the minister of Parma at Madrid, to serve as a channel of communication between him and the queen. Hence Ripperda obtained private audiences of the king and queen of Spain, in which he laid

* Stanhope's Dispatches; Harrington Papers.

down plans for the improvement of trade, and the increase of the marine; flattered the queen with promoting the aggrandisement of her family, and still more ingratiated himself in her favour, by proposing the marriage of Don Carlos with an archduchess.

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1728.

Depending on her protection, he aimed at the ministry of state, of the marine and the Indies; he had even disposed the king to remove the ministers, when Scotti betrayed the secret to Daubenton and Grimaldo. Daubenton prevented the immediate appointment of Ripperda, by representing the danger and impropriety of entrusting the administration to a new convert; and when the death of Daubenton, and the offer of a cardinal's hat to the new confessor, father Bermudas, seemed likely to facilitate his elevation, his expectations were annihilated by the abdication of Philip. During the short reign of Louis, the queen maintained the same private correspondence, and followed his advice, in sending large sums of money and her jewels to Parma.

His ambitious views.

Soon after Philip's resumption of the crown, when the cabinet of Madrid formed a project of reconciliation with the Emperor, Ripperda was selected as the fittest person to carry that delicate negotiation into execution. He was accordingly deputed to Vienna, with secret instructions to make a peace with the Emperor, to conclude a marriage between Don Ferdinand and the second archduchess, and to secure, on the death of the Emperor without issue male, the Italian provinces and the Netherlands to Spain, and the reversion of Tuscany and Parma to Don Carlos. Before his departure, he delivered in a project for preparing a fleet of 100 ships, an army of 100,000 infantry, and 30,000 horse. The expences he proposed to discharge from the revenues of the Indies alone, by new modelling the trade to the settlements, and securing the profits, which were almost totally absorbed by the English and French nations, and the Spanish ministers. He also undertook to save an annual sum of 10,000,000 crowns; and obtained from the king a promise, that on his return from Vienna, he should be appointed prime minister to carry his project into execution.

Mission to the Emperor.

Ripperda performed the object of his mission with great address. He departed from Spain in the latter end of October, and arrived at Vienna in November, where he resided in the suburbs, under the fictitious name of the baron of Pfaffenberg. It does not appear that the English court had any notice of his arrival from St. Saphorin, their agent at Vienna, before the 18th of February; when he received intelligence from Petkum, minister of the duke of Holstein, that a Dutchman, the description of whose person answered to that of Ripperda, held long and secret conferences with count Zinzendorf by night. This man was soon discovered to be Ripperda; but all the information which St. Saphorin could procure concerning the object of his

Concludes the treaty of Vienna.

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1727 to 1730.

mission, amounted to no more than a conjecture, that a marriage between an archduchess and an infant of Spain, was the subject of their conferences; but whether with the prince of Asturias or Don Carlos, was a matter of which he was wholly ignorant.

Ripperda was anxious to finish the objects of his mission, that he might return to Spain, and obtain those honours which awaited him; but with a view to render the queen of Spain more tractable, he changed his instructions, and proposed that the eldest archduchess should be given to her son, Don Carlos, and that Mademoiselle de Beaujolois, who had been affianced to him, should be transferred to the prince of Asturias. The queen instantly approved and promoted a plan so congenial to her wishes, by which the imperial dignity, and the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria, would devolve on her issue. Having thus secured the queen of Spain, he gained the court of Vienna, by affirming, that if he was placed at the helm of government in Spain, a saving would be made of 50,000,000 crowns, out of which five or six millions should be annually remitted to Vienna. He accordingly received a verbal, if not a written promise, from count Zinzendorf, in the name of the Emperor, that the eldest archduchess should be affianced to Don Carlos.

While this business was in agitation, the dissolution of the marriage between the infanta and Louis the Fifteenth, and the refusal of England to accept the sole mediation, excited the resentment of the king and queen of Spain to such a degree, that instant orders were transmitted to Vienna, for concluding the treaty on any terms. Ripperda found no difficulty from the Emperor.

Under these auspices, Ripperda concluded the treaty of Vienna; the news of which, on reaching Madrid, inspired the king and queen with the most extravagant joy, and the populace, delighted at their deliverance from French interference, shouted, "Long live the august house of Austria *." Count Königseck, deputed ambassador to Madrid, was received with the most flattering marks of esteem and consideration, and soon acquired such an ascendancy, that he wholly governed the counsels of Spain.

The secrecy with which the whole negotiation was conducted, was so well maintained, that the contents of the treaty, which was signed on the 21st of May, were scarcely suspected, until they were hinted at by the Emperor himself, who could not contain his joy on the occasion, and then divulged by the Imperial ministers, with a view to insult and intimidate the cabinet of England. The veil of secrecy being now removed, Ripperda came forth in the public character of ambassador from Spain. The splendour of his household, the liberality of his donations, and the punctuality of his payments, attracted esteem and secured popularity. He at the same time displayed the

* Count Staremberg to the Emperor, June 8, 1725. Harrington Papers.

natural warmth and presumption of his temper. He poured forth, in public companies, the most bitter invectives against England, and made repeated declatations, that a refusal to give up Gibraltar, or to guaranty the engagements recently concerted between the two contracting powers, would be followed by an immediate attempt to assist the Pretender.

Ripperda quitted Vienna in the beginning of November. He passed through Italy, and taking ship at Genoa, disembarked at Barcelona. On landing there, he gave to the officers of the garrison, who crowded to pay their respects, an ample account of the transactions at Vienna, declaring that the Emperor had 150,000 troops ready to march at an hour's * warning, and that as many more could be brought into the field in six months. He spoke contemptuously of France, threatened the Hanoverian allies, if they should presume to oppose the designs of the Emperor and Philip; declared that France should be pillaged, that the king of Prussia would be crushed in one campaign, and that George the First would be deprived of his German territories by the Emperor, and of his British dominions by the Pretender. At the conclusion of theserodomontades, he continued his journey without delay, and rode post to Madrid, where he arrived on the 11th of December, in the afternoon; after a short interview with his wife, he repaired to the palace without changing his dress, and went to the antichamber. Applying to the lord in waiting for admission, he was informed that Grimaldo, the secretary of state, was with the king and queen of Spain, and that he could not be immediately admitted. He expressed, in terms of derision, his impatience and surprise that Grimaldo continued so long, and on his coming out took no notice of him, but desired the lord in waiting to announce his own arrival.

He was instantly admitted, and received with the highest marks of kindness and satisfaction †. The conference was long; and on the following day he was nominated minister and secretary of state, in the room of Grimaldo; all the other ministers, councils, and foreign ambassadors were ordered to transact business with him; and without the name of prime minister, he was invested with the same uncontrouled authority as had been enjoyed by Alberoni. But he possessed more turbulence, self-sufficiency, and haughtiness than the cardinal, without his address, resources, and incorruptible integrity, and the British ambassador, who knew his character well, observed, that without the spirit of prophecy, "One might foresee ten Alberoni's in this Ripperda, as Scylla did ten Marius's in Julius Cæsar."

It soon appeared that Ripperda possessed neither address or abilities sufficient to carry his gigantic schemes into execution; and the king, irritated by the disappointment of his sanguine hopes, and angry at having been the dupe

Chapter 35.
1728.

1725.
Returns to
Spain.

Appointed
prime minister.

His disgrace.

* W. Stanhope to lord Townshend. December 27. † *Memoires de Montgon*, tome i. p. 207, 208.

Period IV. of this superficial pretender, repeatedly told the queen, that Ripperda was
 1727 to 1730. a madman, and must be removed.

Sworn with vanity and presumption, he seemed, however, to defy all opposition. "I know," he said, "that the Spanish ministers and nation are irritated against me, but I laugh at their attempts. The queen, to whom I have rendered the most essential services, will protect me." And another time he exclaimed at a public levee, that he was shielded by six friends who would defend him against all intrigues, God, the Blessed Virgin, the emperor and empress, the king and queen of Spain *. But although Ripperda owed his elevation to the union he had formed between the courts of Vienna and Madrid, and appears, from this expression, to have perfectly understood, that his continuance in power could only be secured by supporting that system; yet such was his caprice or vanity, that soon after his establishment, he began to deviate from the line of conduct by which he had attained it. He relaxed in his attentions to count Konigseck, the imperial ambassador, and was suspected of endeavouring to form an union with those of Great Britain and Holland. This conduct rendered Konigseck his enemy; the incapacity of the minister became daily more apparent, and his vain-glorious boasting, produced nothing but the contempt and derision of the statesmen of every nation.

Under these circumstances, Don Joseph and Louis de Patinho, secured the protection of the queen, by the private recommendation of her confessor, Don Domingo da Guerra, who represented them as persons highly qualified to direct the helm of government, and well inclined to support the plans of Ripperda as far as they related to the aggrandisement of Don Carlos. They also gained the interest of count Konigseck by offers of supplying the imperial court with the promised subsidies. Both the queen and Konigseck now suffered the king's resentment against Ripperda to break out; they no longer counteracted the cabals of the Spanish ministers, nor concealed the clamours of the nation against an upstart, a convert, and a foreigner.

Ripperda at length perceiving that he was detested by the people, thwarted by the Spanish ministers, opposed by Konigseck, despised by the king, and declining in the favour of the queen, paid great court to the British and Dutch ambassadors, and made the most humble professions of respect and duty to the king of England. In the midst of these continued apprehensions and alarms, he was dismissed from the superintendence of the finances, under the pretence of delivering him from part of the burthen of government. Foreseeing that this would be speedily followed by the loss of all his employments, he requested the king's permission to retire from his service; but this demand was not complied with, and he continued to transact business

* *Memoires de Montgon*, tome i. p. 210.

till the 14th of May, when he received a letter from the marquis de la Paz, that the king accepted his resignation, and conferred on him a pension of 3,000 pistoles. The general satisfaction which this event diffused, and the tumultuous acclamations of the populace, who assembled in large bodies before his house, filled him with apprehensions of being massacred; and after writing a submissive letter to the king, he took refuge in the hotel of the British ambassador, who was with the court at Aranjuez.

On his return to Madrid, the evening of the 15th, Stanhope had a difficult part to act. It was of the greatest importance to obtain from Ripperda a communication of the secrets of the Spanish cabinet, and particularly an account of the negotiations which had recently taken place, and were then transacting between the courts of Vienna and Madrid, and yet be careful not to offend the king of Spain, by appearing to countenance a discarded minister, in opposition to the will of the sovereign in whose court he resided. The caution and prudence with which he conducted himself on this delicate occasion, reflects honour on his judgment, and contributed greatly to his future elevation. He contrived to give protection to the ex-minister, and to detain him in his house, until he had extorted from him all the secrets which he was willing or able to communicate.

Ripperda now betrayed to him the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna, and probably exaggerated the designs of the Emperor and the king of Spain, with a view to ingratiate himself with the king of England, and to exasperate the nation against those two monarchs who had occasioned his disgrace. He, who in the height of his power was so giddy and presumptuous, was now become so abject, that in making his disclosure, his whole frame shook with agitation, he appeared to be in the greatest agonies, and wept like a child.

For the purpose of conveying the intelligence communicated by Ripperda, which was of too much importance to be sent by the post, or even to be intrusted in a dispatch by a common courier, Keene, then consul general, afterwards ambassador in Spain, was dispatched to England. After communicating in person, the secret with which he was intrusted to the duke of Newcastle and the other ministers of state, he drew up, by order of the king, a letter to the duke of Newcastle, containing the substance of Ripperda's conversation, which is inserted in the correspondence.

After a negotiation of a few days, which passed between the Spanish court and the British ambassador, Ripperda was taken by force from his house, and transferred to the castle of Segovia, from whence he made his escape, after a confinement of fifteen months.

Imprisoned
in the castle
of Segovia.

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.
His escape.

The governor of the castle and his wife, being both invalid, could not pay constant attention to their prisoners, and the servant maid *, being seduced by the duke, contrived his escape, and effected it with the assistance of a corporal, who was one of the guards; while his faithful valet, with unexampled attachment, remained in his apartment, and for some time prevented intrusion, by declaring that his master was indisposed †. The duke had just recovered from a severe fit of the gout, and not without the greatest difficulty descended the ladder of ropes which was let down from the window of his apartment, and repaired to the place where a mule and a guide waited for him. Unable to continue riding he gave his mule to the guide, and hired a carriage, but proceeded so slowly that he employed five days in travelling to a small village on the frontiers of Portugal, where he remained until he was joined by his two confidants. With them he arrived at Miranda de Duero, the first town in Portugal, and from thence continued to Oporto, where he embarked for England, on board the *Charity*, under the name of Don Manuel de Mendosa ‡.

Arrives in
England.

The vessel was forced by contrary winds into Corke, and in the beginning of October, he landed at Comb martin, in Devonshire, with the young woman, the corporal, and a servant, and passed a few days at Exeter. Townshend and Walpole, apprised of his arrival and departure from Exeter, dispatched Corbiere, under secretary of state, to meet him on the western road, who conveyed him in a coach and four to Eton, where he was lodged incognito, in an apartment belonging to Dr. Bland, dean of Durham, and head master of the school. There he was met by Townshend, who received him with the greatest marks of attention, with a view to obtain from him fuller and more accurate information concerning the secret articles of the treaty of Vienna. After a residence of a few days at Eton, he departed with the same secrecy to London, where he arrived on the 13th. After continuing for some time incognito, he took a large house in Soho square, and a villa, and lived in a magnificent style. During his residence in England, he maintained an occasional correspondence with Walpole, and having made a rapid proficiency in the English language, conceived the chimerical hope of filling some high department in administration. While the differences with Spain were under discussion, and a possibility of a rupture with that country continued, the ministers kept up an amicable intercourse with Ripperda, which probably fed his delusion, and inflamed his ambition. But when the con-

* Campbell, in his *Memoirs of the Duke of Ripperda*, has converted the servant maid into the daughter of a Castilian nobleman, and the antiquated wife of the governor, into a sprightly and beautiful young woman.

† See letter from Keene to the duke of Newcastle, giving an account of Ripperda's escape. — *Correspondence*, Art. de Ripperda.

‡ *Memoires de Montgón*. Political State of Great Britain.

clusion of the treaty of Seville, contrary to his views and remonstrances, rendered his information no longer useful, he felt the pain of disappointed self-importance, and in the year 1731, withdrew in disgust to Holland.

Animated by a spirit of vengeance against Spain, which he found he could not satisfy among the powers of Europe, he embarked for Barbary, at the instigation of the ambassador from Morocco, entered into the service of the emperor Muley Abdallah, embraced the Mahometan religion, was created a bashaw, obtained the command of the army and the office of prime minister; and gained the entire confidence of the emperor. After several successes over the Spaniards, and defeating a competitor for the throne of Morocco, in which he gave signs of great courage and skill, he was worsted near Ceuta, and preserved his life, by resigning his command. He deserted Muley Abdallah, when dethroned by Muley Ali, and finally retired to Tetuan, where he lived under the protection of the bashaw, and died in 1737, at a very advanced age*.

Chapter 35.
1728.

Adventures.
in Morocco.

Death.

Cawthorn, in his poem on the Vanity of Human Enjoyments, has well delineated the capricious and motley character of Ripperda.

