the miſunderſtanding in the royal family, he attached himſelf to the ſon, and was ſuſpected by the king of fomenting the prince's diſcontent. On this account he was ſuddenly removed from the poſt of groom of the ſtole, and deprived of all his employments, to the great regret of the prince, who placed implicit confidence in him and his brother the earl of Ilay. Chapter 53. 1739.

During the king's abſence he was much conſulted by the prince; and while he was accuſed by Walpole and Townſhend of caballing with the Tories, one of the cauſes of diſguſt which the king entertained againſt thoſe miniſters was, that they privately caballed with the duke of Argyle and his brother *.

From the time of his removal he oppoſed adminiſtration with great acrimony, until he was ſoftened by the place of lord ſteward of the houſehold, which was conferred on him in 1719. From this period he uniformly ſupported the meaſures of government, although he was occaſionally diſguſted with the miniſtry.

In the debates which took place on the murder of captain Porteous, and on the bill of pains and penalties againſt the provoſt and city of Edinburgh, the duke of Argyle had ſtrenuouſly reſiſted the bill, but in this inſtance he did not conſider himſelf as oppoſing government, becauſe ſeveral, and particularly his brother, the earl of Ilay, who uniformly ſupported the meaſures of adminiſtration, purſued the ſame conduct. In the courſe of theſe debates however, he threw out ſeveral peeviſh expreſſions, teſtifying his diſlike to all kinds of jobs, which were ſuppoſed to be levelled againſt the miniſter, and ſeemed to indicate that he was diſſatisfied. At the time of the rupture between the king and prince of Wales, his diſcontent became more manifeſt, and he finally entered the liſts of oppoſition during the diſcuſſion of Spaniſh affairs.

It is ſtill undecided whether his acceſſion to the ſide of oppoſition was derived from the quick ſight which he is ſaid to have poſſeſſed *when* it was time to leave a miniſter, or from diſguſt and diſappointment, or from diſapprobation of meaſures. But whatever were the motives which influenced his conduct, his defection was a ſevere blow to the miniſter. He gave freſh ſpirits and energy to the cauſe of oppoſition in the houſe of lords. His violent and declamatory ſpeeches were calculated to make a deep impreſſion on the public mind, and his perſonal weight and intereſt in the houſe of commons ſeduced ſeveral members from the miniſterial intereſt, amongſt whom was Dodington, who had long attached himſelf to the duke, and looked up to him as a ſpecies of *demigod*.

* See Chapter 15.

The

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The averſion which the anti-miniſterial party had conceived againſt the duke of Argyle, was now converted into reſpect and love*. He who was bitterly arraigned for his political verſatility, was now applauded for his virtue and patriotiſm. His oppoſition to the miniſter cancelled at once all his former errors, and he ſuddenly became the idol of the party. Pulteney paid a high eulogium to his great merit and exalted talents, while he was preſent in the houſe of commons, for the purpoſe of hearing the debate. Speaking of thoſe who had voted againſt the convention, Pulteney obſerved, "They who had the courage, Sir, to follow the dictates of their own breaſts (I do not mean to reflect on any gentleman) were diſabled from farther ſerving their country in a military capacity. One exception, Sir, I know there is, and I need not tell gentlemen that I have in my eye one military perſon, great in his character, great in his capacity, great in the important offices he has diſcharged, who wants nothing to make him ſtill greater but to be ſtripped of all the poſts, of all the places he now enjoys.—But that, Sir, they dare not do †."

In the common topics of oppoſition, the duke of Argyle felt no embarraſſment, but when an accuſation was brought forwards for paſt tranſactions, which had taken place during his continuance in adminiſtration, in the ſupport of which he had been active and zealous, he felt himſelf in an awkward ſituation. It was not poſſible to reconcile his invective againſt the miniſter with his well-known and often repeated apothegm, That all firſt miniſters had been faulty, but that Sir Robert Walpole had the leaſt faults of any miniſter with whom he had ever been concerned ‡. As an apology, therefore, for his firſt ſupporting, and afterwards arraigning the ſame meaſures, he in-

* The progreſs of party prejudice is well exemplified in the "Opinions of Sarah, ducheſs of Marlborough," who entertained a ſtrong contempt and averſion for the duke of Argyle; while he ſupported Sir Robert Walpole, but inſtantly changed her opinion in his favour, when the duke entered the liſts of oppoſition.

"1738.—It is ſaid the duke of Argyle is extremely angry. It is a common ſaying, that when a houſe is to fall the rats go away; but I doubt there is nothing of that in this caſe, and I rather think the anger muſt be to have ſome new demand ſatisfied, which is a thing his grace has often done.

"1738.—After all the great noiſe there was of the duke of Argyle's being irreconcilably angry with Sir Robert; every thing has paſt ſince in the houſe without his ſaying the leaſt word to ſhew it; *that* was no ſurpriſe to me.

"1738-9.—I think it is quite ſure that the duke of Argyle is determined, and has thrown away the ſcabbard, and he uſes to have a very quick ſight *when* it was time to leave a miniſter.

"1738-9.—The duke of Argyle ſpoke charmingly (on the convention with Spain) and has certainly thrown away the ſcabbard.

"1738-9.—All the hatred I once had to him, upon a very juſt account, is now turned into love.

"1740-1.—The duke of Argyle ſpoke as well as it was poſſible for a man to do."

† Tindal, vol. 20. p. 404.

‡ The Duke of Argyle's Speech anſwered, p. 31, 32.

ſiſted

ſiſted that the miniſter had engroſſed the whole power of government, that the privy council was excluded from all knowledge of the proceedings, and that the meaſures were only ſubmitted to them for approbation, and not for examination. He mentioned himſelf as a witneſs of the truth of this ſtatement. For although he was commander in chief, yet the knowledge of many material tranſactions had been withheld from him. He ſaid that there were two cabinet councils in the kingdom, the king had one, and the miniſter had another, and that the king's knew little or nothing of what was done in the other. He thus endeavoured to exculpate himſelf, and to throw on the miniſter the whole blame of paſt tranſactions, which he and his party were diſpoſed to arraign, as arguments for his removal.

The duke of Argyle was a warm, impetuous and animated orator. He poſſeſſed great fluency of language and elegance of diction. His ſpeeches were highly declamatory, and filled with affected expreſſions of candour, conviction, and diſintereſtedneſs. They had always a very great effect, by appearing to be unpremeditated effuſions flowing from the occaſion and adapted to the moment. They were accompanied with all the graces of elocution, geſture, and dignity of manner. His eloquence was highly celebrated by Pope and Thomſon *.

The vote of credit.

As there was great reaſon to apprehend that the court of Spain would not fulfil her engagements, by paying the £. 95,000, the king ſent a meſſage to both houſes of parliament, expreſſing hopes that they would enable him to make ſuch farther augmentations of his forces, both by ſea and land, and to concert ſuch meaſures as the emergency of affairs might require during the receſs of parliament. The houſe of lords returned an addreſs, aſſuring him of their ſupport. The commons reſolved, that towards enabling the king to augment his forces, if neceſſary, the ſum of £. 500,000 ſhould be granted.

They alſo voted £. 60,000, which, according to the terms of the convention, were due to Spain for the ſhips taken in 1718, and this ſum, with the £. 95,000, was to be applied towards making ſatisfaction to his majeſty's injured ſubjects for their loſſes. The ſeſſion was, ſoon after,

* "Argyle, the ſtate's whole thunder born to wield,
"And ſhake alike the ſenate and the field."

And Thomſon ſays of him,

——— "from his rich tongue
"Perſuaſion flows, and wins the high debate."

cloſed

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June 14. Farther tranſactions with Spain.

cloſed by prorogation. The king's meſſage, the addreſs of the lords, and reſolutions of the commons, were ſent to Mr. Keene, who was ordered to acquaint La Quadra, now marquis of Villarias, that this was a proviſional power which was thought neceſſary to be given during the receſs of parliament, ſhould any emergency occur which concerned the honour, intereſt, and ſafety of the king's dominions, and ought not to excite jealouſy, and that the grant of the £. 60,000, to be paid by England, if Spain would diſcharge the £. 95,000, within the time limited by the convention, was a proof of the king's deſign to fulfil his engagements. But this conciliating language had no effect. The face of affairs was totally changed in Spain; the haughty and inſulting language of the Engliſh parliament and people diſguſted and provoked that ſenſitive nation, and for ſome time all the actions of the Spaniſh court fully proved their determined reſolution not to fulfil the terms of the convention.

The Spaniſh miniſters made bitter remonſtrances on the continuance of admiral Haddock's fleet in the Mediterranean, which they conſidered as inſulting their coaſts *.

May 5. When the plenipotentiaries met, the Spaniſh full powers were not ſo extenſive as the Britiſh, and the meeting was adjourned on that account.

May 17. Villarias declared, on application being made from the South Sea company, that the king of Spain would liſten to no propoſal on the part of the com-

May 23. pany until the £. 68,000 was paid. When the plenipotentiaries met, and the full powers were allowed to be drawn up in due form, de la Quintana, one of the Spaniſh plenipotentiaries, announced, in the name of his maſter, that while the Britiſh ſquadron remained in the Mediterranean, no *grace or facilities* were to be expected, that the Engliſh were to be treated according to the rules of the moſt rigid juſtice, as the honour of the king of Spain would not permit any condeſcenſion while ſuch a ſcourge hung over them. The king of Spain himſelf, bitterly complained to Mr. Keene of the inſult offered to his honour, by the continuance of the Britiſh ſquadron on his coaſt, and declared, that as the South Sea company "refuſed to pay the £. 68,000, he thought himſelf at liberty to revoke the aſſiento for negroes, and to ſeize their effects as an indemnification for that ſum †."

After this audience, Villarias ſignified to Mr. Keene, that his maſter conſidered the peace at an end; that there was no dependence on the promiſes of the Britiſh court; inſiſted on the claim of ſearching ſhips in the American ſeas, and concluded by intimating, that if that claim was not

* Account of the negotiation with Spain, Walpole Papers. † Tindal, vol. 20. p. 419.

admitted

admitted as the baſis of future negotiations, there could be no occaſion for any farther conference *. This was juſtly conſidered as a prelude to the declaration of war; the moſt vigorous preparations were made in England for offenſive operations; Haddock, who was cruiſing off Cadiz, was conſiderably reinforced; Sir John Norris hoiſted the union flag on board the Namur, at Chatham; Sir Chaloner Ogle was ordered to the Weſt Indies with a large force, while Horace Walpole embarked for Holland to require the quota of troops, ſtipulated by treaties in caſe of a war. Chapter 55. 1739.

The miniſtry had ſent to Mr. Keene his laſt inſtructions, which were, to declare that the king inſiſted on a full renunciation on the part of Spain, of all claims of ſearching Britiſh ſhips, as the baſis of a future treaty, and that the honour of the Britiſh crown and nation would not ſuffer any farther negotiations, but upon that condition. He likewiſe demanded, in very peremptory terms, the immediate execution of all that had been ſtipulated on the part of Spain by the convention, and that the Britiſh rights to Georgia and Carolina ſhould be expreſsly acknowledged in the future treaty. He farther obſerved, that the failure of the crown of Spain to fulfil the terms of the convention, had given a new turn to the ſtate of affairs between the two courts, which intitled his Britannic majeſty to be more peremptory, and to riſe in his demands, eſpecially conſidering the vaſt expences which the Spaniſh breach of faith had obliged Great Britain to incur, in armaments both by ſea and land. Mr. Keene, as uſual, received an evaſive anſwer, but renewed his applications to the Spaniſh miniſtry, and firmly told them, that his court had adopted a reſolution of granting their ſubjects liberty to make repriſals on the Spaniards, and that he was ordered to leave Spain if he did not immediately receive a ſatisfactory anſwer †.

The reply amounted to a declaration of war. The Spaniſh court, ſecretly inſtigated by the French, eager to obtain the aſſiento contract, and to become the carriers of the Spaniſh trade into the Weſt Indies, rejected ſo diſhonourable a compromiſe, and prepared for hoſtilities with unuſual activity. The Britiſh cabinet iſſued letters of repriſals, and Admiral Vernon was ſent with nine men of war to intercept the Aſſogue ſhips in their paſſage from America to Spain, and then to reduce Porto Bello.

The declaration of war againſt Spain was received by all ranks and diſtinctions of men, with a degree of enthuſiaſm and joy, which announced the general frenzy of the nation. The bells were pealed in all the churches of Oct. 19. Declaration of war.

* Rymer, vol. 20. p. 419. † Ibid. p. 424.

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London*; huzzas and acclamations reſounded on all ſides; a numerous proceſſion attended the heralds into the city, and the prince of Wales did not deem it a degradation to accompany it, and to ſtop at the door of the Roſe Tavern, Temple Bar, and drink ſucceſs to the war. The ſtocks, which had been ſome time on the decline, roſe inſtantaneouſly. This unuſual circumſtance, at the opening of a war, was owing to the ſanguine expectation, that hoſtilities would be carried on at the expence of the enemy. The poſſeſſions of Spain in the Weſt Indies were conſidered as likely to fall an eaſy prey to the Britiſh adventurers. The merchants anticipated the monopoly of the commerce with South America, and the poſſeſſions of the mines of Peru and Potoſi. But theſe idle dreams of riches and conqueſt ſoon proved fallacious; what the miniſter had foreſeen, now happened: England ſtood ſingly engaged in war without an ally.

The Spaniſh manifeſto fully juſtified the conduct of Spain, and proved to impartial Europe, that though in the refuſal to pay the £. 95,000, ſhe appeared to be the aggreſſor, the Engliſh were the real aggreſſors, and that while affecting to comply with the letter, they had violated the ſpirit of the treaty. France artfully availed herſelf of theſe circumſtances; while ſhe armed both by ſea and land, with a view to intimidate England, and to join Spain, whenever a favourable opportunity ſhould occur, ſhe artfully offered her mediation to compoſe the differences, and prevailed on the Dutch to maintain a ſtate of neutrality, by threatening them with an army of 50,000 men towards the Low Countries, and alluring them with hopes of ſharing the ſpoils of the trade which the Engliſh carried on to Spaniſh America.