O pause, lest virtue every guard resign,
And the sad fate of Ripperda be thine.
This glorious wretch indulged at once to move
A nation's wonder and a monarch's love;
Blest with each charm politer courts admire,
The grace to soften, and the soul to fire,
Forsook his native bogs with proud disdain,
And, though a Dutchman, rose the pride of Spain.
This hour the pageant waves the Imperial rod,
All Philip's empire trembling at his nod;
The next disgrac'd, he flies to Britain's isle,
And courts the sunshine of a Walpole's smile.
Unheard, despis'd, to southern climes he steers,
And shines again at Salé and Algiers;
Bids pale Morocco all his schemes adore,
And pours her thunder on th' Hesperian shore:
All nature's ties, all virtue's creeds belied,
Each church abandon'd, and each God denied;
Without a friend his sepulchre to shield,
His carcase from the vultures of the field,
He dies, of all ambition's tons the worst
By Afric hated, and by Europe curst.

* This account of Ripperda is principally drawn from the dispatches of St Saphorin at Vienna, of William Stanhope at Madrid, and

from "An Account of Ripperda," by two Sicilian abbots, in the Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH:

1730.

Sanguine Hopes of Opposition that Walpole would be removed.—Their Efforts in Parliament.—Debates on the Imperial Loan—on the Pension Bill—on Dunkirk—and the Renewal of the East India Company's Charter.—Arrangement of the Ministry on the Resignation of Lord Townshend.—Characters of the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Harrington.

Coalition of
the Tories
and discon-
tented
Whigs.

ALTHOUGH the Tories had hitherto joined the discontented Whigs in their attacks against the minister, yet their coalition had never been hearty and sincere. They formed a separate body; and as they did not amount to less than one hundred and ten members, they considered themselves, both from their superior numbers and weight as country gentlemen, entitled rather to give than receive an impulse from the other parts of the minority. They did not therefore chuse to pay that regular attendance in parliament, which a constant and uniform warfare required from all those who, however differing in many points, were united in that of distressing the minister. But in the session which opened in 1730, a regular and systematic plan was formed by Bolingbroke, and carried into execution by means of his address and activity. His connection with Pulteney, as the joint manager of the Craftsman, gave him an influence over the Whigs; and his intimacy with Sir William Wyndham, secured to him the acquiescence of the Tories. He had persuaded the whole body, that notwithstanding the signature of the convention at Pardo, a peace with Spain still met with insuperable difficulties. That Philip had not relinquished his demand of Gibraltar; that the Spanish depredations would still continue to be committed with impunity; that the British commerce with Spain would either be suspended or annihilated. Measures were therefore concerted to call the ministers to account for their supineness and pusillanimity. The clamours thus excited, extremely popular in a nation jealous of its honour, and anxious to secure its commercial advantages, occasioned great discontents, as well amongst the friends as the enemies of the minister.

Conduct of
Bolingbroke.

Although the conclusion of the treaty of Seville, which was highly favourable to the commercial interests of England, and honourable to her national

Chapter 36.

1730.

Hopes of
opposition.

tional glory, disconcerted opposition, and overset the schemes of Bolingbroke in this particular, yet he was too able not to form another plan of attack. Having made a coalition between the discordant parties in the minority, and appointed a general muster in parliament, he still continued to animate the mass with fresh spirit. His labours were now turned to sow discord among the Hanoverian allies, to avail himself of a growing misunderstanding which had recently appeared between England and France, to encourage the Emperor to persist in his refusal to admit Spanish garrisons into Parma and Tuscany, and thus to counteract the execution of the treaty of Seville. Under his auspices, and by his direction, the opposition brought forwards many questions calculated to harass government, and to render themselves popular. The expectations formed by the disaffected were highly sanguine; and a notion prevailed both at home and abroad *, that the fall of the minister was unavoidable. Their hopes of success were founded on the disunion in the cabinet; on the supposed aversion of the king to Walpole, and on the disgust of the Whigs who adhered to Townshend.

June.

Debate on
the Imperial
loan.

The first trial of their strength was made on the question concerning the Imperial loan. The Emperor, by the treaty of Seville, having been deprived of liberal remittances from Spain, attempted to borrow £.400,000 in London. A bill was accordingly presented to the commons for preventing loans to foreign powers, without licence from the king under his privy seal. Had the ministry permitted the loan, they would have been abundantly and deservedly reproached: Advocates, however, against the prohibition were not wanting. The hardships of all restraints, the disadvantage to us, and the advantage to the Dutch, were specious pretences. Walpole took an active share in combating the arguments of opposition, and the question was carried †. A sufficient justification of the measure was, that the want of money compelled the court of Vienna to submit to terms of accommodation.

On the pen-
sion bill.

February 16.

The most popular and plausible measure proposed by opposition was, the pension bill, which was now *first introduced, and which from this period, became a never-failing topic of antiministerial attack and of ministerial defence. Sandys moved for leave to bring in a bill to disable all persons from sitting in parliament, who had any pension, or any offices held in trust for them from the crown, directly or indirectly; and for the purpose of enforcing this exclusion, he proposed that every member, on taking his seat, should swear that he had not any pension, directly

* Secret intelligence from Paris. Walpole Papers.

† Journals.

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.

March 3,
1730-1.

or indirectly, did not enjoy any gratuity or reward, or hold any office or place of trust; and that after having accepted the same, he would signify it to the house within fourteen days. Walpole, who knew the unpopularity of the arguments which could be urged against the bill, and appreciated the effect of those which would be brought in its favour, declined taking any active part against it, notwithstanding the express injunctions of the king *, who called it a villanous bill, and the disgust of Townshend, who was unwilling that the odium of its rejection should be cast upon the house of lords. He does not seem to have spoken in the debate, or to have exerted his usual influence; for while most of the questions supported or opposed by government, were passed or thrown out by a majority of more than two to one, the bill was carried by 144 against 134 †. It was negatived by the house of lords after a long debate ‡, and a protest entered by twenty-six peers. A similar fate attended it the next session; and during his whole administration, Sir Robert Walpole never made any strong opposition to it, but left it to be rejected by the upper house. It was now the generally received opinion, and not without foundation, that the minister suffered the pension bill to pass the house of commons, because he knew that it would be thrown out by the peers. Sandys therefore, in the subsequent Session, brought forward a motion for appointing a committee, to inquire whether any members had, directly or indirectly, any pensions, or any offices from the crown held in trust for them, in part, or in the whole. Walpole ventured to oppose it; he called it a motion for erecting the house into a court of inquisition, and urged, that it justified the treatment which the bill had met with in the upper house. He declared that the act, if passed, could not answer the end for which it was proposed, unless the house should assume to itself a power unknown to the constitution, namely, a power of compelling every member that was suspected, to accuse himself, not of any thing criminal, for it could not be criminal to take either place or pension from the crown, and in consequence of that construction, to dispossess half the counties and boroughs in England of their representatives. The arguments and influence of the minister prevailed, and the bill was thrown out, by 206 against 143 §. Yet such was the unpopularity of the rejection, that many members, suspected of having pensions or places held in trust, voted for it, lest their opposition might disoblige their constituents.

* Note from the king to lord Townshend. Correspondence.

† Journals. Tindal.

‡ Lord's Debates. Tindal.

§ Journals.

The stipulation to destroy the harbour of Dunkirk, made at the peace of Utrecht, and renewed in the treaty with France of 1717, had never been fully complied with. The French cabinet, always anxious to retain the use of a harbour, which, in case of a war with Great Britain, was situated so advantageously for the annoyance of our trade, continued clandestinely to prevent the demolition of the works. Frequent remonstrances were made by the English government, and promises extorted from the French cabinet, that the treaty should be carried into effect: but the inhabitants, either by the suggestion or connivance of the French government, kept the harbour and works in a state of repair.

This was a subject which gave great uneasiness to the minister, and on which he frequently expatiated in his letters to his brother, and even reproached him for neglecting to enforce the demolition. It was a point, however, of so much delicacy, that cardinal Fleury, though he constantly avowed his readiness to accede to the demands of the British minister, yet always eluded them, probably not daring to irritate the people of France by the enforcement of so disagreeable a command. The delays on this subject afforded to opposition a ground for insinuating that the ministry were in connivance with the court of France, to sanction the repairs of that harbour. Bolingbroke was well aware that nothing would more exasperate the public mind, than the persuasion that the French were employed in the reparation of that harbour; and if that fact could be proved, that the suspicion of conniving at it would fall upon the ministry: he was no less convinced, that it would weaken the credit of the minister abroad, if he could prove that France did not fulfil its engagements, and that a misunderstanding had arisen between the two kingdoms. To obtain evidence in support of these points, he sent his secretary, Brinsden, to inspect the state of the works at Dunkirk.

On the imperfect and exaggerated report of this agent, was founded a motion for an address, that "the king should direct that all orders, instructions, reports, and proceedings, had in regard to the port and harbour of Dunkirk, since its demolition, be laid before the house." The king having agreed to this address, the necessary documents were produced, which being read, and witnesses examined, Sir William Wyndham moved, that in what had been done relating to the harbour of Dunkirk, there was a manifest violation of the treaties between the two crowns. But before he was seconded, the other side made a motion for an address of thanks to the king, "for his attention to the interests of the nation, in causing a proper application to be made to the court of France, not only for putting a stop

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1727 to 1730.

to the works carrying on, but for demolishing such as had been made by the inhabitants of Dunkirk, for repairing the port and channel there; and to express their satisfaction in the good effects which his majesty's instances had had, by obtaining express orders from the most Christian king, for causing to be destroyed all the works that might have been erected at Dunkirk, contrary to the treaties of Utrecht and the Hague; and their reliance upon their being punctually executed; and further to declare their satisfaction in the firm union and mutual fidelity, which so happily subsisted and were so strictly preserved between the two nations *."

This unexpected motion, which prevented the discussion of that proposed by Sir William Wyndham, occasioned a long and warm debate, in which Walpole seems to have particularly distinguished himself. The great object of opposition was to draw over the Whigs, who usually supported government, and had lately wavered, under the plausible notion that the conduct of the minister had been in this instance contradictory to the principles and interests of their party. The object of the minister was to prove to the Whigs, that their principles and interests were no ways affected by this controversy, and that it was simply a Tory question. With great art he introduced a personal application, and made a most vigorous attack on Bolingbroke, who was particularly obnoxious to the Whigs, at whose instigation he insinuated this inquiry was made, and whose character and spirit of opposition he drew in the most unfavourable colours. Sir William Wyndham, provoked by the Philippic against his friend, defended him with uncommon energy, and drew a comparison between him and Walpole, in which he attempted to shew that Bolingbroke was by no means inferior in honesty and integrity to the minister. This comparison called up Henry Pelham, who ably seconded the attack against Bolingbroke, and excited such a general indignation among the Whigs, that the address was carried by 274 against 149 †. The loss of this question by so large a majority, which the opposition expected to have carried triumphantly, increased the popularity of the minister, and his credit abroad; and Horace Walpole, who took a considerable share in the debate, observes in a letter to Poyntz, this was the greatest day, both with respect to the thing itself, and the consequences, that had ever occurred within his memory, for the king and ministry, and must prove a thunder-bolt to their adversaries in England, as well as abroad, as it contradicted the assertions of opposition, that the king and the Whigs were dissatisfied with his brother's administration ‡.

* Tindal, vol. 20, p. 71.

† See Journals.

‡ Horace Walpole to lord Harrington and

Stephen Poyntz. March 2d, 1730. Correspondence.

Chapter 36.
1730.

On the renewal of the charter of the East India company.

Another object of great national interest, brought forward by opposition, was to prevent the renewal of the charter of the East India company, which was near its expiration, and to form another incorporated society without the exclusive privileges, which should grant licences, upon certain conditions, to all persons inclined to trade to the East Indies. The leading men in the minority, foreseeing that the company would apply to the legislature for the renewal of their charter, had secretly prevailed on many respectable merchants in the city to engage in the scheme. It had a popular tendency, from the general aversion which is always entertained against monopolies and exclusive privileges, by those who derive no immediate share from the emoluments; and was still farther recommended by the plausible pretence of easing the public burthens, by obtaining a large sum of money from the new incorporated society.

Having obtained information of their views, the minister laboured to counteract them. He was convinced that the trade could only be carried on by an exclusive company. The persons who were to form the new society, were wholly unacquainted with the secrets of the business, and unless the company could be induced to communicate information, and to part with its forts and settlements in the country, the trade might be reduced or annihilated. Having concerted his plan with a few of the directors, in whom he placed implicit confidence, and aware that the chief hopes of success conceived by opposition, were founded on the popular ground of obtaining sums of money for the use of the public, he anticipated their views, by insinuating to the house, that a part of his ways and means would be derived from the East India company. This unexpected turn surprised the minority, and wholly disconcerted their plan before it was brought to maturity. They had however proceeded so far in opening private subscriptions, and making engagements, that they could not recede*. A petition was therefore presented to the house by several merchants, traders, and others, offering to advance £. 3,200,000 at five payments, before the 25th of May 1733, at an interest of 5 per cent. to redeem the fund and trade of the East India company, provided the lenders might be incorporated and vested with their whole trade, yet so as not to trade with their joint stock, or in a corporate capacity, but the trade be open to all his majesty's subjects, upon licence from such proposed new company, desiring the same, on proper terms and conditions; and provided the trade be exercised to and from the port of

* Horace Walpole to lord Harrington, March 2. Correspondence.

London

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1727 to 1730.

London only; and be subject to redemption at any time upon three years notice, after a term of thirty-one years, and repayment of the principal.

After a long debate, the petition was rejected by a majority of 223 against 138*.

The opposition, however, were not intimidated by the rejection of this proposal. They had been taken unawares, and compelled, by the address of the minister, to bring it forward before it had been fully digested. They resolved therefore to introduce the business again, and employed the intervening time in publishing anonymous letters, essays in periodical papers, and pamphlets, against exclusive companies in general, and particularly against the East India company. All the arguments † which had ever been advanced against monopolies in this and other mercantile companies, were retailed on this occasion, and all the benefits which were supposed to result from a free trade, were magnified with great art and subtilty. The ministers and the East India company were not on their part silent; they likewise defended, with no less skill, the advantages of an united company, vested with exclusive privileges, and bound by peculiar regulations, under the controul of the legislature. The petition was again presented to the house of commons, on the 9th of April, and rejected without a division. While it was depending, the minister brought in his bill, which prolonged the charter to 1766, on the condition of paying £. 200,000 towards the supply of the year, and of reducing the interest of the money advanced to the public, from £. 160,000 to £. 120,000, or one per cent. by which bargain, the nation was benefited to the amount of at least a million.

Rice act.

An act which passed this session, though trifling in itself, yet must not be omitted, as it formed part of those commercial regulations which the minister was endeavouring gradually to introduce, by taking off several restraints that shackled foreign commerce. It seems to have been the first deviation from a general principle which had been established by the European nations who had dominions in America, to maintain an exclusive intercourse between the mother country and the colonies. The narrow spirit of this impolitic restriction, from which incredible advantages were supposed to result, but which in reality was productive of great inconveniencies, did not escape the notice of the minister; and he suffered an exception to be

* Journals.

† The reader will find the arguments, pro and con, in Anderson's History of Commerce,

who has treated the question with great judgment. Vol. 3. p. 156—162.

made of rice, as a perishable commodity. An act accordingly was passed, for granting liberty to carry rice from Carolina directly to any part of Europe, south of Cape Finisterre, in British bottoms, navigated by British sailors*. In consequence of this beneficial act, the plantations of rice were considerably increased in the province of Carolina: The good effects of this regulation induced the minister afterwards to extend the privilege to the colony of Georgia. And it is the observation of an eminent commercial writer, "that the consequence of both these well-judged laws has been, that the rice of the American plantations has been preferred to the rice of Verona and Egypt, which had before a general sale†."