Conduct of England:

On reviewing the conduct of England, from the renewal of the diſputes concerning the Spaniſh depredations in 1737, to the declaration of war, we ſhall not heſitate to confeſs, that it was inconſiſtent, unjuſt, haughty, and violent.

The Britiſh nation liſtened only to one ſide of the queſtion, gave implicit credit to all the exaggerated accounts of the cruelties committed by the Spaniards without due evidence, and without noticing the violations of expreſs treaties by the Britiſh traders. The difficulty of obtaining an accurate ſtatement of facts, which had paſſed in the American ſeas, was ſeldom taken into conſideration. Inſtant and full reparation for damages, not ſufficiently authenticated, and always over-rated, was loudly and repeatedly called for.

* It is recorded, that Sir Robert Walpole, hearing the bells ringing, inquired the cauſe of ſuch rejoicings, and was informed that the bells were ringing for the declaration of war. They now *ring* the bells, he replied, but they will ſoon *wring* their hands.

The

The cry of *No ſearch* echoed from one part of the kingdom to another, and reverberated from London to Madrid. The common topics of juſtice and humanity were forgotten amidſt the public ardour; a general enthuſiaſm pervaded all ranks of people, and the religious cruſade againſt the Saracens, in an age of bigotry and ignorance, was not proſecuted with greater fervour than the commercial cruſade againſt Spain, in an enlightened century. The crown of Spain was reviled and degraded in the eyes of Europe, by the petulance of declamatory eloquence; imperious meſſages were ſent to Madrid, and the moſt haughty and irritable court in Europe, provoked and inſulted beyond the poſſibility of farther forbearance. Chapter 53. 1739.

The public conduct of the miniſter is alſo liable to much animadverſion, though from a different cauſe. And of Walpole.

Burke ſays, "I obſerved one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire ſtrength of his cauſe. He temporiſed; he managed; and adopting very nearly the ſentiments of his adverſaries, he oppoſed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak poſt. His adverſaries had the better of the argument, as he handled it, not as the reaſon and juſtice of his cauſe enabled him to manage it. I ſay this, after having ſeen, and with ſome care examined the original documents, concerning certain important tranſactions of thoſe times. They perfectly ſatisfied me of the extreme injuſtice of that war, and of the falſhood of the colours, which, to his own ruin, and guided by a miſtaken policy, he ſuffered to be daubed over that meaſure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converſe with many of the principal actors againſt that miniſter, and with thoſe who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did in the leaſt defend the meaſure, or attempt to juſtify their conduct, which they as freely condemned as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in hiſtory in which they were totally unconcerned. Thus it will be. They who ſtir up the people to improper deſires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themſelves. They who weakly yield to them, will be condemned by hiſtory *."

Theſe obſervations are perfectly juſt; but the ſagacious author did not ſufficiently conſider, and perhaps did not know, the delicate ſituation of the miniſter, and the embarraſſments under which he laboured at this particular juncture. Walpole himſelf well knew the ſtrength of the arguments, which might have been produced againſt the aſſertions of the minority. He was aware, that the Britiſh who traded to the South Seas, were principally

* Thoughts on a Regicide Peace, p. 23.

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engaged in carrying on an illicit trade, and in importing and exporting illicit goods; that few of the captures were illegal; and that the Spaniards, though they might in ſome inſtances have tranſgreſſed the bounds of ſtrict juſtice, yet in general were ſufficiently vindicated by the conduct and behaviour of the Britiſh traders.

The fact was, that the nation could not hear the truth; the minds of all men were ſo inflamed with tales of cruelties, that any attempts to contradict them were wholly ineffectual. The miniſter himſelf could not venture to queſtion or decry them.

An inſinuation thrown out by ſome of his friends, that the Britiſh ſhips in the Weſt Indies carried on ſmuggling, contrary to treaties, and to the true intereſt of the fair trader, was received with high indignation, and repreſented by oppoſition, as a reflection caſt upon the whole body of Engliſh merchants in America *. Nor need any other proof be given of the general infatuation and frenzy, which prevented the voice of truth and reaſon from being heard, than that the fable of Jenkins's ears was fully credited, and that no one could venture to call in queſtion the truth of that abſurd ſtory. He was obliged therefore to confine the defence of the convention to the expediency of the meaſure, the inconveniences of war, and the advantages of peace, with ſuch general arguments as were anſwered and nullified by impaſſioned appeals to the feelings and honour of an injured and inſulted nation.

His oppoſition to the war, drew upon him odium and unpopularity from all quarters. Even many of thoſe who voted with him from perſonal conſiderations, were equally free in their complaints of his indolence, want of ſpirit, and averſion to vigorous meaſures, for vindicating the national honour, and chaſtiſing the inſolence of Spaniſh depredations.

Inclination of the king.

The king was eager for war. Inſpired by a martial ſpirit and natural magnanimity, he was diſpoſed to ſeek reparation of injuries by military operations, preferably to the ſlower and leſs ſplendid methods of negotiation.

By the death of queen Caroline, Walpole had loſt his principal protectreſs; one who uniformly appreciated his counſels and promoted his views; who maintained in the king's mind thoſe favourable ſentiments, which thoſe who were about his perſon, were labouring to change. Her deceaſe gave full ſcope to the intrigues of a ſtrong party in the cabinet, who inclined for war, and oppoſed thoſe meaſures which the miniſter wiſhed to adopt.

Diviſions in the cabinet.

The duke of Newcaſtle was particularly vehement in ſupporting the contents of the petition, which the merchants had delivered to the king in 1737.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 366.

In

In conformity to this ſtatement of the grievances, he drew up an angry memorial, which Keene was ordered to preſent to the Spaniſh miniſters, in which he endeavoured to prove that the Spaniards had broken the articles in ſeveral treaties, and particularly alluded to the treaty of 1667. This memorial* was forwarded to Keene, to be preſented to the court of Madrid, and Horace Walpole was ordered to draw up a ſimilar one, to be preſented to the States General. But the ſagacity of Horace Walpole ſaw the fact in a very different light. He was fully ſenſible that the treaty of 1667, referred only to the trade which Great Britain was permitted to carry on to the Spaniſh dominions in Europe only, and had no reference to the American commerce. This opinion he repreſented with his uſual freedom, and proved by undoubted documents †. Chapter 53. 1739.

Sir Robert Walpole adopted this mode of thinking, and objected to Newcaſtle's memorial. But being unſupported by the king, and the other members of the cabinet, he was compelled to withdraw his oppoſition, and aſſent to the meaſure. Even when the convention was ratified, and the ſettling of the diſputes referred to an amicable compoſition, Newcaſtle adopted the opinions and language of oppoſition, and obſerved, in a letter to the Britiſh miniſter at Madrid:

"His majeſty's view and deſign is, that this commiſſion ſhould not, like ſome former ones, be drawn into length and produce no effect; but that all points in diſpute between the two crowns, may be thoroughly examined, and finally ſettled and adjuſted; ſo that a perfect good underſtanding may be eſtabliſhed between the two nations; *which is impoſſible to be done, as long as the depredations continue in any manner; and therefore the king does expect, that the freedom of navigation of his ſubjects may be effectually ſecured to them; that they may neither be liable to be taken or ſearched in their navigation in the American ſeas, to and from any part of his majeſty's dominions* ‡."