Chapter 36.
1736.

The opposition moved in the course of the session for various papers, relating to foreign affairs. Of those they obtained, little use seems to have been made, except to furnish matter to the writers of pamphlets and essays in periodical papers. These publications now assumed such an air of violence and audacity, as seems to have alarmed the minister, perhaps too much, for it induced him to make it one of the topics of animadversion in the speech from the throne which terminated the session.

Close of the session.

The same day on which the house was prorogued, Townshend resigned. Lord Harrington was appointed secretary of state, Henry Pelham secretary at war, and the privy seal was given to the earl of Wilmington, on whose assistance opposition had relied with the most perfect security. In a few months after, he was created lord president of the council, which high office he held till the removal of Sir Robert Walpole.

May 15th.
Change of the ministry.

The charge of foreign affairs now ostensibly devolved on the duke of Newcastle and lord Harrington, whose characters form a remarkable contrast, though they acted together with the utmost cordiality.

Thomas Pelham Holles, duke of Newcastle, was son of Thomas lord Pelham, by Grace, sister of John Holles, duke of Newcastle. He was born in August 1693-4, and on the death of his father, in 1712, succeeded to the barony of Pelham: he inherited a large part of the great estate of his uncle, who had no issue male, and took the name of Holles. Being of a great Whig family, he strenuously promoted the succession of the line of Brunswick. Soon after the accession of George the First, he was created earl of Clare, and in 1715, duke of Newcastle. He supported the administration of his brother-in-law ‡ lord Townshend; but on the schism of the

Character of the duke of Newcastle.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 76.

† Anderson's Origin of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 164.

‡ The first wife of Charles viscount Townshend

was Elizabeth, daughter of lord Pelham by his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir William Jones, attorney general to Charles the Second.

Whig

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.

Whig administration in 1717, he attached himself to Sunderland, by whose influence he was appointed lord chamberlain of the household, and invested with the order of the garter. On the coalition which took place in 1720, between Sunderland and Townshend, he joined his former friend. During the struggle in the cabinet between Townshend and Walpole on one side, and Carteret and Cadogan on the other, he uniformly attached himself to the brother ministers. His devotion to their cause was so warm, and his consequence as one of the great Whig leaders so highly appreciated, that he was solely admitted into the most intimate confidence, and entrusted with the most secret transactions. In their private correspondence, they invariably style him their good friend: Townshend repeatedly desires Walpole to give information to the duke. In one place he expressly says, "When I desire you to communicate this to no one, I always except the duke of Newcastle," and Walpole no less frequently assures his correspondent, that he has no reserve for their common friend. When it became necessary to remove Carteret from the office of secretary of state, Newcastle was selected as the fittest person to fill that station, which in consequence of the alliance with France, was a post of the highest delicacy and importance.

Newcastle was thirty years of age when he was raised to this office, and as he succeeded Carteret, whose knowledge of foreign affairs, and talents for business were duly appreciated, his appointment to so important a trust was contemptuously spoken of, and the new secretary was considered as not capable of fully discharging the duties of his office. His outward appearance and manners, seemed to justify this observation. He was trifling and embarrassed in conversation, always eager and in a hurry to transact business, yet without due method. He was unbounded in flattery to those above him, or whose interest he was desirous to conciliate, and highly gratified with the grossest adulation to himself. The facility with which he made and broke his promises, became almost proverbial. He was not sufficiently considerate to his secretaries and subordinate clerks, exacting from them a large sacrifice of time and labour; and to his immediate dependants he was fretful and capricious.

With these unfavourable appearances, he gave few symptoms of the talents which he undoubtedly possessed. In fact, he had much better abilities than are usually attributed to him. He had a quick comprehension; he was an useful and frequent debater in the house of peers; had an answer ready on all occasions, and spoke with great animation, though with little arrangement, and without grace or dignity. He wrote with uncommon facility,

facility, and with such fluency of words, that no one ever used a greater variety of expressions; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that in his most confidential letters, written with such expedition as to be almost illegible, there is scarcely a single erasure or alteration.

His temper was peevish and fretful, and he was always jealous of those with whom he acted. Of this jealousy, Townshend occasionally complained in his private correspondence with Horace Walpole, and in one instance, he particularly observes, "This was my view in sending a projet mitoyen, but my dear friend the duke looks upon the thoughts of any body else as reflections upon his own; and instead of considering the use that may be made of what is suggested by another, looks upon it as a personal thing, and runs out into a long justification of his own performances, which nobody finds fault with*." Sir Robert Walpole also repeatedly insinuated to his correspondents, not to omit writing confidentially to Newcastle, and exhorted them rather to neglect him than the duke, who would be grievously offended by the smallest omission. This jealousy, suppressed in some measure during his subordinate situation under lord Townshend, and for some time after his resignation, increased as he advanced in years, was highly troublesome to the minister of the house of commons, and created so much disgust, as to occasion frequent altercations.

George the Second had conceived a very early and violent antipathy to the duke of Newcastle, which was augmented by the discordancy of their tempers and habits, particularly by his deficiency in method and exactness, which the king considered as essential characteristics of a minister. The representations of Walpole, on the necessity of conciliating a man so powerful from family and party connections, had induced the king to moderate or conceal his repugnance; but his dislike broke out occasionally into bitter expressions of contempt and aversion. In one of these discontented moods, he said to a confidential person, "You see that I am compelled to take the duke of Newcastle to be my minister, who is not fit to be chamberlain in the smallest court of Germany."

With these habits, and this disposition, and under the necessity of struggling against the deep-rooted aversion of George the Second, it is a matter of surprise that he so long retained his power; for if we reckon from his first promotion to the post of lord chamberlain, to his resignation at the commencement of the reign of George the Third, he continued to fill a high situation at court for a period of six and forty years. This long continuance in office

* Walpole Papers.

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1727 to 1730.

was owing to his situation as the chief leader of the Whigs, to his princely fortune and profusion of expence, to the high integrity and disinterestedness of his character, and to the uniform support which he gave to the house of Brunswick.

As a subordinate minister, acting under superior influence, his zeal and activity were highly useful; and his want of order and warmth of temper, were counteracted and modified by the method and prudence of Walpole. But when he was placed at the head of affairs, he became distracted * with the multiplicity of business, yet unwilling to divide it with others. Weakness of counsels, fluctuation of opinion, and deficiency of spirit, marked his administration during an inglorious period of sixteen years, from which England did not recover, until the mediocrity of his ministerial talents, and the indecision of his character, were controuled by the ascendancy of Pitt.

Character of
lord Har-
rington.

His colleague in office, William Stanhope, (descended from Sir John Stanhope, brother of Philip the first earl of Chesterfield) was third son of John Stanhope of Elvaston, in Derbyshire, and after receiving a learned education, he entered into the profession of arms; served in Spain under his kinsman James, afterwards earl Stanhope, and after several promotions, obtained, in 1715, a regiment of horse. He was chosen in the first parliament of the reign of George the First, for the town of Derby; and in 1717, appointed envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the king of Spain. On the rupture which broke out between Spain and England in 1718, he was named envoy and plenipotentiary to the court of Turin. In May 1721 he served as a volunteer in the French army commanded by marshal Berwick, which laid siege to Fontarabia. During this war, he concerted a plan for the destruction of three Spanish ships of the line, and a great quantity of naval stores, in the port of St. Andero, in the Bay of Biscay; an English squadron effected that enterprize; he himself contributed to the execution, by accompanying a detachment of troops, which Berwick sent at his solicitation, and was the first that leaped into the water when the boats approached the shore †.

On the peace with Spain, he was constituted brigadier general, and returned to Madrid in the same character as before. During his residence at that court, he was witness to many extraordinary events, which he has ably detailed in his dispatches. The abdication of Philip the Fifth, the succession and death of Louis, the resumption of the crown by Philip, the return of the Spanish infanta, the separation of Spain from France, and union with

* Lord Harvey, in a letter to Horace Walpole, said of him, "that he did nothing in the

same hurry and agitation, as if he did every thing." Correspondence, Period V.

† Collins's Peerage.

the house of Austria, and the rise and fall of Ripperda. He manifested great firmness and discretion when that minister was forcibly taken from his house; and his conduct on this occasion, principally impressed the king and the ministers with a deep sense of his diplomatic talents, and contributed to his future elevation.

On the rupture with Spain, which commenced with the siege of Gibraltar, he returned to England, and was appointed vice chamberlain to the king, and soon afterwards nominated, in conjunction with Horace Walpole and Stephen Poyntz, plenipotentiary at the congress of Soissons.

He had now two great objects in view, a peerage, and the office of secretary of state. But he had to struggle as well against the ill-will of the king, who was highly displeased with his brother Charles Stanhope, as against the prejudices of Sir Robert Walpole, who, deeply impressed with a recollection of the conduct of earl Stanhope at Hanover, had taken an aversion to the very name. It required all the influence of the duke of Newcastle, and the friendship of Horace Walpole, to surmount these obstructions; which were not removed until he had gained an accession to his diplomatic character, by repairing to Spain, and concluding the treaty of Seville. His merits in that delicate negotiation, extorted the peerage from the king; and on the resignation of lord Townshend, he was nominated secretary of state. In that office, his knowledge of foreign affairs, his application to business, his attention to diplomatic forms, the solemnity of his deportment, the precision of his dispatches, and his propensity to the adoption of vigorous measures against France, on the death of Augustus the Second, rendered him highly acceptable to the king. Having offended queen Caroline, by affecting to set up an interest independent of her, he would have been removed, had not his prudence and caution again conciliated her favour.

He never cordially coalesced with Sir Robert Walpole; and although he almost uniformly acted in subservience to his views, he looked up to the duke of Newcastle as his patron and friend, and gave many instances in which he sacrificed his own interests, even in opposition to the commands of the king, to gratitude and friendship. He was a man of strong sense and moderation; of high honour and disinterested integrity; and so tenacious of his word, that Philip of Spain said of him, "Stanhope is the only foreign minister who never deceived me." He was of a mild and even temper, and had contracted, by long habit, so much patience and phlegm, that he was characterised by the Portuguese minister, Don Arevalo *, as "*not being accustomed to interrupt*

* Orford Papers.

Period IV. *those who spoke to him.*" A contemporary historian * has also farther described him as one whose moderation, good sense, and integrity, were such, that he was not considered as a party man, and had few or no personal enemies. Although he never spoke in the house of peers, yet he was highly useful in recommending to the cabinet the most prudent method of attack or defence, and in suggesting hints to those who were endowed with the gift of the tongue.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH:

1730.

Origin and Progress of the Disagreement between Townshend and Walpole.—Resignation—Retreat and Death of Townshend.

Causes of the
disagreement
between
Townshend
and Wal-
pole.

THE treaty of Seville was the concluding act of Townshend's administration; it was signed on the 9th of November 1729, and on the 16th of May he retired in disgust from the office of secretary of state. His resignation was owing to a disagreement with his brother in law and co-adjutor, Sir Robert Walpole, which had long subsisted. It had been occasionally compromised by the interference of common friends, but finally broke into a rupture, which rendered the continuance of both in office incompatible.

The causes of this misunderstanding were various, and originated from the difference of their tempers, from disagreement on subjects of domestic and foreign politics, from political and private jealousy.

Townshend was frank, impetuous, and overbearing; long accustomed to dictate in the cabinet, and fond of recommending violent measures. Walpole was mild, insinuating, pliant, and good-tempered; desirous of conciliating by lenient methods, but prepared to employ vigour when vigour was necessary.

The rough and impetuous manners of Townshend, began to alienate the king, and disgust the queen. All the members of the cabinet were no less dissatisfied with him. Newcastle, in particular, was anxious to remove a minister, who absolutely directed all foreign affairs, and who rendered him a mere cypher. He wished to procure the appointment of lord Harrington, who already owed his peerage to him, and who, he flattered himself, would act in subservience to his dictates.

To these public causes of misunderstanding, derived from a desire of pre-eminence, a private motive was unfortunately added. The family of Townshend had long been the most conspicuous, and accustomed to take the lead, as the only one then distinguished by a peerage, in the county of Norfolk; the Walpoles were subordinate both in estate and consequence, and Houghton was far inferior in splendour to Rainham*. But circumstances were much altered. Sir Robert Walpole was at the head of the treasury, a peerage had been conferred on his son, the increase of his paternal domains, the building of a magnificent seat, the acquisition of a superb collection of paintings, a sumptuous stile of living, and affable manners, drew to Houghton a conflux of company, and eclipsed the more sober and less splendid establishment at Rainham.

Walpole had long been considered as the first minister in all business relating to the internal affairs: he was the principal butt of opposition, for the name of Townshend scarcely once occurs in the Craftsman, and the other political papers against government, while that of Walpole is seen in almost every page.

His influence over the queen had, on the accession of George the Second, prevented the removal of Townshend. He managed the house of commons, and was supported by a far greater number of friends than his brother minister could boast, who had little parliamentary influence, and still less personal credit.

Walpole felt, in all these circumstances, his superior consequence; he was conscious that he should be supported by the queen, and was unwilling to continue to act in a subordinate situation; while Townshend, who had long been used to dictate, could not bear any opposition to his sentiments, or any resistance to his views. He considered his brother minister as one who had first enlisted himself under his banners, and who ought to continue to act with the same implicit obedience to his commands. Hence a struggle for power ensued.

* Rainham was built by Inigo Jones for Sir Roger Townshend.

Period IV.
1727 to 1730.

Townshend had hitherto possessed what the French call *la feuille des benefices*, and had been the principal dispenser of ecclesiastical preferments. This great object of ministerial influence was naturally coveted by Walpole, and had occasioned frequent disputes. In many points of domestic administration, the violence of Townshend's measures was reprobated and opposed by Walpole, particularly in the business of Wood's coinage; in the haughty manner of writing to the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant of Ireland; and in the measures adopted in the riots in Scotland in 1725. In foreign affairs, Walpole affected not to interfere, declaring that he did not understand them, and that they did not belong to his department; yet he always opposed, as much as lay in his power, all complicated engagements, and uniformly objected to the too lavish expenditure of the public money in the formation of alliances, which he often considered as useless and chimerical. His remonstrances had produced a sensible effect in opposition to the sentiments of Townshend; but it was particularly in the negotiation for the treaty of Hanover, that a wide difference of opinion had subsisted. He expressed his disapprobation at the precipitate manner in which it was concluded, and was offended that such an important step had been taken without a due communication to him.

He was still more dissatisfied when the Danish subsidy became due. For as France avoided paying her share, and the whole burthen fell upon England, he, as minister of finance, was under the necessity of finding resources to supply the deficiency.

In several dispatches from the foreign ministers in 1725 and 1726, frequent mention is made of the growing misunderstanding between Townshend and Walpole, and a rupture is described as unavoidable. Yet these bickerings and occasional instances of discordant sentiments, did not alienate the brother ministers. They continued to act together, and on the accession of George the Second, the removal of one would have been followed with the resignation of the other. Their union at this period was so close, and the opinion which Walpole entertained of Townshend so favourable, that in 1727, when Townshend was in imminent danger, Walpole expressed, in terms of affection and concern, his apprehensions of the loss which the cause would sustain from his death; "he considered him as the bulwark of the constitution; and trusted that Providence would interpose to save the man, without whom all ~~must~~ fall to the ground *."

These disputes had been frequently allayed by the interposition of lady

* See Correspondence, Period IV.

Townshend; she had, like an Octavia between Anthony and Augustus, by a discreet exertion of her influence as wife and sister, moderated the asperities of the contending politicians. But her mediation had unfortunately ceased by her death, which happened in March 1726.

Queen Caroline observed the growing misunderstanding between the brother ministers, and when the rupture became unavoidable, gave her support to Walpole in preference to Townshend. By her influence, he soon obtained the preponderance.

Townshend, thus reduced to act a secondary part, was resolved to make an effort to recover his former power, by forming a new administration, and removing the duke of Newcastle, whose official jealousy, and attempts to raise lord Harrington to the office of secretary of state, had displeased him, and placing his friend lord Chesterfield, who had long aspired to that station, in his stead. Full of these projects, he accompanied the king to Hanover; and as he was the only English minister of the cabinet abroad, he embraced the favourable opportunity of ingratiating himself. He became more obsequious to the king's German prejudices, paid his court with unceasing assiduity, and appeared to have gained so much influence, that he thought himself capable of obtaining the appointment of Chesterfield, who was at this time ambassador at the Hague, and had considerably distinguished himself in his diplomatic capacity. At the suggestion of lord Townshend, when he waited on the king in his passage through Holland, he requested and obtained permission to attend him to London. When Townshend offered the place of secretary of state to Chesterfield, he inquired if he had secured the queen; his answer implied no doubt. But the very choice he had made was in itself sufficient to counteract his success. Chesterfield had offended the queen by the court he paid to lady Suffolk, and she exerted all her influence with the king, which was seldom exerted in vain, to frustrate the scheme.

Such an attempt, however secretly conducted, could not escape the observation of Walpole. He conferred with the queen on the proper means of averting the design, and the communications he received from her in this and other particulars, inflamed his resentment. On quitting the palace after one of these conferences, he met Townshend at colonel Selwyn's, in Cleveland Court, in the presence of the duke of Newcastle, Mr. Pelham, colonel and Mrs. Selwyn. The conversation turned on a foreign negotiation, which at the desire of Walpole had been relinquished. Townshend, however, still required that the measure should be mentioned to the commons, at the same time

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1730.

Influence and death of lady Townshend.

The queen favours Walpole.

Prevents the appointment of Chesterfield.

Altercation between Townshend and Walpole.

1729.

that

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1727 to 1730.

that the house should be informed that it was given up. Walpole objecting to this proposal as inexpedient, and calculated only to give unnecessary trouble, Townshend said, "Since you object, and the house of commons is your concern more than mine, I shall not persist in my opinion; but as I now give way, I cannot avoid observing, that upon my honour I think that mode of proceeding would have been most advisable." Walpole, piqued at these expressions, lost his temper, and said, "My lord, for once, there is no man's sincerity which I doubt so much as your lordship's, and I never doubted it so much as when you are pleased to make such strong professions." Townshend, incensed at this reproach, seized him by the collar, Sir Robert laid hold of him in return, and then both, at the same instant, quitted their hold, and laid their hands upon their swords. Mrs. Selwyn, alarmed, attempted to go out and call the guards, but was prevented by Pelham. But although their friends interposed to prevent an immediate duel, yet the contumelious expressions used on this occasion, rendered all attempts to heal the breach ineffectual.

Their difference as to foreign affairs.

Great difference of opinion had also arisen in regard to foreign affairs. When Townshend accompanied the king abroad, in May 1729, he considered the Emperor as the sole cause of the obstacles which impeded a general pacification, and immediately on his arrival at Hanover, plunged into the chaos of German politics. He was so much incensed against the Emperor, and so vehemently inclined to compel him to accede to the admission of Spanish garrisons into Parma and Leghorn, that he promoted, to the utmost of his power, the conclusion of a subsidiary alliance with the four electors of the Rhine, by which England could not have guaranteed the pragmatic sanction during the existence of that alliance. On the contrary, Walpole, anxious not to do any thing which might render England incapable for a time to gratify the Emperor in his favourite project, secretly opposed the conclusion of the treaty, and laboured to reconcile the discordant politics of Spain and Austria, or if that was impossible, to conciliate Spain without too much irritating the Emperor.

This collision of opinions naturally increased the misunderstanding, led them to counteract each other, and to strive for pre-eminence in the cabinet.

Townshend effectually recommends Methuen.

Having failed in raising Chesterfield to the office of secretary of state, Townshend made a last attempt to obtain that place for Sir Paul Methuen, in which he was equally unsuccessful. These disappointments increased his natural irritability, which he vented in peevish expressions against Lord Harrington; and these reproaches, probably exaggerated by the duke of Newcastle, increased the animosities in the cabinet.

At

At length the contest was brought to a crisis. Townshend seems to have obtained the good-will of the king by representing, that he was the only support of his German interest, that lord Harrington had neglected pressing the plan of operations against the Emperor, and that Hanover would be sacrificed by the new arrangements. Under these circumstances, the duke of Newcastle had written, with the approbation of the Walpoles, a dispatch to the plenipotentiaries at Soissons, dissuading an attack of the Austrian Netherlands, advising that an army should be assembled on the banks of the Rhine, for the purpose of threatening the frontiers of Bohemia; but strongly recommending, that before this plan was concerted with France, proposals of accommodation should be presented to the Emperor. But before the letter was submitted to the king, Townshend had written to him, enforcing the necessity of forming a plan of hostile operations before any declaration was made, for the purpose of compelling the king of Prussia to submit, and reducing the Emperor to accept of the terms dictated by England and her allies.

The king approved this advice, and ordered Townshend to communicate his resolution to the duke of Newcastle and Horace Walpole, that instructions might be forwarded to the plenipotentiaries, in conformity to that opinion. Townshend accordingly sent the letter, with the king's answer, to Horace Walpole, and went into Norfolk for a few days. In this dilemma, the duke despaired of success, and proposed to act agreeably to the dictates of Townshend. But Sir Robert Walpole communicated Newcastle's dispatch to the queen, and obtained, through her influence, the assent of the king, who expressed his full approbation of the contents.

Townshend, finding that his personal influence with the king was not sufficient to counteract the exertions of his rivals, opposed by the queen, and deserted by the remaining members of the cabinet, gave in his resignation, and retired from public affairs.

Resigns.

In several letters to his confidential correspondents abroad, which are still extant in the Rainham Collection, Townshend attributes his resignation principally to the effects of his dangerous illness in 1727, which rendered him incapable of supporting the fatigues of his place, but hints at the same time with great delicacy at the coolness and misintelligence which had arisen between him and Sir Robert Walpole, and to the disgust he had recently received from that quarter, which fortified his resolution. At the same time he adds, with great spirit and dignity, that he is happy to announce that his retreat will not make any alteration in public affairs, and that he never could have resolved to quit his situation, if he had not been fully convinced that

Explains the motives of his resignation.

Period IV. 1727 to 1730. Walpole would follow the same principles, and carry on the same measures which had been hitherto pursued. In his letter to Slingelandt, he observes, "the king has had the goodness to permit me to retire in the most obliging manner, and has most graciously received the assurances, which I took the liberty to make, that notwithstanding my resignation, I should always be ready to furnish all the eclairsissements in my power, whenever it shall be deemed necessary for his service."

Retirement. Townshend retired with a most unfulfilled character for integrity, honour, and disinterestedness, and gave several striking proofs that he could command the natural warmth of his temper, and rise superior to the malignant influence of party spirit and disappointed ambition. The opposition, who had formed sanguine expectations of the consequences of the disunion in the cabinet, were prepared to receive him with open arms, but he resisted their advances, and firmly persevered in his original determination. Soon after Chesterfield commenced his ardent opposition to Walpole, he went to Rainham, and requested Townshend to attend an important question in the house of lords. Townshend replied, that he had formed a resolution which he could not break, of never again engaging in political contests. "I recollect," he added, "that lord Cowper, though a staunch Whig, had been betrayed by personal pique and party resentment, in his opposition to the ministry, to throw himself into the arms of the Tories, and even to support principles which tended to serve the cause of the Jacobites. I know that I am extremely warm; and I am apprehensive if I should attend the house of lords, I also may be hurried away by the impetuosity of my temper, and by personal resentment, to adopt a line of conduct, which in my cooler moments I may regret." He maintained this honourable and truly patriotic resolution; and thus proved himself worthy of the highest eulogium.

He passed the evening of his days in the pursuit of rural occupations and agricultural experiments; his improvements ameliorated the state of husbandry, his hospitality endeared him to his neighbours, and the dignity of his character insured respect. Apprehensive of being tempted again to enter into those scenes of active life, which he had resolved totally to abandon, he never revisited the capital, but died at Rainham, in 1738, aged 64.

Death. Notwithstanding the asperity with which this contest was conducted, the brothers seem to have renounced their friendship without forfeiting their esteem for each other. Townshend did not indulge in peevish expressions against his successful rival, and Sir Robert Walpole never blamed the ministerial conduct or depreciated the abilities of lord Townshend. He was always unwilling to enter into the causes of their disunion; when an intimate friend pressed him

him on the subject some years afterwards, he made several attempts to evade the question, and at length replied, "It is difficult to trace the causes of a dispute between statesmen, but I will give you the history in a few words; as long as the firm of the house was Townshend and Walpole, the utmost harmony prevailed; but it no sooner became Walpole and Townshend, than things went wrong, and a separation ensued *.

* The contents of this chapter are derived from the letters in the Correspondence.—Etough's Papers.—The late Earl of Hardwicke's Memorandums.—Maty's Life of Lord Chester-

field.—Communications from the late earl of Orford, lord Sydney, and his brother Charles Townshend, esquire.

PERIOD THE FIFTH:

From the Resignation of Lord TOWNSHEND, to the Dissolution
of the Parliament.

1730—1734.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH:

1730—1731.

Walpole inclines to a Reconciliation with the Emperor.—Negotiations which preceded and terminated in the Treaty of Vienna.—Treaty of Seville carried into Execution.—Transactions in Parliament.—General Satisfaction.—Character of Earl Waldegrave, the new Ambassador at Paris.

Walpole conducts foreign affairs.

THE resignation of Townshend placed Walpole in a new point of view. Hitherto he had taken no public part in foreign affairs, and had only indirectly influenced the current negotiations, either through the private interposition of the queen, or the medium of his brother, and he affected to leave the sole direction of those matters to the secretary of state. But the removal of Townshend instantly changed his situation. The duke of Newcastle for some time continued to act the same subordinate part as before; and the new secretary, lord Harrington, received his impulse from the minister of the finance, or from his brother Horace. Walpole, therefore, now took a more open and decided place in the regulation of foreign transactions, and his opinion seems to have principally contributed to the renewal of the ancient

Chapter 38.
1730 to 1731.

Promotes a
reconciliation
with the
Emperor.

ancient connection with the house of Austria, with whom England had been so long in a state of open defiance.

He had sagaciously appreciated the advantages which resulted to England from the alliance with France, was convinced, that an union with that power had effectually hurt the cause of the Pretender, and counteracted the schemes of the Jacobites. He was aware that France, during the minority of Louis the Fifteenth, or under the government of a prime minister like Cardinal Fleury, of a pacific and timid disposition, was a very proper ally in a defensive treaty, to check and prevent the designs of the Emperor, who had formed schemes and alliances detrimental to the security and commerce of England. He well knew that ministers of a free nation must sometimes be obliged to contract new engagements, in opposition to those powers with whom they would have been willing to have lived in the strictest friendship, upon just and honourable terms*.

He had therefore concurred with Townshend, in warmly promoting the alliance with France, and was not deterred by the popular outcry, that the measures of the cabinet were directed to lower our natural ally, the house of Austria, and exalt France, our natural enemy, from pursuing a plan which secured to England internal tranquillity and external peace. The improvement of our commerce and manufactures were a full justification of this wise measure.

But things were now considerably changed. The solid establishment of the house of Hanover on the throne of Great Britain, and the number of Jacobites who, on the quiet accession of George the Second, renounced their principles, had lessened the danger of internal commotions, and rendered the co-operation of France in favour of the Pretender, less an object of alarm.

The relative situation of France was no less changed. Morville, the friend of England, had been dismissed from the office of secretary of state, and his successor, Chauvelin, the enemy of England, governed Cardinal Fleury. A reconciliation had taken place between France and Spain, and the ancient jealousy between France and England began to revive on both sides.

In consequence of this alteration of circumstances, France acted from policy an indecisive and wavering part. When the Emperor, in opposition to the arrangements made by the allies of Seville, had declared, that if Spanish troops should enter Tuscany, he would drive them out, it became necessary

State of the
French cabinet.

* The Interest of Great Britain steadily pursued, p. 26.

Period V. 1750 to 1734. either to force him to execute that treaty, or to prevail upon him, by the guaranty of his favourite object, the pragmatic sanction. Cardinal Fleury affected to co-operate with England, in obtaining the consent of the Emperor, either by force or persuasive means; but artfully threw obstacles in the way of both. Various schemes for effecting that end were proposed. It was the great object of England to prevent the invasion of the Low Countries, and to confine principally the seat of war to Sicily, or at least to Italy. It was the view of the French to extend it to the other parts of the Austrian dominions, under the hopes of making conquests on the side of Germany and the Low Countries.

When the two nations were actuated with such different views, no coincidence of opinion could be expected. France objected to all schemes, either of compulsion or compromise, and endeavoured to throw the blame of inactivity on the English and Dutch. Meanwhile Spain complained bitterly that the treaty of Seville was not executed, and that Parma and Tuscany, for the attainment of which she had acceded to the quadruple alliance, were on the point of being lost.

Negotiations
at Vienna.

Walpole now perceived that the strict alliance with France would no longer be maintained. He had two objects in view, the one, according to his own expressions, to avoid a war with the Emperor, for fear of its consequences, and the other with Spain, on account of our trade, and the only method of effecting both these purposes was to renew the ancient connection with the house of Austria, and to lure the Emperor to accede to the treaty of Seville, with the promise of guarantying the pragmatic sanction.

On these interesting topics he maintained a correspondence with his brother, Horace Walpole, ambassador at Paris; combated his opinion in favour of continuing the friendship with France, and gradually brought him over to approve a negotiation with the house of Austria.

The Emperor had, before the treaty of Seville, endeavoured to open a separate negotiation with England, and since its conclusion had thrown out hints to our ambassador at Vienna, that a thorough reconciliation might easily be effected. In consequence of these insinuations, the British cabinet decided on making the attempt, and lord Harrington announced this resolution in an official dispatch to Mr. Robinson, who had succeeded earl Waldegrave in the embassy to Vienna *.

An answer being transmitted, that the Imperial court was inclined, with every appearance of sincerity, on their part, to renew their ancient connection with

* September 14-25, 1736. Correspondence, Period V.

England, on fair and reasonable conditions, farther instructions were forwarded from the secretary of state, together with the plans of treaties and declarations to be signed by the Emperor, both in regard to the disputes with England, and to the king's German affairs *.

Chapter 36.
1730 to 1731.

While this negotiation was pending, the delay gave such umbrage to the king of Spain, that he declared, by the Marquis of Castillar, his ambassador at Paris, that he considered himself free from all engagements contracted on his part by the treaty of Seville, and at full liberty to adopt such measures as should be most suitable to his interests.

Jan. 29.