The chancellor, lord Hardwicke, a man of moderation, good ſenſe, and candour, was of the ſame opinion with the duke of Newcaſtle, and ſpoke with ſuch vehemence in the houſe of lords againſt the depredations, and in favour of compulſory meaſures, that Walpole, who ſtood behind the throne, exclaimed to thoſe who were near him, "Bravo colonel Yorke, Bravo §." Lord Harrington inclined to the ſentiments of Newcaſtle and Hardwicke. The earl of Wilmington was always blindly attached to the opinion of the king, and therefore favoured the war. He repented that he had declined

* Keene and Walpole Papers.
† Walpole Papers.
‡ Duke of Newcaſtle to Benjamin Keene, Whitehall, January 26, 1737-8. Walpole Papers.
§ From the late earl of Hardwicke.

accepting

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accepting the employments which had been offered to him on the death of George the Firſt; his hopes revived on the deceaſe of queen Caroline; he aſpired to the ſtation of firſt miniſter, and by his ſecret influence in the cloſet, occaſionally thwarted and counteracted the advice of Walpole.

The only members of the cabinet of whom Walpole was ſecure, were Sir Charles Wager, the earl of Godolphin, who had ſucceeded lord Lonſdale in the office of privy ſeal, which he retained in compliance with the wiſhes of the miniſter, to whom he was uniformly and inviolably attached, and the duke of Devonſhire, who was occaſionally abſent in Ireland.

Many meaſures were alſo adopted which he did not approve, and many perſons appointed to commands, particularly admiral Vernon, in oppoſition to his wiſhes. The letters of repriſal were iſſued contrary to his opinion. Newcaſtle had adapted the declaration of war to the public opinion*, in direct contradiction to his known ſentiments, on the baſis of principles which held up the delay of hoſtilities to cenſure, and, as the miniſter thought, with a view to caſt an odium upon him. The declaration had been approved by the cabinet, and was on the point of being iſſued in this form, when a ſtrong remonſtrance of Horace Walpole † to the lord chancellor, induced the ſecretary of ſtate to amend this important paper.

Lord Hervey privy ſeal.

A ſtill greater ſource of diſcord had been derived from the reſolution of the miniſter to obtain the privy ſeal for lord Harvey, who had uniformly proved his attachment, and had ſtrenuouſly ſupported his adminiſtration, by ſpeeches, and by his pen. Godolphin, who had ſucceeded lord Lonſdale in that high office, had announced his intention of retiring, but had delayed the reſignation at the requeſt of Walpole, until the difficulties which obſtructed the nomination of Hervey could be removed. That nobleman had, by his ſarcaſtic and petulant raillery, rendered himſelf ſo highly diſagreeable to Newcaſtle, that in a letter to lord chancellor Hardwicke, he obſerved, "Sir Robert Walpole and Pulteney, are not more oppoſite in the houſe of commons, than lord Hervey and I are, with regard to our mutual inclinations to each other, in our houſe ‡." He ſtrongly repreſented the objections to his promotion, and the ill effects which would be derived from it. He propoſed, rather than ſubmit, that the duke of Grafton, the lord chancellor, his brother Mr. Pelham, and himſelf ſhould reſign; and even if they ſhould not accede to this meaſure, avowed his reſolution ſingly to retire, rather than bear what he conſidered as a perſonal inſult. He made alſo ſtrong remon-

In oppoſition to Newcaſtle.

* Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, September 30, 1739.

† Horace Walpole to lord Hardwicke, Correſpondence.

‡ Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 14, 1739. Hardwicke Papers.

ſtrances

ſtrances on the ſubject to Sir Robert Walpole, and a violent altercation paſſed between them at Claremont. Notwithſtanding theſe poſitive declarations, the miniſter perſevered in his reſolution. Lord Hervey was at length appointed lord privy ſeal, and Newcaſtle, either finding his co-adjutors not inclined to reſign in compliance with his requeſt, and ſoftened by the chancellor and his brother, ſuppreſſed his diſguſt, and acquieſced in the nomination. Chapter 53. 1739. April, 1740.

The ſituation of the miniſter was rendered ſtill more irkſome, by the occaſional ill-humour of the king, who thwarted and counteracted his views, at the very moment when he moſt wanted his aſſiſtance. Several inſtances of a pertinacious refuſal of the miniſter's juſt requeſts, appeared in the courſe of this ſummer. But one in particular, will ſerve to ſhew the extreme embarraſſments under which he laboured. Walpole thwarted by the king.

Horace Walpole had ſerved, with little interruption, in the quality of envoy, plenipotentiary, or embaſſador from 1722 to 1739. He had performed his functions with unremitting aſſiduity and addreſs; and had rendered himſelf eminently uſeful in the conduct of foreign affairs. He had been for ſome time weary of his employment, and expreſſed an earneſt deſire to return to England. On the death of queen Caroline, his ſituation abroad became more difficult. Contradictory orders were occaſionally iſſued from London and Hanover. The opinion and advice which he freely gave, were not always congenial to the king's German prejudices. He incurred diſpleaſure by the frankneſs with which he declared his ſentiments on all occaſions, and the courage with which he oppoſed the petty electoral views, which ſometimes interfered with the grand intereſts of Great Britain and Europe. Frequent bickerings with lord Harrington, rendered his continuance abroad more and more irkſome, and he reſiſted all the importunities of his brother, enforced by the earneſt repreſentation of the chancellor, for whom he entertained the higheſt eſteem, and perſevered in his reſolution to retire from the diplomatic line.

The ſtate of affairs, and temper of the Dutch, who were preſſed by England on one ſide, and by France on the other, required a perſon of great abilities, addreſs, and circumſpection, agreeable to the leading men of the republic, well acquainted with the forms of their complicated conſtitution, and capable of obviating the dilatorineſs of their counſels. It was neceſſary alſo, that the ſucceſſor ſhould be attached to the miniſter, and likely to follow the directions of Horace Walpole. Such a perſon was Robert Trevor, ſecond ſon of lord Trevor, who had, from the commencement of Horace Walpole's embaſſy to the Hague, ſerved in the capacity of private ſecretary, and

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during his abſence, had acted as chargé d'affaires. He was diſtinguiſhed no leſs for his diſcretion than his talents, and his diſpatches were peculiarly intereſting and animated.

But the king had entertained a violent prejudice againſt Trevor, and though he could not with juſtice or policy object to his nomination, yet he clogged his miſſion with ſo many difficulties as nearly prevented it, and when thoſe difficulties were finally overcome, he poſitively refuſed to confer on him the united character of envoy and plenipotentiary, with the ſalary of eight pounds a day, but inſiſted that he ſhould be only appointed envoy, with a ſalary of no more than five pounds. The repeated ſolicitations of Walpole, in compliance with his brother's wiſhes, had no effect, all his attempts to perſuade the king were ineffectual.