Soon after these transactions, the duke of Parma died; the duchess, his widow, declared herself pregnant: the Emperor, with the secret connivance of England, took possession of Parma, making at the same time a declaration, that if the duchess should be delivered of a son, the introduction of the Spanish troops should take place; if of a daughter, Don Carlos should instantly receive the investiture of Parma and Placentia, from the Emperor and empire.

Death of the
duke of Parma.

In opening this negotiation, the British cabinet had declared it to be the determined resolution of the king to make the treaty of Seville the basis of the new alliance, and the securing to Don Carlos the succession to Tuscany and Parma was held out as an indispensable article. The minister was aware that the best method to obtain peace was to be prepared for war, and that the only successful means for carrying the treaty of Seville into effect, were to be ready to enforce its execution by vigorous measures. The speech which the king delivered from the throne on the meeting of parliament, was drawn up by him in conformity with these sentiments. After declaring, that every measure was adopted to prevent, by an accommodation, the fatal consequences of a general rupture; and that it was impossible to state the supplies which would be required for the current service of the year, until peace or war should be decided upon, it concluded with these strong expressions:

Parliamentary proceedings.

Jan. 26.

"The time draws near, which will admit of no farther delays. If the tranquillity of Europe can be settled without the effusion of blood, or the expence of public treasure, that situation will certainly be most happy and desirable. But if that blessing cannot be obtained, honour, justice, and the sacred faith due to solemn treaties, will call upon us to exert ourselves, in procuring by force, what cannot be had upon just and reasonable terms."

The negotiation was carried on with so much address and secrecy, that al-

* Lord Harrington to Mr. Robinson, Dec. 4-15, 1730.

† Journals.

though

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though some rumour of it had transpired, and hints had been thrown out in the *Craftsman*, yet the debate on the side of the minority was conducted on a supposition, that England was preparing for a war with the Emperor, to execute the treaty of Seville by force, and an amendment to the address was proposed, that the king should be requested not to concur in a war against the Emperor, either in Flanders or on the Rhine. But when this proposition was negatived, a more plausible amendment was suggested by opposition (who artfully availed themselves of the prejudice conceived against the king for his attachment to Hanover) they proposed to insert, that they would support his majesty's engagements, so far as they related to the interest of Great Britain. In answer to this proposal, Walpole did not hesitate to declare, "That such an expression in their address would seem to insinuate, that the king had entered into engagements that did not relate to the interests of Great Britain, which would be a great instance of ingratitude towards the king, who in all his measures had never shewed the least regard to any thing but the interest of Great Britain, and the ease and security of the people; as all those who had the honour to serve him could testify, and upon their honour declare; that he hoped every member of that house was convinced, that the king would never enter into any engagement that was not absolutely necessary for procuring the happiness and insuring the safety of his subjects, and therefore it was quite unnecessary to confine the words of their address to such engagements as related to the interest of Great Britain *."

Nothing was said directly in answer to this assertion, though so much might have been said. It was only urged, that to support any hostile operations against the Emperor on the Rhine, was absolutely destructive to the interests of Great Britain, tending to the total subversion of the balance of power; that the house had good reason to believe that no minister would dare to advise the king to such a measure; and the member who used these strong expressions, concluded by opposing the amendment as unnecessary, the address was therefore carried without a division. It was also drawn up by the minister, and after acknowledging, in terms of gratitude, the king's goodness, "in endeavouring to have the conditions of the treaty of Seville fulfilled and executed, in such manner as might best secure a general pacification, and be conformable to his engagements with his allies," declared "that they would, with all cheerfulness, grant such supplies as should be necessary for the service of the ensuing year, and effectually enable the king to make good his engagements †."

Unanimity
and zeal.

The unanimity and vigour of this address, which was equally adopted by

* Chandler.

† Ibid.

the house of peers, had a great effect on the transactions abroad, and gave energy to the negotiations at Vienna.

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In consequence of the adoption of these measures, lord Harrington expressed to the British minister at Vienna, the king's disapprobation of the delays and obstacles with which the Imperial court clogged the progress of the negotiations, replied to the counter project of the Emperor, gave farther instructions, and sent the ultimatum of the cabinet.

Obstructions
to the Aus-
trian alliance.

Notwithstanding these remonstrances, the ministry well knew that the obstacles were derived no less from the pertinacity of the Hanoverian, than the haughtiness of the Imperial court, and one of the great difficulties which occurred in concluding an accommodation, arose from blending the affairs of Germany with those of England.

Robinson had been particularly ordered * "to continue the greatest friendship and confidence towards Dieden, the Hanoverian agent at Vienna, and act in perfect concert with him in every thing, wherein the king's interests were concerned: And to employ his best offices and instances with the Imperial ministers, for procuring the most effectual redress and satisfaction to the king upon the several demands which Dieden was instructed to make for that purpose to the court of Vienna."

These objects of contention between the Emperor and the king, as elector of Hanover, were so various, complicated, and delicate, that the treaty would never have been concluded, had the British minister at Vienna insisted, according to his official orders, upon a full and satisfactory answer to all the points in dispute. Fortunately, the cabinet of London, influenced by Walpole, had the courage to cut the Gordian knot, which it could not unloose; lord Harrington, in a private letter, instructed Mr. Robinson † to sign the treaty with England, and to refer the German affairs to a future decision.

Removed.

Another great difficulty in conducting this negotiation, arose from an erroneous opinion, formed by the Emperor, that the ministers of the English cabinet were disunited, and from a jealousy that the two Walpoles, who were known to direct the helm of government, were favourable to the alliance with France, and consequently hostile to the house of Austria. This notion had been supported by the duchess of Kendal, in her correspondence with the Empress, and corroborated by some leading members of opposition,

Further diffi-
culties obvi-
ated.

* Grantham Papers. Dispatch from lord Harrington to Mr Robinson, 1st December, 1730. Correspondence.

† Lord Harrington to Mr. Robinson. January 28th, February 8th, 1731. Correspondence.

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who had long held a private intercourse of letters with the Emperor or his ministers.

This false opinion, together with the difficulty of settling the German affairs, suspended the signature of the treaty. In this moment of doubt and uncertainty, a letter * from Horace Walpole to Mr. Robinson, conveying the strongest assurances of his own and his brother's sentiments in favour of the Emperor, decided the Imperial cabinet, and hastened the conclusion.

Second treaty of Vienna.

The treaty was signed on the 16th of March, and is usually called the second treaty of Vienna, to distinguish it from that which was concluded in 1725. It was a defensive alliance, and stipulated a reciprocal guaranty of mutual rights and possessions; on the part of England, to guaranty the Emperor's succession, according to the pragmatic sanction; on that of the Emperor, to abolish the Ostend company, and all trade to the East Indies, from any part of the Austrian Netherlands, to secure the succession of Don Carlos to Parma and Tuscany, and not to oppose the introduction of Spanish Garrisons.

Effects of the treaty.

Thus was this great and difficult task of preventing a general war, accomplished with an address and secrecy that reflected high honour on those who conducted it. The treaty of Seville was carried into execution without force, and without breach of faith to any other power: to Don Carlos Parma was secured, with the consent of the Emperor, and the eventual succession of Tuscany guarantied; Spain was satisfied with England; and the Emperor, gratified with the guaranty of the pragmatic sanction, considered this union as the commencement of a new æra to the house of Austria.

The satisfaction in England was full and complete. In fact, no event more disconcerted opposition, or raised the minister higher in the estimation of the public. It had long been a favourite theme of popular declamation, that his measures had a tendency to lower the house of Austria, and to exalt the power of France. Their arguments were therefore now turned against themselves; the breach of the French alliance, and reconciliation with Austria, took away one plausible topic of raillery and invective.

Objections of opposition.

The only popular objection to the management of foreign affairs now was, that England was entangled in a multiplicity of treaties and guaranties; that no rupture could take place in Europe, in which we should not be obliged to interfere as principals; that it was the steady interest of Great Britain to contract no burthenome engagements, to trust to her naval strength and insular situation for repelling all foreign attempts, and give no just offence to any of the powers of Europe.

* February 9-20, 1731. Correspondence.

To this general objection a general answer was returned; that a nation, whose strength depends upon the flourishing state of trade and credit, (inseparable from that of public tranquillity) whose commerce extends itself to all parts of the world, and is founded on compacts and stipulations with powers of different and incompatible interests; who has as many enviers as neighbours, as numerous rivals as there are commercial powers, must have a more extensive and particular interest to foresee and obviate those troubles, which, if not prevented in time, might occasion great disturbances, might place so large a share of dominion in the hands of one prince, as to endanger the liberties of the rest, and consequently interrupt her trade. A people thus situated, must provide themselves with foreign support, proportionable to the attempts that may be apprehended from foreign powers to their prejudice, which cannot possibly be secured but by reciprocal engagements on their part, and by interesting themselves as deeply in the welfare and security of other nations, as they expect those nations to interest themselves on their behalf.

This compact having secured the consent of the Emperor to the introduction of Spanish troops, Philip revoked the marquis de Castelar's declaration, and acceded to the new treaty of Vienna; and the execution of it, which speedily followed, proved the sincerity of the Imperial and British courts. After a few altercations between the Emperor and Don Carlos, the one claiming Parma as an inheritance, and the other insisting on conferring it as a fief of the empire, the Spanish troops landed at Leghorn, on the 20th of October, under convoy of the British and Spanish fleet. Don Carlos himself arrived there on the 26th of December, and was put in full possession of Parma and Placentia.

In opening this negotiation, Walpole had been anxious not to irritate France, before he had conciliated the court of Vienna. He judged it prudent to send in the place of his brother Horace, who had returned from his embassy at Paris, a person agreeable to Cardinal Fleury, and in whom he could implicitly confide. Lord Chesterfield had been recommended for that post, as a prelude to his being appointed secretary of state; but Horace Walpole represented to his brother, that his temper and habits would not accord with those of the Cardinal, and suggested the earl of Waldegrave, as more proper for so delicate a situation, who was accordingly nominated.

James earl of Waldegrave was descended from an ancient family in Northamptonshire, whose ancestors may be traced in a direct line to times anterior to the conquest. They were lords of the towns of Waldegrave,

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Answered.

Treaty of
Seville carried
into execution.

Character
and embassy
of the earl of
Waldegrave.

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Twywell and Sipton, in the county of Northampton *; Sir Richard Waldegrave was speaker of the house of commons in 1382; and some of his ancestors received the estate of Navestock and Borely, in Essex, and Chewton in Somersetshire, as tenants from Henry the Eighth.

In 1643 Sir Edward Waldegrave was made a baronet, and his great grandson, Sir Henry Waldegrave, was created, in 1685, a peer, by the title of Baron Waldegrave, of Chewton †, in Somersetshire, where the family then principally resided. On the revolution he followed the fortunes of James the Second, whose natural daughter, Henrietta, by Arabella Churchill, he had espoused, and to whom he had many and great obligations. He died at Paris in 1689.

His eldest son and successor James, of whom we are now treating, was born in 1684, and educated in the Roman Catholic religion. In 1722 he entered into the communion of the church of England, and took his seat in the house of peers. His uncle, the duke of Berwick, being desirous to mortify him for having renounced his faith, inquired of him whether he had made his abjuration from political or religious motives, and made use of the expression, *confess* the truth, to which he replied, I changed my religion to avoid *confession*.

When it was thought necessary to send an ambassador to Vienna, for the purpose of executing the articles agreed upon in the preliminaries signed between England, France, and the Emperor at Paris, and of conciliating the Emperor, who had been dissatisfied with the king of England, Lord Waldegrave was selected as the person whose mild and affable demeanour best qualified

* As the account of the Waldegrave family given by Collins, is incorrect in many particulars, a more accurate statement is here added from family documents, communicated by the countess of Waldegrave. "Waldegrave, a Saxon by lineal descent, lord of the county of Northampton, had at the conquest one only daughter, and her he married, by the conqueror's commandment, to Guerin or Warin de Waldegrave of Normandie, by means of which marriage, Waldegrave the Saxon had a pardon granted him by the conqueror, of his life and land, notwithstanding he bore arms against him at Battle Abbey, on king Harold's part, which pardon is yet extant, and was lately in the hands of the lords of the manor of Waldegrave, &c. in the county of Northampton. This town

and manor was sold by Sir William Waldegrave, knight, in the reign of king Henry the Eighth."

Waldegrave is of Saxon derivation, from *Wald*, and *Grave*, signifying the ruler of a *Wald* or forest. The ancestors of the present earl resided in different counties at different periods. A Sir Richard Waldegrave, who was speaker of the house of commons in 1382, married the heiress of Sylvester of Buers, in the county of Suffolk, and either himself or some of his descendants, more than once represented that county.—The grants of Navestock, Borely, and Chewton, probably occasioned the sale of the family inheritance in Northamptonshire.

† Collins's Peerage. Collinson's History of Somersetshire.—Article Chewton.

him for that negotiation. George the First, who considered the mission as too great a condescension after the ill usage he had received from the Emperor, sent word that he approved the person, though he disliked the errand*.

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Lord Waldegrave set out in May 1727, and arrived at Paris on the 14th of June. The difficulty of settling the complicated negotiations, and the events which followed the death of George the First, detained him in France nearly a year. He went to Vienna in April 1728. During his residence in that capital, he corrected the mistatement which the opposition in England had transmitted of their strength, and of the weakness of the party that espoused the measures of government; and plainly shewed that the divisions in the cabinet would not diminish the weight and influence of Great Britain abroad. He proved to the Imperial ministers, that the preliminaries with Spain contained no conditions hostile to the house of Austria, and were strictly conformable to the articles of the quadruple alliance. He threw out hopes to the Emperor of a future accommodation with England, and that the guaranty of the pragmatic sanction might be the consequence of his acceding to the introduction of Spanish garrisons into Parma and Leghorn. He obtained a ratification of the preliminary articles between the Emperor, England, and France, and laid the foundation of the reconciliation, which Sir Thomas Robinson, afterwards lord Grantham, carried into execution. He then returned to Paris, where he was appointed ambassador extraordinary on the resignation of Horace Walpole.

He filled this difficult employment ten years, during a period in which the disunion between France and England was gradually increasing into an open rupture.

For his services at Vienna, he was created viscount Chewton and earl of Waldegrave, and his exertions at Paris were rewarded with the garter. In 1740 he obtained leave to return for the recovery of his health. He embarked for England, October 1740, and died at his seat at Navestock in Essex, on the 11th of April 1741, in the 57th year of his age.

He was in high confidence with Sir Robert Walpole, and was the foreign ambassador in whom the minister, next to his brother, principally confided. Several letters which passed between them, and are printed in the correspondence, prove the truth of this assertion. He conducted himself in his embassies with consummate address, and particularly dis-

* Earl of Waldegrave's Diary.

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tinguished himself by obtaining secret information in times of emergency. Though a man of pleasure, he pursued business, when business was necessary, with indefatigable diligence. His letters are written with great spirit, perspicuity, and good sense, and are peculiarly entertaining. He had so little the appearance of a man of business, that he was considered as incapable of writing such excellent dispatches as he transmitted to England, and they were principally attributed to his secretary, Mr. Thompson. But this unjust imputation was soon proved to be false, when the ambassador left France, and the secretary remained chargé d'affaires. The inferiority of his letters, to those which were written during Waldegrave's embassy, was striking, and carried a full conviction, that they were of his own composition. I am enabled also to do justice to the abilities of the earl of Waldegrave in this respect. A complete collection of his letters and dispatches, from 1727 to 1740, is preserved at Navestock, and the greater number are original draughts written in his own hand, with such erasures and alterations as fully prove that they were solely his composition. They do honour to his diplomatic talents, and prove sound sense, an insinuating address, and elegant manners.

Suspensions of
France.

The renewal of the ancient alliance with the house of Austria, had greatly displeased the French cabinet, and particularly disgusted cardinal Fleury, whose sentiments were always inclined to the adoption of pacific measures, who (however influenced by the counsels of Chauvelin) was convinced that the peace of Europe had been principally owing to the union between France and England, who appreciated the sentiments of Sir Robert Walpole as congenial to his own, and who from long habits of intimacy and confidence, had contracted a partiality for Horace Walpole, which he was unwilling to relinquish. He considered this alliance as a prelude to incessant bickerings and future contests; and, being well acquainted with the domineering spirit of the house of Austria, and the eagerness of Charles the Sixth, to obtain from all the powers of Europe, the guaranty of the pragmatic sanction, suspected that his assent to the treaty of Vienna was purchased with a promise on the part of England, to compel France to accede to that guaranty, and expressed in strong terms of indignation, his apprehension of secret articles derogatory to the interests of France.

The candid answer of the British cabinet, conveyed through the earl of Waldegrave, removed the jealousies of the cardinal. The king and cabinet in England, had now adopted, however unwillingly, the principles of the pacific minister, and De la Faye, under secretary of state, spoke the sentiments of Walpole, when he observed, that no one but a person totally ignorant

ignorant of the British constitution, could for a moment have entertained such an opinion. The king, he remarked, could not engage in war without money, and must apply to parliament for supplies, if such a misfortune should occur. The parliament, who spoke the voice of the nation, might be induced to grant supplies for the purpose of keeping out the Pretender, protecting merchants, preserving trade, or maintaining Gibraltar; but it would have been a monstrous conduct to have proposed an annual supply of five millions for the purpose of compelling France to guaranty the pragmatic sanction. The nation could never bear such a proposition, and the minister who had the folly to make it, would justly incur the indignation of the people *.

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Removed.

The earl of Waldegrave being recalled from Vienna, it became necessary to depute a person of confidence to that court, on whom the Walpoles could no less implicitly depend; nor can a greater proof of their superior ascendancy in the cabinet be given, than that Mr. Robinson was the person who was chosen to fill this important situation at this critical juncture.

Mission and character of Mr. Robinson.

Thomas Robinson, knight of the bath, and afterwards lord Grantham, was fourth son of Sir William Robinson, baronet, of the county of York, by Mary, daughter of George Aislaby, of Studley Royal. He was brought up at Westminster school, and completed his education at Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he became a fellow in 1719. In 1723, he accompanied Horace Walpole as secretary to the embassy at Paris, and was distinguished by him with the highest marks of confidence and esteem; under his instructions, and from his example, he acquired a consummate experience in diplomatic concerns. During the absence of the ambassador, he was entrusted with the management of the English affairs in France, and conducted himself with so much address and ability, that he was not duped even by the affected candour of cardinal Fleury, nor deluded by the artifices of Chauvelin. Great command of temper, patience of contradiction, dignity of manner, frankness in receiving, and quickness in answering objections, rendered him peculiarly adapted to counteract the chicanery of the Imperial court, to soften the domineering and punctilious character of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, and to conciliate the discordant tempers of the four ministers of the conference †. He continued minister at the court of Vienna from 1730 to 1748, when he was deputed ambassador and joint plenipotentiary with the earl of Sandwich, to conclude the peace of Aix la Chapelle.

* De la Faye to the earl of Waldegrave, August 16th, 1731. Correspondence.

† Prince Eugene, count Zinzendorf, count Staremberg, and the bishop of Bamberg.

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His dispatches are clear and perspicuous, so explicit and descriptive, as to convey a faithful picture of the tempers and characters of those with whom he negotiated; and it was truly said of him, that he not only set down every word that was uttered in his conferences with the Imperial ministers, but noted even their looks and gestures. These interesting documents contain a copious, and almost uninterrupted narrative of the transactions between England and the court of Vienna, during a period of eighteen years, big with events, that threatened the downfall of the house of Austria, which was averted by the heroism of Maria Theresa, and the interposition of England. In 1742 he was made knight of the Bath, and soon after the conclusion of the peace of Aix la Chapelle, returned to England. He was successively appointed lord of trade, master of the great wardrobe, and secretary of state. In 1761 he was created a peer, by the title of lord Grantham, and died in 1770, aged seventy-three.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH:

1731.

Biographical Memoirs of William Pulteney.—Origin and Progress of his Misunderstanding with Walpole.

TWO errors are principally to be avoided by an author, that undertakes to write the life of a minister, who directed, during so long a period, the helm of government, and whose conduct materially affected the interests of Great Britain and the fate of Europe. The first is such a bias of affection and partiality, as to draw a panegyric rather than a history; the second, an indiscriminate prejudice against those who headed the opposition; and who, because they were enemies to Sir Robert Walpole, have been held forth by his partisans, as devoid of all principle, and using, in every instance, their reprobation to his measures, as a cloak for malice and rancour. This last is the usual

usual error of biographers; and yet it appears extraordinary to a candid mind, that in order to raise the character of one great man, it should seem necessary to debase all his opponents; and that no allowance should be made for difference of opinion, or inveterate habits and prepossessions. Because the party writers of opposition have loaded Walpole with invective, is it just to asperse his adversaries with equal virulence?

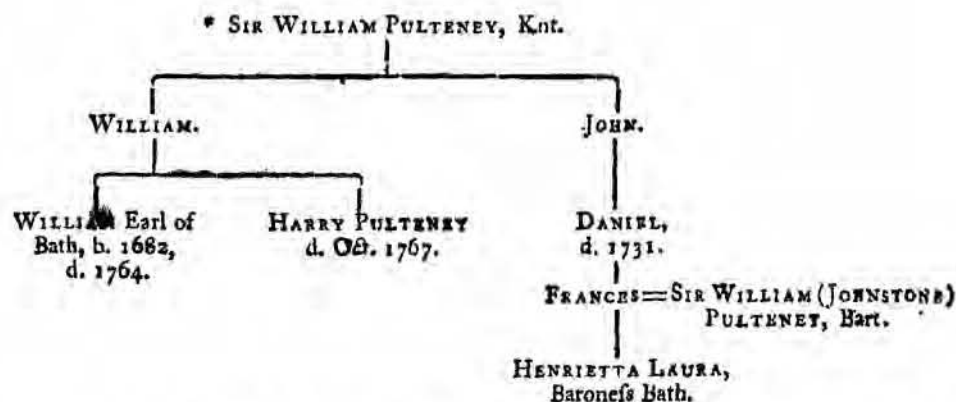
But in no instance has prejudice been carried to a greater height, than in drawing the character and conduct of Pulteney, the great leader of opposition. He, above all others, has been exposed to the fiery ordeal of party; not only by the friends of the minister whom he drove from the helm, but also by those who were once joined with him, and who, discontented at the disposal of offices on the change of administration, railed at their former leader, because they were not promoted to those places which they claimed as the reward of their long perseverance.

William Pulteney* was descended from an ancient family, who took their surname from a place of that appellation in Leicestershire. His grandfather, Sir William Pulteney, was member of parliament for the city of Westminster, and highly distinguished himself in the house of commons for his manly and spirited eloquence.

Family,
birth, and
education of
Pulteney.

Of his father, William Pulteney, I find little upon record, except his birth, marriage, and death.

William Pulteney†, his eldest son, was born in 1682, received his education at Westminster school, where he greatly improved in classical



† I am indebted to the kindness of the bishop of Salisbury (Dr. Douglas) for some of these anecdotes, which relate to the early part of Mr. Pulteney's life.

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Comes into
parliament.

literature; and being removed to Christ Church, Oxford, so highly distinguished himself by his talents and industry, that he was appointed, by dean Aldric, to make the congratulatory speech to queen Anne, on her visit to the college.

Having travelled through various parts of Europe, he returned to his native country, with a mind highly improved; and soon after his return, came into parliament for the borough of Heydon, in Yorkshire, by the interest of Mr. Guy, his protector and great benefactor.

Being descended from a Whig family, and educated in revolution principles, the young senator warmly espoused that party, and during the whole reign of queen Anne opposed the measures of the Tories.

He first spoke in the house on the place bill, which he warmly supported, and some amendments being made by the lords, the discussion was, by the intervention of the ministry, postponed for three days; during which interval, means were found to gain over several who had opposed the bill, and the amendments seemed likely to be carried.

The young senator, indignant at this apostacy, and irritated that several had, in a few days, totally changed their opinions, animadverted in a few words on such political baseness; and alluding to Sir James Montague*, who after having distinguished himself in opposition to the amendments, now voted for them, observed, "Cerberus has received his sop, and barks no more;" a remark which struck the house as ready and pertinent.

He had formed a just notion, that no young member ought to press into public notice with too much forwardness, and fatigue the house with long orations, until they had acquired the habit of order and precision. He was often heard to declare, that hardly any person ever became a good orator, who began with making a set speech. He conceived that circumstances of the moment should impel them to the delivery of sentiments, which should derive their tenor and application from the course of the debate, and not be the result of previous study or invariable arrangement.

Fortune.

Pulteney and his partisans accused Walpole of being "a wretch who could not raise £. 100 upon his own security;" in the same manner, the advocates of Walpole accused Pulteney, with equal injustice, of having received favours and bribes from the crown, and of ingratitude in forsaking the minister, to whom he owed great obligations. But both accusations were equally devoid of truth. Pulteney inherited from his father a very con-

* Afterwards solicitor and attorney general.

siderable estate, and had from Henry Guy, the intimate friend of his grandfather, and guardian of his youth, and who had been secretary to the treasury, a legacy of £. 40,000, and an estate of £. 500 a year. He received also with his wife Anna Maria, daughter of John Gumley, of Isleworth, a very large portion, and increased this property, by the most rigid œconomy, which his enemies called avarice; but which did not prevent him from performing many acts of charity and beneficence.

During the whole reign of queen Anne, Pulteney uniformly espoused the side of the Whigs; and supported, both by his eloquence and fortune, the protestant succession in the house of Hanover. On the prosecution of Sacheverel, he ably distinguished himself in the house of commons, in defence of the revolution, against the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance. When the Tories came into power, in 1710, he was so obnoxious to them, that his uncle, John Pulteney, was removed from the board of trade. He not only took a principal share in the debates of the four last years of queen Anne, while the Whigs were in opposition, but was also admitted into the most important secrets of his party, at that critical time, when the succession of the Hanover family being supposed to be in danger, its friends thought themselves obliged to engage in very bold enterprises to secure it. He was a liberal subscriber to a very unprofitable and hazardous loan, then secretly negotiated by the Whig party, for the use of the Emperor, to encourage him to refuse co-operating with the Tory administration in making the peace of Utrecht.

Parliamentary conduct.

On the prosecution of Walpole for high breach of trust and corruption, Pulteney vindicated his friend in a very elegant speech; and on his commitment to the Tower, was amongst those who paid frequent visits to the prisoner, whom he, with the rest of the Whigs, considered as a martyr to their cause*. He also engaged with Walpole in defending the Whig administration, and wrote the ironical dedication to the earl of Oxford, prefixed to Walpole's account of the parliament, which I have before taken notice of.

Soon after the death of queen Anne, and before a message had been received from George the First, Pulteney, in answer to those who opposed the clause moved by Horace Walpole, for giving £. 100,000 for apprehending the Pretender should he land, or attempt to land, in any of the king's dominions,

* Pulteney's Answer.

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1730 to 1734.

observed, "That the protestant succession was in danger, as long as there was a popish Pretender, who had many friends both at home and abroad; that the late queen was sensible of that danger, when she issued her proclamation against him, and that the case was not altered by her demise: that the nation would be at no charge if the Pretender did not attempt to land, and if he did, £. 100,000 would be well bestowed to apprehend him *.

Appointed
secretary at
war.

His parliamentary abilities and uniformity of conduct gave him a very honourable claim to distinction on the accession of George the First. Accordingly, on the king's arrival, and before a meeting of the new parliament, he was appointed privy counsellor and secretary at war, even in opposition to the inclination of the duke of Marlborough, who, as commander in chief, thought himself entitled to recommend to that post †. He was chosen a member of the committee of secrecy, nominated by the house of commons to examine and report the substance of the papers relating to the negotiation for peace, and on the suppression of the rebellion which broke out in Scotland, he moved for the impeachment of lord Widdrington, and opposed the motion to address the king, for a proclamation, offering a general pardon to all who were in arms in Scotland, who should lay their arms down within a certain time.

He was at this period so much connected with Stanhope and Walpole, that in allusion to the triple alliance between Great Britain, France, and Holland, which was then negotiating by general Stanhope, secretary of state, they were called the three *grand allies*; and a proverbial saying was current, "are you come into the triple alliance ‡?"

Resigns.

But when Stanhope and Walpole took different sides, on the schism between the Whigs, when Townshend was dismissed, and Walpole resigned, Pulteney followed his friends example, and gave up his place of secretary at war.

Origin of his
disagreement
with Wal-
pole.

When Walpole made a reconciliation between the king and the prince of Wales, and negotiated with Sunderland to form a new administration, in which he and lord Townshend bore the most conspicuous part, then were first sown those seeds of disgust and discontent which afterwards burst forth.

The causes of this unfortunate misunderstanding, may be traced from the authority of the parties themselves, or their particular friends. Pulteney was offended because Walpole had negotiated with the prince of Wales and Sunderland, without communicating the progress to him, although he had

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 298.

† Letter to Pulteney, p. 29.

‡ Memoirs of the Life and Conduct of William Pulteney, esq., p. 17.

told it to Mr. Edgecumbe, who indiscreetly gave an account daily to Pulteney *.

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Another cause of disgust was, that Pulteney, who had hitherto invariably proved his attachment to Townshend and Walpole, expected to receive some important employment, whereas he was only offered a peerage, and when he declined it, more than two years elapsed, before any farther overtures were made; and though Pulteney at length solicited † and obtained the office of cofferer of the household, in the room of the earl of Godolphin, who received a pension of £. 5,000 per annum to make way for him, he deemed that place far below his just expectations.

Made cofferer of the household.

Notwithstanding, however, these secret causes of disgust, Pulteney continued to support the administration. On the communication of the plot in which bishop Atterbury was involved, he moved for an address to congratulate the king on the discovery of so dangerous and unnatural a confederacy. He was chairman of the committee appointed by the house of commons in the prosecution; and the report which he drew up on that occasion, is a masterpiece of perspicuity and order. But the disdainful manner in which he conceived he had been treated by Walpole, had made too deep an impression on his mind to be eradicated. Finding that he did not possess the full

Chairman of the secret committee.