Trevor had received from Horace Walpole a promiſe of his recommendation, and as he knew the affection of Sir Robert Walpole for his brother, and believed his influence all powerful in the cloſet, he had conſidered his appointment to the offices of envoy and plenipotentiary, as certain as if it had paſſed the great ſeal. When, therefore, the miniſter acquainted him with the king's inflexibility, he declined accepting the grant of envoy alone, as degrading to himſelf, declared that, on account of the ſmallneſs of his own fortune, the ſalary of five pounds a day was inſufficient to maintain an eſtabliſhment, in a ſtyle and manner conformable to uſage, and conſonant to the dignity of his ſtation.

The miniſter never felt himſelf more chagrined. He was concerned leſt his brother ſhould impute to him a lukewarmneſs in promoting his friend, and procuring a poſt which had been ſolemnly promiſed. He was apprehenſive leſt Trevor ſhould conceive his influence over the king greater than it really was, and ſhould ſuſpect him of duplicity, and he was at the ſame time convinced, that no perſon was ſo proper to be employed at the Hague. He therefore frankly repreſented his ſituation to his brother; he expreſſed his inability to prevail over the king, and intimated, that ſhould Trevor decline the appointment of envoy, the conſequence would be the increaſe of the king's diſguſt, and the nomination of another perſon, who might be both incapable of diſcharging his functions, and be diſagreeable to them. He therefore earneſtly entreated his brother to obtain the acquieſcence of his friend. His exhortation prevailed; Trevor, at the ſuggeſtion of Horace Walpole, complied, and ſucceeded him at the Hague, in the quality of envoy only.

Horace Walpole returned to England, and ſoon afterwards reſigned the place of cofferer of the houſehold for a tellerſhip of the exchequer. He took no further ſhare in public buſineſs, than in giving his aſſiſtance to his brother

in

in the management of foreign affairs, and ſtrenuouſly ſupporting his meaſures in parliament. Chapter 55. 1739.

Thus ſituated, and thus embarraſſed, thwarted by the king, counteracted by the cabinet, reviled by the nation, and compelled to declare war againſt his own opinion, a ſimple and natural queſtion ariſes; Why did he not reſign? Why did he ſtill maintain a poſt expoſed to ſo many difficulties, and ſubject to ſo much obloquy? His intimate friends urged him to take this ſtep, when the convention was carried in the houſe of commons by a majority of 28. In fact, he did requeſt the king's permiſſion to reſign *. He ſtated his embarraſſments: He obſerved, that his oppoſition to this war would be always imputed as a crime, and that any ill ſucceſs in carrying it on would be attributed to him. The king remonſtrated againſt this reſolution, exclaiming, "Will you deſert me in my greateſt difficulties?" and refuſed to admit his reſignation. The miniſter reiterated his wiſhes, and the king again impoſed ſilence in ſo authoritative a manner, that he acquieſced, and remained at the helm. Offers to reſign.

But his compliance with the king's commands is by no means ſufficient for his juſtification. Had he come forward on this occaſion, and declared that he had oppoſed the war as unjuſt, and contrary to the intereſts of his country, but finding that the voice of the people was clamorous for hoſtilities, he had therefore quitted a ſtation which he could not preſerve with dignity, as he was unwilling to conduct the helm of government, when he could not guide it at his own diſcretion, and to be reſponſible for meaſures which he did not approve: Had he acted this noble and dignified part, he would have riſen in the opinion of his own age, and have ſecured the applauſe of poſterity.

The conſequence of his continuance in office was repeated mortifications from thoſe with whom he acted, and inſults from thoſe who oppoſed him, and that in leſs than two years from this period, he was reduced to a compulſory reſignation.

The truth is, that he had neither reſolution or inclination to perſevere in a ſacrifice which circumſtances ſeemed to require, and to quit a ſtation which long poſſeſſion had endeared to him. But miniſters are but men; human nature does not reach to perfection; and who ever quitted power without a ſigh, or looked back to it without regret?

* Correſpondence between Horace Walpole and Etough. Walpole and Etough Papers.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FOURTH:

1739—1741.

Meeting of Parliament.—Return of the Seceders.—Efforts of Oppoſition.—Embarraſſments of Walpole.—Supplies.—Capture of Porto-Bello.—Expedition to America.—Altercations in the Cabinet.—Foreign Affairs.—Death of the King of Pruſſia—Of the Emperor.—Invaſion of Sileſia.

Meeting of parliament, November 15.

King's ſpeech.

THE declaration of war rendered it neceſſary that the parliament ſhould be aſſembled at an earlier ſeaſon than uſual. The king, in his ſpeech from the throne, ſpoke a language which could not have been ſtronger, had it been dictated by oppoſition. In the opening, he obſerved, "The preſent poſture of our affairs has obliged me to call you together at this time, ſooner than has been uſual of late years, that I may have the immediate advice and aſſiſtance of my parliament, at this critical and important conjuncture. I have, in all my proceedings with the court of Spain, acted agreeably to the ſenſe of both houſes, and therefore I can make no doubt, but I ſhall meet with a ready and vigorous ſupport in this juſt and neceſſary war, which the repeated injuries and violence committed by that nation upon the navigation and commerce of theſe kingdoms, and their obſtinacy and notorious violation of the moſt ſolemn engagements, have rendered unavoidable."

He then mentioned the augmentation of his forces, and the confidence he had in being furniſhed with the neceſſary ſupplies. After adverting to the heats and animoſities which had, with the greateſt induſtry, been fomented throughout the kingdom, and had chiefly encouraged the proceedings of the court of Spain, he concluded by obſerving, "Union among all thoſe who have nothing at heart but the true intereſt of Great Britain, and a becoming zeal in the defence of my kingdoms, and in the ſupport of the common cauſe of our country, with as general a concurrence in carrying on the war, as there has appeared for engaging in it, will make the court of Spain repent the wrongs they have done us; and convince thoſe, who mean the ſubverſion of the preſent eſtabliſhment, that this nation is determined, and able, both to vindicate their injured honour, and to defend themſelves againſt all our open and ſecret enemies, both at home and abroad *."

* Journals. Chandler.

In

Proceedings of the lords. November.

In the houſe of lords, the addreſs paſſed, though not without much altercation from the peers in oppoſition, at the mention of heats and animoſities, almoſt without a diviſion, and on a diviſion, the numbers were 68 againſt 41 *.

Of the commons.