* The account of this transaction is thus given by Pulteney himself, several years afterwards, when he was in the height of opposition. "You sent to him one day, as he was going out of town, desiring to speak with him, that, when he came, you told him of the reconciliation between the late k— and the then p— of W—; and that a bargain was made for those *Whigs*, who had resigned their employments, to be put in again by degrees. To this the gentleman replied, 'Who prays is it, that hath had authority to make this bargain?' Your answer was, 'I have done it with the ministry, and it was insisted on that nobody but lord Townshend should know of the transaction. Neither lord Cowper, the Speaker, nor any one else knew it; and therefore we hope you will not take it amiss, that it was kept secret from you.'—'Not I,' said the gentleman, 'but I think it very odd, that any one should presume to take a plenary authority upon himself, to deal for such numbers as were concerned, in an affair of this consequence'—'We have not,' said you again, 'had our own interests alone in view. We have bargained for all

our friends, and in due time they will be provided for. I am to be, said you, at the head of the treasury. Lord Sunderland had a great desire to retain the disposition of the secret service money to himself; but I would by no means consent to that, knowing the chief power of a minister (and I presume his profit also) depends on the disposition of it.' You named several others, who were to come into employments; and said to this gentleman, 'We know, Sir, that you do not value any thing of that kind; so we have obtained a peerage for you.' It seems you did not, at that time, pretend that the gentleman either expected, or insisted on any employment; and therefore told him, that the king had consented to make him a peer. To this the gentleman replied with some warmth, 'Sir, if ever I should be mean enough to submit to being sold, I promise you that you shall never have the selling of me. A peerage is what some time or other. I may be glad of accepting, for the sake of my family; but I will never obtain it by any base method, or submit to have it got for me on such terms by you *.'"

† Pulteney's Answer.

* An Answer to one Part of a late infamous Libel, intitled "Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two honourable Patrons," p. 54, 55.

confidence

Period V. 1730 to 1734. confidence of administration, or disapproving those measures which tended, in his opinion, to raise the power of France on the ruins of the house of Austria, and which he thought sacrificed the interests of Great Britain to those of Hanover, topics on which he afterwards expatiated with great energy and unusual eloquence in parliament, he became more and more estranged from his former friends, and expressed his disapprobation of their measures both in public and private. At length, his discontent arrived to so great a height, that he declared his resolution of attacking the minister in parliament.

Joins opposition.

Walpole attempts to conciliate him.

Walpole perceived his error in disgusting so able an associate, and with a view to prevent his opposition to the payment of the king's debts, hinted to him in the house of commons, that at the removal of either of the secretaries of state, the ministers designed him for the vacant employment: but it was now too late. To this proposal Pulteney made no answer, but bowed and smiled, to let him know he understood his meaning*.

April 8th, 1725.

Pulteney now came forward as the great opposer of government, and his first exertion on the side of the minority, was on the subject of the civil list. A message being delivered from the king, by Sir Robert Walpole, praying the commons to assist him in discharging the debts of the civil list, Pulteney moved for an address, that an account should be laid before the house, of all the monies paid for secret service, pensions, bounties, &c. from the 25th of March, 1725. This address being voted, a motion was made for the house to go into a grand committee, to consider of the king's message; but Mr. Pulteney represented, "That the house having ordered an address for several papers relating to the civil list, and other expences, they ought, in his opinion, to put off the consideration of the message, till those papers were laid before the house; it being natural to inquire into the causes of a disease, before remedies are applied." This being opposed by Walpole, Pulteney replied, "That he wondered how so great a debt could be contracted in three years time; but was not surprised some persons were so eager to have the deficiencies of the civil list made good, since they and their friends had so great a share in it; and desired to know, whether this was all that was due, or whether they were to expect another reckoning?" To this it was answered in general, "That there was indeed a heavy debt on the civil list, and a great many pensions; but that most of these had been granted in king William and queen Anne's reigns; some by king Charles the Second, and very few by his present majesty. That, since the

April 9th.

* Pulteney's Answer, p. 51.

civil list was first settled for his majesty, an expence of above £. 90,000 per annum had happened, which could not then be foreseen, and therefore was left unprovided for. That, upon examination of the account of the civil list debts, it would appear, that most of those expences were either for the necessary support of the dignity of the crown and government, or for the public good. That there was indeed a pension of £. 5,000 of another nature, upon the account of the cofferer's place, but which could not well be avoided, for both lord Godolphin, who was in that office, and his father, had so well deserved of the government, that they could not handsomely remove him without a gratuity, and therefore they gave him a pension of £. 5,000 to make room for the worthy gentleman who now enjoys the post *."

Pulteney opposed the motion in every step, until the third reading, when he voted for the payment of the king's debts; and he himself thus accounts for his conduct in this particular: "The late king had of himself, or as he was advised by his ministers, frequently tried the gentleman on this point, and used to persuade him to be for it. He used all the arguments he could; urged to him all the motives he thought could possibly engage him, but all to no purpose. He continued inflexible. At length, the king said to him, *it is hard you will not let me be an honest man.* What would you, continued his majesty, *think yourself of one, who refused to pay his butcher, his baker, and other honest tradesmen?*—To this the gentleman replied, not a little affected with his majesty's last argument, *God forbid that he should prevent his majesty from acting such an honest part.* It was not his intention. *What he meant to do was consistent with his duty as a servant to his majesty, and agreeable to his duty as a representative of the people. He meant only to expose that unnecessary profusion which had been made in secret service money, pensions, &c. That the money which should have paid his honest tradesmen, was by these means diverted.* His view therefore was to get a censure of such practices, and to prevent their becoming precedents; nor had he any design of depriving the honest creditors of their just debts; and this was the reason, when it came to the last instance, why *this gentleman* voted for the question; which his majesty understood very well to be agreeable to the promise he had made, however mysterious it might appear to others, and which the gentleman was fully persuaded to be just in itself, and consistent with his duty as a servant to the crown †."

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 524, 525.

† Answer to the Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two honourable Patrons, B. 5th, 53.

Period V.
1736 to 1734.
Dismissed.

Refuses to be
secretary of
state.

He was soon afterwards dismissed from his place of cofferer of the household, and from this period entered into a systematic opposition to the minister. Pulteney proved himself so formidable, that Walpole again endeavoured to gain him over, and about the time of Townshend's resignation, queen Caroline * offered him a peerage, together with the post of secretary of state for foreign affairs, if he would again join his old co-adjutor; but Pulteney rejected the offer, and declared his fixed resolution never again to act with Sir Robert Walpole.

The most violent altercations passed in the house of commons between them; their heat against each other seemed to increase in proportion with their former intimacy, and neither was deficient in sarcastic allusions, violent accusations, and virulent invectives.

On the ninth of February, 1726, Pulteney made a plausible motion for the appointment of a committee to state the public debts, as they stood on the 25th of December, 1714, with the debts which had been incurred since that time, till the 25th December 1725, distinguishing how much of the said debts had been provided for, and how much remained unprovided for by parliament. He was seconded by Daniel Pulteney, and supported by Sir Joseph Jekyl. In opposition, Walpole endeavoured to shew, that such an inquiry was unreasonable and preposterous, and that it might give a dangerous wound to public credit at this critical juncture, when monied men were already too much alarmed by the appearances of an approaching war, urging, that in the present posture of affairs, the commons could not better express their love to their country, than by making good their promises and assurances at the beginning of this session, and by raising, with the greatest dispatch, the necessary supplies, to enable the king to make good his engagements, for the welfare of his subjects, to disappoint the hopes of the enemies to his government, and to repel any insults that might be offered to his crown and dignity. Barnard, member for the city of London, confirmed the assertion of the minister, as to the danger of increasing the alarm of monied men, which had already so much affected public credit, that the stocks had within a few weeks fallen 12 or 14 per cent. Sir Thomas Pengelly having spoken for the motion, Walpole again replied; on which Pulteney declared, "That he made this motion with no other view, than to give that *great man* an opportunity to shew his integrity to the whole world, which would finish his sublime character." To this Walpole answered, "That this compliment would have come out with a better grace, and appeared more sincere, when that *fine gentleman* had himself a share in the manage-

* From the earl of Orford. *Life of bishop Newton.*

ment of the public money, than now he was out of place*. Such petulant altercations between these two able speakers, caused much dissatisfaction to those independent members who wished well to the Hanover line, and who generally supported or opposed all questions from conviction, without being influenced by party motives. This opposition of Pulteney was so apparently dictated by personal resentment, that several who would otherwise have considered the motion just and reasonable, voted against it. Many deemed it ill-timed, and calculated to hurt public credit, and to draw an odium on the house of commons, and accordingly supported the minister; for these reasons the motion was negatived by 262 against 89 †.

Pulteney now placed himself at the head of the discontented Whigs; he, in conjunction with Bolingbroke, his ancient antagonist, became the principal supporter of the Craftsman, to which paper he gave many essays, and furnished hints and observations.

At this period, Pulteney was greatly courted by the foreign ministers of those powers who were displeased with the measures of the British cabinet, and by none more than by Palm, the Imperial ambassador, who caballed with the opposition, and endeavoured to overturn the ministry ‡.

Courted by
foreign
powers.

The controversy in 1731, which passed between Pulteney and Walpole's friends and pamphleteers, widened the breach, and rendered it irreparable. The Craftsman was full of invectives against Walpole, and the measures of his administration. In answer to this paper, a pamphlet was published under the title of *Sedition and Defamation Displayed*; in a letter to the author of the Craftsman, with a motto from Juvenal,

Controversy
in 1731.

*Aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris, Et carcere dignum,
Si vis esse aliquis.*——

It contained a violent, and, according to the spirit of the political pamphlets of the times, a scurrilous abuse of Pulteney and Bolingbroke. The character of Pulteney is portrayed in the colours of party, in a dedication to the patrons of the Craftsman; and his opposition is wholly attributed to disappointed ambition and personal pique. In answer to this pamphlet, which he supposed to be written by lord Hervey, the great friend and supporter of Sir Robert Walpole, he wrote, "*A proper Reply to a late scurrilous Libel, intitled, Sedition and Defamation Displayed, in a Letter to the Author; by Caleb D'Anvers, of Gray's Inn, Esq.*"

In this pamphlet, Mr. Pulteney introduces the character of Sir Robert Walpole, which it must be confessed does not yield, either in scurrility or misrepresentation, to that of Pulteney, given in *Sedition and Defamation Displayed*.

* Chandler.

† Thomas Bradrick to lord chancellor Mordaunt, February 10, 1726. *Middleton Papers*.
Journals.

‡ Letter from Palm to the Emperor, December 17, 1726. *Correspondence*.

Period V.
1730 to 1734.

In this publication, the author treated lord Hervey * with such contempt, and lashed him with such ridicule, in allusion to his effeminate appearance, as a species of half-man and half-woman, which Pope, in his character of Sporus,

* John lord Hervey, eldest son of John the first earl of Bristol, was born in 1696. He came first into parliament soon after the accession of George the First, was appointed vice-chamberlain to the king in 1730, in 1733 was created a peer, and in 1740 was constituted lord privy seal, from which post he was removed in 1742. He died in 1743. He took a considerable share in the political transactions of the times, and was always a warm advocate on the side of Sir Robert Walpole. Tindal * has observed, "that history

ought to repair the injury that party has done to some part of his character," and in fact, it is necessary; for never was man more exposed to ridicule, and lashed with greater severity, than lord Hervey has been exposed and lashed, by the satirical pen of Pope. If we may credit the satirist, who has delineated his character under the name of Sporus, he was below all contempt; a man without talents, and without one solitary virtue to compensate for the most ridiculous foibles, and the most abandoned profligacy.

"Let Sporus tremble.—A. What, that thing of silk,
"Sporus, that mere white curd of asses milk?
"Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
"Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?
"P. Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
"This painted child of dirt, that stinks and sings, &c.
"Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
"As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.
"Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
"And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks;
"Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
"Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad, &c.
"Amphibious thing! that acting either part,
"The trifling head, or the corrupted heart,
"Pop at the toilet, flatterer at the board,
"Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.
"Eve's tempter thus the Rabbins have express'd,
"A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest,
"Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,
"Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust."

However I may admire the powers of the satirist, I never could read this passage without disgust and horror; disgust at the indelicacy of the allusions, horror at the malignity of the poet, in laying the foundation of his abuse on the lowest species of satire, personal invective, and what is still worse, on sickness and debility. The poet has so much distorted this portrait, that he has in one instance made the object of his satire, what ought to have been the subject of his praise, the rigid abstinence to which lord Hervey unalterably adhered, from the necessity of preserving his health. Lord Hervey having felt some attacks of the epilepsy, entered upon, and persisted in a very strict regimen, and thus stopt

the progress, and prevented the effects of that dreadful disease. His daily food was a small quantity of asses milk, and a flour biscuit; once a week he indulged himself with eating an apple: he used emetics daily. To this rigid abstemiousness, Pope malignantly alludes, when he says, *

"The mere white curd of asses' milk."

In short, I agree with the ingenious editor of Pope, "Language cannot afford more glowing or more forcible terms to express the utmost bitterness of contempt. We think we are here reading Milton against Satanus. The raillery is carried to the very verge of railing, some will say, ribaldry. He has armed his muse with a scalping knife."

Sporus, has no less illiberally adopted, that lord Hervey was highly offended, a duel * ensued, and Pulteney slightly wounded his antagonist. It afterwards appeared that lord Hervey did not compose this pamphlet; and Pulteney acknowledged his mistake, and imputed it, without sufficient authority, to Walpole himself †.

As one great source of obloquy vented by the ministerial writers against Pulteney, was his junction with Bolingbroke, who, when driven from his country, had espoused the party of the Pretender, a letter, by Bolingbroke, appeared in the *Craftsman*, of May 22, 1731, with the fictitious name of Old-castle, which, after heaping many charges on the minister, drew the characters of Pulteney and Bolingbroke in a most favourable light, and vindicated them from the imputations of the writers on the side of government.

This letter produced an answer, intitled, "*Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two Honourable Patrons, in his Paper of May 22, 1731.*"

Par nobile fratrum;

In which the two characters commended by the *Craftsman*, were attacked with increasing asperity, and Pulteney was loaded with the most virulent personal

May we not ask, with the same author, "Can this be the nobleman whom Middleton, in his dedication to the *History of the Life of Tully*, has so seriously, and so earnestly praised, for his strong good sense, his consummate politeness, his real patriotism, his rigid temperance, his thorough knowledge and defence of the laws of his country, his accurate skill in history, his unexampled and unre-mitted diligence in literary pursuits, who added credit to this very history, as Scipio and Lælius did to that of Polibius, by revising and correcting it, and brightening it, (as he expresses it) by the strokes of his pencil?" May we not also ask, Is this the nobleman, who wrote some of the best political pamphlets which appeared in defence of Walpole's administration? who, though sometimes too florid and pompous, was a frequent and able speaker in parliament, and who, for his political abilities, was raised to the post of lord privy seal? In truth, lord Hervey possessed more than ordinary abilities, and much classical erudition; he was remarkable for his wit, and the number and appositeness of his repartees.

Although his manner and figure were at first acquaintance highly forbidding, yet he seldom failed, to render himself, by his lively conversation, which Pope calls,

"The well whip'd cream of courtly common sense,"

an entertaining companion to those whom he

wished to conciliate. Hence he conquered the extreme prejudice which the king had conceived against him, and from being detested, he became a great favourite. He was particularly agreeable to queen Caroline, as he helped to enliven the uniformity of a court, with sprightly repartees and lively sallies of wit.

His cool and manly conduct in the duel with Pulteney, proved neither want of spirit to resent an injury, or deficiency of courage in the hour of danger, and he compelled his adversary to respect his conduct, though he had satirised his person.

His defects were extreme affectation, bitterness of invective, prodigality of flattery, and great servility to those above him.

Horace, earl of Orford, has given a list of his political writings, in the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors; and among the Orford Papers, are draughts of several of those pamphlets which were submitted to Sir Robert Walpole. Some are corrected by him, in others, the minister made considerable additions. See Warton's *Pope*, vol. 4. p. 44, 45, 46. *Opinions of Sarah duchess of Marlborough*, Article, lord Hervey.

* An account of the duel is given in a letter from Thomas Pelham to earl Waldegrave, January 23, 1731. *Correspondence*, Period V.