In the commons it occaſioned a warm and violent debate, which did not ſo much relate to the ſubject of the addreſs, as to the return of the ſeceding members to their duty. Mr. Archer having moved the addreſs, which was as uſual the echo of the ſpeech, Pulteney began by vindicating the ſeceſſion. He enforced the neceſſity of that meaſure, for the purpoſe of clearing their characters to poſterity, from the imputation of ſitting in an aſſembly, where a determined majority gave a ſanction to meaſures evidently diſgraceful to the king and the nation. "This ſtep," he ſaid, "however it has been hitherto cenſured, will I hope, for the future, be treated in a different manner, for it is fully juſtified by the declaration of war, ſo univerſally approved, that any farther vindication will be ſuperfluous. There is not an aſſertion maintained in it, that was not, almoſt in the ſame words, inſiſted upon by thoſe who oppoſed the convention. Since that time, there has not one event happened that was not then foreſeen and foretold. But give me leave to ſay, Sir, that though the treatment which we have ſince received from the court of Spain, may have ſwelled the account, yet it has furniſhed us with no new reaſons for declaring war; the ſame provocations have only been repeated, and nothing but longer patience has added to the juſtice of our cauſe. The ſame violation of treaties, the ſame inſtances of injuſtice and barbarity, the ſame diſregard to the law of nations, which are laid down as the reaſons of this declaration, were then too flagrant to be denied, and too contemptuous to be borne. Nor can any one reaſon be alledged for juſtifying our going to war now, that was not of equal force before the convention. After that was ratified, and after the addreſs of parliament to his majeſty on that head, there was indeed ſome ſort of pretext for not commencing hoſtilities, becauſe you had laid yourſelves under a kind of obligation, to ſee if the court of Spain would fulfil their part of the ſtipulations; but this was a reaſon that could have no place before that conduct was entered into and approved. It is therefore evident, that if the war be now neceſſary, it was neceſſary before the convention. Of this neceſſity the gentlemen (known, however improperly, by the name of *Seceders*) were then fully convinced. They ſaw, inſtead of that ardour of reſentment, and that zeal for the honour of Britain, which ſuch indignities ought to have

* Lords' Debates.

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produced, nothing but meanneſs, and tameneſs, and ſubmiſſion; and their natural conſequences, a low, temporary expedient, a ſhameful convention; a convention, which had the Spaniards not madly broken it, muſt have ended in our ruin, muſt have thrown our own navigation into the hands of our enemies. To ſuch a conduct as this they could give no ſanction; they ſaw that all oppoſition was ineffectual, and that their preſence was only made uſe of, that what was already determined might be ratified by the plauſible appearance of a fair debate. They therefore ſeceded, if that word muſt be uſed on this occaſion, and refuſed to countenance meaſures which they could neither approve nor defeat.

"The ſtate of affairs is now changed; the meaſures of the miniſtry are now altered; and the ſame regard for the honour and welfare of their country, that determined theſe gentlemen to withdraw their countenance from ſuch a conduct as they thought had a tendency to deſtroy them, the ſame has brought them hither once more, to give their advice and aſſiſtance in thoſe meaſures, which they then pointed out, as the only means of aſſerting and retrieving them." He then obſerved, that the only method to preſerve the trade and navigation of Great Britain from any future violation, was to attack the Spaniſh ſettlements in the Weſt Indies, and to prevent any miniſter from giving up our conqueſts, under any pretence whatſoever; declared his readineſs to ſupport miniſtry in carrying on the war with vigour and advantage; expreſſed his wiſhes, that no mention had been made of heats and animoſities in the king's ſpeech, and thought that the dignity and reputation of the houſe would be conſulted, if the addreſs ſhould take no notice of that clauſe in the ſpeech *.

To this Sir Robert Walpole replied: "After what paſſed laſt ſeſſion, and after the repeated declarations of the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt, and his friends, I little expected that we ſhould have this ſeſſion been again favoured with their company. I am always pleaſed, Sir, when I ſee gentlemen in the way of their duty, and glad that theſe gentlemen have returned to their's; though, to ſay the truth, I was in no great concern leſt the ſervice either of his majeſty or the nation ſhould ſuffer by their abſence. I believe the nation is generally ſenſible, that the many uſeful and popular acts which paſſed towards the end of laſt ſeſſion, were greatly forwarded and facilitated by the ſeceſſion of theſe gentlemen, and if they are returned only to oppoſe and perplex, I ſhall not at all be ſorry if they ſecede again.

"The honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt ſaid, that they took this ſtep,

* Chandler.

becauſe

becauſe he and his friends conceived that meaſures were purſued which tended to ruin the honour and intereſt of this nation, and that they have returned to their duty, becauſe theſe meaſures are now at an end. Sir, I don't remember any one ſtep which was taken in the whole of our tranſactions with Spain, and has not been fully canvaſſed in parliament, and as fully approved. The parliament can beſt judge what is fit or not fit to be done, and while I have the honour of bearing any ſhare in the adminiſtration, I ſhall think myſelf ſafe, and my actions compleatly juſtified, if they are, after mature deliberation, approved by a Britiſh parliament. The ſtale argument of corruption never ſhall have any weight with me; it has been the common refuge of the diſappointed and diſaffected ever ſince government had a being; and it is an accuſation, that like all other charges, though unſupported by proof, if advanced againſt the beſt and moſt diſintereſted adminiſtration, and puſhed with a becoming violence, a pretended zeal for the public good, will never fail to meet applauſe among the populace. I cannot, however, believe that the honourable gentleman and his friends, have found any reaſon to boaſt of the effects produced by their ſeceſſion upon the minds of the people, for it was a very new way of defending the intereſts of their conſtituents, to deſert them when they apprehended them to be endangered. I ſhould not have touched ſo much upon this ſubject, had I not been in a manner called upon to do it, by what fell from the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt. I ſhall now proceed to take ſome notice of what he further advanced.

"The declaration of war againſt Spain, is neither more nor leſs than the conſequence, which the king again and again informed this houſe, would ariſe from the Spaniards perſiſting in their refuſal to do juſtice to his injured ſubjects; and what the honourable gentleman has ſaid upon that head, amounts to nothing more than that, after the Spaniards had abſolutely refuſed to do that juſtice, his majeſty proceeded to thoſe meaſures which he had then more than once promiſed to take. I am ſorry that the honourable gentleman ſhould ſo far diſtruſt the royal aſſurances, as rather to abſent himſelf from his duty as a member of this houſe, than put any confidence in his majeſty's promiſe. But give me leave to ſay Sir, that, from the well known character of his majeſty, this declaration of war is no more than what the honourable gentleman and his friends had not only reaſon, but a right to expect, even at the time of their ſeceſſion, if the continued injuſtice of the court of Spain ſhould make it neceſſary to have recourſe to arms. So that upon the whole, I neither ſee how his majeſty's not iſſuing this declaration of war, when they were pleaſed to require it, was a good reaſon for their running

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running from their duty; nor how its being iſſued at laſt is any apology for their return *."

After a few reflections on the impropriety of Pulteney's propoſals, and ſome obſervations by Sir John Barnard on the want of convoys, which were anſwered by Sir Charles Wager, the addreſs was carried without a diviſion.

The conduct of the miniſter during this whole ſeſſion, proved the extreme embarraſſments under which he laboured, the little dependence he could generally place on thoſe who ſupported him, and the effect which the public voice had upon the deciſions of the commons.

Bill for encouragement of ſeamen. Nov. 16.

When Pulteney moved to bring in the bill for the ſecurity of trade and encouragement of ſeamen, which had been thrown out laſt ſeſſion by the exertions of the miniſter, he oppoſed it with much warmth, and demanded that the meaſure ſhould be poſtponed for the purpoſe of taking it into conſideration †. On the firſt reading, however, he did not venture to continue his oppoſition, and after a ſlight animadverſion by Horace Walpole, it paſſed without a diviſion. Although the miniſter appreciated the injuſtice of depriving the public of all ſhare in the prize money, and of annihilating at once a great ſource of revenue, which might aſſiſt government in carrying on the war, yet he dreaded to reſiſt ſo popular a meaſure, and to offend the navy of England.

Nov. 26.