† It was written by Sir William Younge, secretary at war, as he himself informed the late lord Hardwicke.

Period V.
730 to 1734.

abuse, by ransacking his private life, prying into his domestic concerns and family transactions, by accusing him of acting solely from disappointment and revenge, of being governed by veteran Jacobites, of disrespect to the king, ingratitude to the minister, of sharing the bounties, and adding to the pensions of the crown, and of having obtained the fee-simple of £. 9,000 per annum, by the favour, indulgence, and assistance of the minister, whom he had sworn to destroy *. Perhaps he would have acted a more prudent and dignified part, in not making any reply to the invective of a party pamphlet; but, as he conceived it to have been written, or at least the materials to have been furnished by the minister, his indignation was roused, and he published an animated defence of himself and his own conduct, a work to which I have frequently alluded, as containing much curious information on the origin and progress of the quarrel between him and Walpole. It is styled, *An Answer to One Part of a late infamous Libel, intitled, "Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two Honourable Patrons;" in which the character and conduct of Mr. P. is fully vindicated.* Addressing it to Sir Robert Walpole, he says of the pamphlet in which he had been so indecently abused, "There are several passages of *secret* history in it, falsely stated and misrepresented, which could come from nobody but yourself. "You might, perhaps, employ some of your mercenaries to work them up for you; but the ingredients are certainly your own."

In the course of the defence, Mr. Pulteney gives us his account of the conversation about making him secretary of state, which he accuses Walpole of having disclosed, and misrepresented. And as Walpole had thrown out to him the bait of the secretaryship, to prevent, if possible, his opposing the payment of the king's debts, the secret history of that transaction, as far as Pulteney was concerned, is laid before the public. Having gone through that part of his defence, he proceeds, "Since now we are upon the heads of *secret history, which you have opened*, I must explain another point in this gentleman's defence, concerning the reconciliation between his late majesty and the present king, from whence it will appear, whether you or this gentleman was most greedy of employments, and who discovered the truest zeal for the honour of his present majesty †." That part of his secret conversation which related to George the Second, then prince of Wales, is here subjoined.

"But pray, Sir (continued the gentleman) since you acquaint me with the terms you have made for me, what are those you have made for the P—, who hath acted so honourable and steady a part to those with whom he engaged, and who are now in opposition to the court? To this you answered with a sneer, *Why He is to go to court again, and He will have his DRUMS and his GUARDS,*

and such FINE THINGS. At this the gentleman was astonished, and thought proper to press you a little further, by asking you, *whether the P— was to be left regent again, as he had been when the king went out of England.*—No, said you, *WHY SHOULD HE? What!* replied the gentleman, *have you stipulated for a share of royalty for yourself, on the king's departure, and is the P—to live like a private subject, of no consequence in the kingdom?*—The gentleman avers, upon his honour, that your answer was this, *HE DOES NOT DESERVE IT.—WE HAVE DONE TOO MUCH FOR HIM; AND IF IT WAS TO BE DONE AGAIN, WE WOULD NOT DO SO MUCH.*—Upon this, the gentleman went directly to the P— (with whom he then had some credit) and humbly represented upon what terms the reconciliation was founded. He told him that he was sold to his father's ministers, by persons who considered nothing but themselves and their own interest, and were in haste to make their fortunes. This was thought by him to have had some weight, at that time, with the P—, though the gentleman did not think it proper to tell him the whole that had passed, and relate what you said of him in so ungrateful a manner*.”

The disclosure of this secret conversation, and of the contemptuous expressions which Walpole is said to have uttered against the king, when prince of Wales, instead of irritating him against the minister, only raised his resentment higher against Pulteney. Franklin, the printer of the pamphlet, was arrested; Pulteney's name was struck out of the list of privy counsellors, and he was put out of all commissions of the peace †, measures which tended to render the breach irreparable. Such was indeed the bitterness of party, and the animosity against the minister, that Pulteney does not hesitate to declare, that “the opposition had come to a determined resolution, not to listen to any treaty whatsoever, or from whomsoever it may come, in which the first and principal condition should not be to deliver him up to the justice of the country ‡”.

Struck out of the list of privy counsellors.

When such virulent invectives were cast on both sides, it was hardly possible to suppose that any compromise could be effected; and Pulteney continued invariably to oppose the measures of Walpole, and was principally instrumental in driving him from the helm of affairs. But although in the zeal of party, and in the warmth of debate, these two great men reviled each other with so much acrimony, yet even in the house of commons they frequently entered into conversation on the most amicable terms; and as Pulteney always, though in opposition, sat on the treasury bench, these opportunities were very frequent. Dr. Pearce, bishop of Rochester, recorded anecdotes of their easy manner of conversing, which reflects the highest honour on both parties.

* Answer to an infamous Libel, p. 55, 56.

‡ Mr. Pulteney's Answer, p. 47.

† Tindal, v. 20. p. 104.

Period V.
1730 to 1734.

"Mr. Pulteney sitting upon the same bench with Sir Robert Walpole in the house of commons, said, "Sir Robert, I have a favour to ask of you." O my good friend Pulteney, said Sir Robert, what favour can you have to ask of me? It is, said Mr. Pulteney, that Dr. Pearce may not suffer in his preferment for being my friend. I promise you, returned Sir Robert, that he shall not. Why then I hope, said Mr. Pulteney, that you will give him the deanery of Wells. No, replied Sir Robert, I cannot promise you that for him, for it is already promised."

Sir Robert having afterwards obtained for him the deanery of Winchester, his friend Mr. Pulteney, congratulating him on his promotion, said to him, "Dr. Pearce, though you may think that others besides Sir Robert have contributed to get you that dignity, yet you may depend upon it, that he is all in all, and that you owe it entirely to his good-will towards you; and therefore, as I am now so engaged in opposition to him, it may happen, that some who are of *our* party may, if there should be any opposition for members of parliament at Winchester, prevail upon me to act there in assistance of some friend of our's; and Sir Robert, at the same time, may ask your assistance in the election for a friend of his own, against one whom we recommend. I tell you, therefore, beforehand, that if you comply with my request, rather than Sir Robert's, to whom you are so much obliged, I shall have the worse opinion of you. Could any thing be more generous to the dean as a friend, or to Sir Robert, to whom in other respects he was a declared opponent *?"

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH:

1733.

Walpole proposes to take Half a Million from the Sinking Fund, for the Service of the current Year.—Encroachments from its first Establishment to this Motion.—Opposition to the Bill.—Substance of the Reasons on both Sides.—It passes the House.—Subsequent Encroachments.—Beneficial Consequences which would have been derived from appropriating the Produce to the Liquidation of the Debt.—Ill Consequences of alienating it.—Motives which induced the Minister to take that Method of raising Supplies.

THE last accounts which I had occasion to give of the parliamentary proceedings and domestic events, were carried down only to May 1730. The hopes of a division amongst the Whigs, and of the ministers, all gave

* Life of Pearce.

energy to the leaders of opposition; but the ill success of their exertions, and the uninterrupted quiet and prosperity of the country, during the two succeeding years, render the domestic history barren of events, and afford little worthy of mention in the life of the minister. But the sixth session of the third septennial parliament, which opened on the 17th of January 1733, is distinguished by two measures of Sir Robert Walpole; of which the first, to take half a million from the sinking fund, though contrary to the national interest, was carried by a large majority; and the second, which was the excise scheme, though evidently calculated for the advantage of the country, met with such violent opposition, as induced the minister to relinquish it.

This chapter will be confined to the discussion of the important question concerning the alienation of the sinking fund; a measure which has incurred the bitter censure of most writers who have speculated on the subject of finance, and which seems to be the greatest blot in the administration of the minister. In this disquisition, I shall endeavour to state, the deviations from, and encroachments on the sinking fund, until it was finally perverted from its original use, and instead of being employed in the liquidation of the national debt, became a fund for the current service of the year; to shew the beneficial consequences which would have resulted from following the original design; and to consider the motives which induced the minister to counteract his own great establishment, and to entail a debt on the nation, which, if it could not have been entirely paid off, might at least have been considerably diminished.

When the house of commons passed an act for the establishment of a fund for applying the surplusses of duties and revenues to the liquidation of the national debt, called in subsequent acts the sinking fund, the words to appropriate them to that purpose were as strong as could be found, *to and for none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever.*

Origin of the sinking fund.

During the whole reign of George the First, it was invariably appropriated to its original purposes, and rather than encroach upon it, money was borrowed upon new taxes, when the supplies in general might have been raised, by dedicating the surplusses of the old taxes to the current services of the year*. Even in the infancy of the establishment, when its operations were necessarily very confined, great advantages were derived even from this small surplus; the national interest was immediately reduced from 6 to 5 per cent.; £.750,000 in old exchequer bills were paid off in 1719; and it appeared, by the report of the house of commons, that from 1717 to 1728, it had discharged £.2,698,416, and that its average amount was £.1,200,000.

* Price's Appeal on the National Debt. Sinclair, p. 106.

Period V.

1732 to 1734.

Appropriated
to other uses.Debates on
its alienation.

It had no sooner attained this progressive power, than its operations were suspended. Between 1727 and 1733, several encroachments had been made, either by alienating the taxes which yielded the surplusses, or by charging the interest of several loans upon the surplusses appropriated to the payment of the debt. But although this measure was in effect the same as depriving it of gross sums (there being no difference between taking the annual interest of a sum, and that sum itself) yet as these encroachments were not literally direct invasions of the fund, they seem to have met with little opposition.

However, in 1733 an open attack was made. Half a million being voted for the service of the ensuing year, the minister proposed to take that sum from the sinking fund, and by that means to continue the land tax at one shilling in the pound; adding, that if this motion should be objected to, he should move for a land tax of two shillings in the pound, there being no other means of providing for the current expences.

This motion justly occasioned a long and violent debate, and the strength of the argument undoubtedly lay on the side of opposition. The whole substance of the reasons, which the minister could urge in defence of this violation of his own principles, was the necessity of giving ease to the landed interest, and the dread of the public creditors to have their debts discharged. On this occasion he advanced this remarkable position, that the situation of the country, and the case of the public creditors was altered so much since the establishment of the sinking fund, that the competition among them was not who should be the first, but who should be the last to be paid, an assertion, which none of the opposition ventured to contradict, and therefore may be considered as true. He also added, that although the sinking fund was established for the payment of the debts, yet it was still subject to the disposal of parliament; and whenever it appeared, that it could be more properly and beneficially applied to some other use, the legislature had a power, and ought to dispose of it in that manner.

On the other side, the opposition argued, that the sacred deposit for discharging the debts and abolishing the taxes, ought not to be applied to any use, except in cases of extreme necessity, which were not now apparent; that the assenting to the motion was in fact robbing posterity of £. 500,000, and the progressive interest of that sum, for a trifling ease to themselves. They reminded him of his inconsistency, in destroying his own darling project, and undermining the boasted monument of his own glory; and Sir John Barnard emphatically urged, "that the author of such an expedient must expect the curses of posterity."

These arguments, however, did not affect the decision of the house of commons. The influence of the minister, aided by the co-operation of the landed,

landed; monied, and popular interests, triumphed over opposition; and the motion was carried by a majority of 110 voices, 245 against 135.

The practice of alienating the sinking fund having been once sanctioned by parliament, was continued without intermission. In 1734 £. 1,200,000, or the whole produce of the year, was taken from it; in 1735 and 1736, it was anticipated and mortgaged. "Thus expired," observes Dr. Price, perhaps with more enthusiasm than truth, "after an existence of a few years, the sinking fund; that sacred blessing (as it was once thought) and the nation's only hope. Could it have escaped, it would long before this time have eased Britain of all its debts, and left it safe and happy."

In regard to the beneficial consequences which must have resulted from the due administration of the sinking fund, many words are not wanting to prove that point. Without estimating the advantages as highly as the opponents of the minister, or Dr. Price, it may fairly be inferred, from the statement of Walpole himself, that had the produce been applied to that purpose, from its first establishment in 1716 to 1739, the year in which the war with Spain commenced, that more than 20 millions of the national debt might have been easily paid off, whereas only £. 7,190,740 were discharged.*

The ill consequences to the public of alienating the sinking fund, are so notorious and evident, that it is not my intention to justify Sir Robert Walpole; on the contrary, he deserves, and has sufficiently incurred the censure of posterity, who have suffered by this measure. But while we blame this conduct in its full latitude, let us not follow the example of those speculative writers, who do not sufficiently weigh existing circumstances, neglect to consider the temper of the times and the situation of the country, and who judge of the measures pursued by government in 1733, from those which have been pursued in subsequent times. In justice to the memory of a minister, who seems to have sacrificed every object for the preservation of interior tranquillity and external peace, let us consider the motives which induced him to propose the alienation of the sinking fund, which cannot be better illustrated, than in the words of a very judicious writer on finance.

* The opposition computed, but on very erroneous calculations, that at Christmas 1733, £. 25,000,000 might have been paid off more than had been discharged, and Dr. Price observes, "Had it been the year 1732, been allowed to increase, and this (except from the interest of debts paid by it) and been applied to the discharge of debts, would to the payment of debts, bearing 4 per cent. interest,

and afterwards to the payment of debts, bearing 3 per cent. it would (in the present year 1731) have completed the redemption of more than one hundred and sixty millions of debt, leaving the public, during this whole period, in possession of all the surpluses which have arisen in the revenue beyond £. 1,210,000, except those produced by redemptions &c."

§ Price on Annuities, vol. 1. p. 120.

Period V.

1730 to 1734.

* These steps of administration I neither censure or approve of. I must suppose every statesman to have good reasons for doing what he does, unless I can discover that his motives are bad. May not the landed interest, who composed the parliament, have insisted upon such a diminution of their load? May not the proprietors of the public debts have insisted, on their side, that no money out of the sinking fund should be thrown into their hands, while the bank was making loans upon the land and malt duties at 3 per cent.? Might not the people have been averse to an augmentation of taxes? When three such considerable interests concur in a scheme, which in its ultimate though distant consequences, must end in the notable prejudice of perpetuating the debts, although opportunities offer to diminish them, what can government do? They must submit; and, which is worse, they cannot well avow their reasons. •

“Such combinations must occur, and frequently too, in every state loaded with debts, where the body of the people, the landlords, and the creditors, find an advantage in the non-payment of the national debt. It is for this reason, I imagine, the best way to obviate the bad consequences of so strong an influence, in parliament, would be, to appropriate the amount of all sinking funds in such a manner, as to put it out of a nation's power to misapply them, and by this means force them either to retrench their extraordinary expences, or to impose taxes for defraying them*.”

Popularity of
the measure.

These observations are perfectly just, and consonant to the spirit and temper of the times; nor did any measure of Walpole's administration more conciliate the favour of the landholders, momed men, and people, than the alienation of the sinking fund, so justly deprecated by posterity, yet so much applauded by his contemporaries.

For a long period after the accession of George the First, the greater part of the landed interest had uniformly opposed government. With a view to ingratiate the new family with these persons, who formed a large party in the house of commons, the minister had lowered the land tax to three and then to two shillings in the pound; and this measure had given the administration great popularity. It had most effectually quelled the opposition, and brought over many friends to government; and it was truly said by Henry Pelham, in the house of commons, “Gentlemen may talk as they please of what was done in last session of parliament; but I can say, that in all places where I have since been, I have had the pleasure of receiving the thanks of the people, for the ease then given to the landed interest; and whatever goods may

* Stewart's Political Economy, vol. 2, page 394.