Addreſs to the king.

The agreement of the miniſter to the war, and the vigorous manner in which it was conducted, diſtreſſed oppoſition, by taking from them the moſt popular topic of declamation and obloquy. They endeavoured, therefore, to introduce motions of ſo violent a tendency, as ſhould preclude all hopes of a reconciliation with Spain, truſting that the miniſter would oppoſe them as being contradictory to his pacific ſyſtem, and would by that reſiſtance increaſe the national averſion. Accordingly, Sir William Wyndham, after a violent Philippic againſt adminiſtration, moved for an addreſs, teſtifying a reſolution to ſupport the king in the proſecution of the war, and beſeeching him "never to admit of any treaty of peace with Spain, unleſs the acknowledgment of our natural and indubitable right to navigate in the American ſeas, to and from any part of his majeſty's dominions, without being ſearched, viſited, or ſtopped, under any pretence whatſoever, ſhall have been firſt obtained, as a preliminary thereto ‡."

February 21, 1740.

As the tendency of this motion was well underſtood by the miniſter, and as it was made with the hopes of being rejected, he diſappointed their views.

* Chandler. † Ibid. ‡ Journals. Tindal.

After

After briefly vindicating his conduct from the reproaches of Sir William Wyndham, he declared that he was the firſt to agree to the motion, and it accordingly paſſed, without a diſſenting voice. The concurrence of the lords being obtained, the addreſs was accordingly preſented by both houſes.

When the place bill was brought before the houſe, the miniſter departed from his uſual cuſtom, of giving only his ſilent vote; he ſpoke againſt it with great ſtrength of argument. All his efforts, however, could only procure a ſmall majority of 16, 222 againſt 206 *. The cauſe of this numerous minority, was principally owing to the approach of a general election, which influenced many who favoured adminiſtration, to vote for the queſtion. Place bill rejected. February.

The efforts of oppoſition compelled him to relinquiſh a bill, to which he had paid conſiderable attention, and which he thought eſſentially neceſſary for the ſpeedy equipment of the fleet. Government felt ſenſible inconveniences from their inability to man their ſhips of war. According to an account given in laſt year, upon a medium no more than twenty-one thouſand five hundred and ſixteen ſeamen had been muſtered on board the royal navy, from the 31ſt of December 1738 to the 31ſt of December 1739. The public clamour at the ſame time, on account of the numerous captures made by the Spaniards, hourly increaſing, produced many warm petitions and remonſtrances. The method of impreſſing, ſerved only to increaſe the diſcontent of the merchants, who were perpetually plying both houſes of parliament with complaints that their trade was neglected. The matter was therefore referred to a committee, who found invincible obſtacles in their endeavours to remedy the inconvenience any other way, than by eſtabliſhing a general regiſter of all ſeamen and watermen capable of ſervice. A bill to this effect was accordingly preſented to the houſe by Sir Charles Wager †. Bill for regiſtering ſeamen. February 5.

The oppoſition fairly allowed the expediency of the bill, but expatiated with great effect on the hardſhips which it would entail upon the ſeaman, who muſt appear whenever ſummoned, at all hazards, whatever might be the circumſtances of his family, or the ſtate of his private affairs; he muſt, in many caſes, expoſe himſelf to the penalties of the act, or leave his family at a time when his aſſiſtance and direction are abſolutely neceſſary. He muſt, if he ſhould by any misfortune or negligence, be encumbered with debt, either fall under the diſtreſſes which the breach of this law would bring upon him, or lie at the mercy of his creditors, perhaps exaſperated by long diſappointments, or by long practice of ſeverity hardened in oppreſſion.

* Journals. Chandler, vol. 11. where ſee Walpole's admirable ſpeech on the occaſion, p. 233.
† Tindal, p. 450. Chandler.

Pulteney

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

Pulteney propoſed to defer the ſecond reading a few days, and to print the bill for the conſideration of the houſe.

To theſe arguments the miniſter replied, by declaring that the impreſs of ſeamen, to which government muſt always have recourſe in times of emergency, was neither eligible or legal, that it was ineffectual and inſufficient for the attainment of its end; that the delay in procuring ſailors at the commencement of a war, was a general grievance and a great obſtruction to offenſive operations, and to the acquiſition of conqueſts which would be eaſy at firſt, but afterwards became difficult. "While we are publiſhing proclamations," he ſaid, "iſſuing warrants for impreſſes, and gleaning up our ſailors by ſingle men, our ſecrets are betrayed, and our enterprizes defeated." He did not, however, object to the propoſal for printing the bill, and delaying the ſecond reading a proper time, which was ordered accordingly.

During this ſuſpenſion, great outcry was raiſed againſt the bill, as founded on French edicts, and as tending to the introduction of French meaſures and French deſpotiſm, and the reſtrictions which it would have impoſed on the ſailors, which were not inconſiderable, were as uſual magnified and exaggerated. The public mind was inflamed to ſuch a degree, that when the bill was preſented to be read a ſecond time, it was received with a ſilent horror, as a tranſcript of the French edict for the ſame purport, and tending to enſlave the moſt uſeful body of men in the kingdom. Sir Charles Wager and Sir John Norris, who had prepared the bill, candidly admitted the charge, that it was founded on a ſimilar ordinance, but declared that it was the only expedient which they could deviſe, to effect the purpoſe for which it was deſigned.* The miniſter, however, was diſinclined to ſupport a bill, againſt which ſuch ſtrong objections were made. He was therefore one of the firſt to ſuggeſt the propriety of dropping it, and it was accordingly rejected. "A motion was then made for the houſe to reſolve itſelf into a committee the Monday following, to conſider of the heads of a bill, for the further and better encouragement of ſeamen to enter into his majeſty's ſervice; but this reſolution, however well intended, never produced the deſired effect, though it ſeemed to be agreed upon by all parties, that a regiſter was abſolutely neceſſary; and the firſt reſolution which the committee came to, March the 13th, was, that a voluntary regiſter of ſeamen would be of great utility to the kingdom*."

Dropped.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 451. Sir Charles Wager introduced a ſimilar bill in the next ſeſſion, though with an alteration of the moſt exceptionable parts. Every paragraph was obſtinately conteſted. Some exceptionable clauſes were corrected, and ſeveral amendments made; after a long and well fought oppoſition, it paſſed by 155 againſt 79.

The

Chapter 5. 1739 to 1741.

The opponents of the miniſter, ſenſible that he was not adequately ſupported, preſſed him with motions tending to increaſe his embarraſſment. Some prizes having been taken by the Spaniards, a motion was made in the houſe of commons, "For a liſt of ſhips of war employed as cruizers, for the protection of trade on this ſide Cape Finiſterre, ſince the 10th of July laſt, diſtinguiſhing the time each ſhip was ordered to remain, and the time ſuch ſhip did actually remain on ſuch cruize, together with the reaſons of her returning to any port of this kingdom." But as the rejection of this motion was highly arraigned, the miniſter agreed the following day to addreſs the king "to give directions, that beſides the ſhips of war employed againſt the enemy, a ſufficient number of ſhips may be appointed to cruize in proper ſtations, for the effectual protection of trade." The public was extremely ſurpriſed that the miniſtry ſuffered this motion to paſs, as it carried an oblique reflection upon themſelves. But the truth was, that about this time, both the French and Dutch, under pretext of neutrality, had commenced carriers to the Spaniards, and upon being ſtopped and viſited by the Britiſh ſhips, had made ſtrong complaints that ſuch practices were not warranted by the laws of nations, or by treaties. The court of England in anſwer, told them, that their complaints ſhould be examined, but choſe to leave it to the parliament, to expreſs the ſenſe of the public, in a matter that ſo nearly touched the national intereſt. When the addreſs was preſented, the king replied, "All poſſible care has been taken in carrying on the war againſt Spain, in the moſt proper and effectual manner, and at the ſame time, for protecting the trade of my ſubjects; and you may be aſſured, that the ſame care ſhall be continued." In conſequence of this addreſs, however, the building of twenty gun ſhips to act againſt the enemy's privateers, was haſtened, and ſix ſhips of war, and ſtore ſhips were ſent to reinforce admiral Haddock in the Mediterranean.

Motion for cruizers. March 23.

But a ſtill more dangerous meaſure was enforced by the oppoſition, which I ſhall give in the words of the contemporary hiſtorian ſo often quoted. "An embargo upon all ſhipping, except coaſters, had continued, by order of the lords of the admiralty, from the 1ſt of February to the 28th of March, when a petition from the merchants and owners of ſhips, and others concerned in manufactures and commerce, was ſent to the houſe of commons, complaining of the great hardſhips the continuance of the embargo brought upon trade in general; and containing ſome inſinuations as if it had been continued through wantonneſs. The fact was, that the petitioners had been amongſt the loudeſt in the outcry raiſed againſt government

Petition againſt the embargo.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

for not protecting their trade; and as that clamour increaſed, the neceſſity of employing more ſeamen increaſed likewiſe. The lords of the admiralty had employed every fair means in their power to procure ſeamen, but without ſucceſs, till they were reduced to the diſagreeable alternative of either impoſing the embargo, or permitting the ſervice of the public to ſuffer. To give all the eaſe, however, in their power to trade, they ſoon took off the embargo on foreign ſhips, and acquainted the maſters of Britiſh ſhips, that they were willing to take it off entirely, if every maſter, or merchant, or owner of a ſhip, would, in proportion to their number of hands, contribute to the ſupply of the navy. Though nothing could be more reaſonable, and indeed, neceſſary, than this conduct, yet it was repreſented, in the antiminiſterial ſpeeches and writings, as an intolerable oppreſſion upon commerce, calculated with a view to make the city of London, and the trading part of the nation, weary of the war. The miniſtry, however, did not think fit to comply with the prayer of the petition, which was, to be heard by counſel againſt the embargo. They very juſtly thought, that to admit counſel on ſuch a head, was ſtripping his majeſty and the government of one of their moſt unqueſtionable prerogatives; and the motion was therefore rejected by a majority of 166 againſt 95. This ſeaſonable firmneſs of the government was attended with very good effects; for the merchants, at laſt, agreed to carry one third of their crew landſmen, and to furniſh one man in four to the king's ſhips; upon which condition their ſhips had protections granted them, and about the 14th of April, the embargo was taken off from all merchants ſhips in the ports of Great Britain and Ireland outward bound *."

Supplies.

Almoſt the only propoſals of the miniſter which the minority did not reſiſt, were thoſe which related to ſupplies. In this inſtance, they were as liberal in granting the public money, as if they had forgotten their own repeated aſſertions, that the nation had been ſo much impoveriſhed by Walpole, that it could not bear any farther burthens. The land tax was raiſed to four ſhillings in the pound; twelve hundred thouſand pounds were taken from the ſinking fund, and the whole amount of the ſupplies came to £. 4,059,722.

Bounties.

Many excellent laws in favour of commerce and navigation were paſſed during this ſeſſion, and premiums were continued for the importation of maſts, pitch, and tar; for encouraging the Greenland fiſhery, by allowing an additional bounty to all ſhips employed in the whale fiſhery during the war, and for protecting the men from being impreſſed.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 456.

Not

Not long before the prorogation of parliament, the news of the capture of Porto Bello, by Vernon, reached London; and as the admiral was ſtrongly ſupported by oppoſition, and conſidered as perſonally obnoxious to the miniſter, ſo favourable an opportunity of diſtreſſing him, was not omitted. During the public rejoicings, the houſe of lords ſent an addreſs to the commons for their concurrence, in which they congratulated the king on the glorious ſucceſs of his arms under the command of admiral Vernon, by taking Porto Bello with only ſix ſhips of war. When the addreſs was brought to the commons, the words, with ſix ſhips of war only, were omitted. "But ſeveral of Vernon's friends, who had heard him declare in the houſe, that he could take Porto Bello with that force, inſiſted upon the inſertion of thoſe words. They were oppoſed by the few of the miniſterial party who were in the houſe, who thought they conveyed a reproachful inſinuation againſt the memory of admiral Hoſier, and could only ſerve to revive the animoſities of the public; but the addition being inſiſted upon, it was carried by 36 againſt 31, and being agreed to by the peers, was preſented accordingly." It is juſtly obſerved by Tindal, "A Roman conſul, after reducing a province, never received greater marks of public applauſe from his country, than admiral Vernon did upon the demolition of Porto Bello. His name, not only amongſt the lower, but the moſt diſtinguiſhed ranks, became proverbial for courage; his exploit was exaggerated beyond meaſure; meanings were ſuggeſted that never were intended, and conſequences were drawn that never followed. The oppoſition, who counted upon Vernon as a creature of their own preferring, reſolved to avail themſelves of his name, and ſome of their heads entered into a correſpondence with him, which has been ſince publiſhed, and in which they repreſented the miniſter and his friends, as ſecret enemies to his perſon and ſucceſs, and themſelves as the patrons of his glory, and the ſureties for his conduct to the public. A man of Vernon's warm conſtitution and reſentful temper could not but be affected with thoſe repreſentations which he thought came from his friends; and he conceived a deep diſlike to every perſon employed, and every meaſure concerted for the public ſervice, becauſe he thought all came from the miniſter or his friends; and indeed, moſt of the terrible misfortunes that afterwards attended the Britiſh arms in America, were owing to his invincible prepoſſeſſions *."

Capture of Porto Bello.

March.

An expedition was prepared to intercept the Spaniſh fleet, which was ready to ſail from Ferrol; the command was given to Sir John Norris, and

Expeditions to America.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 456.

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the duke of Cumberland ſerved on board the Victory as a volunteer. The accident of two ſhips running foul, and the prevalence of contrary winds, fruſtrated the object of the armament, and they were obliged to remain in Torbay, till intelligence was received that the Spaniſh fleet had proceeded for America. A ſmall ſquadron, commanded by commodore Anſon, ſailed for the South Sea, and to aſſiſt Vernon. But the greateſt expectation was excited by a formidable fleet of ſeven and twenty ſhips of the line, beſides frigates, fire ſhips, bomb ketches, and tenders, equipped for the attack of the northern coaſt of New Spain, which ſailed under Sir Chaloner Ogle. In the Weſt Indies they joined Vernon, who aſſumed the command; and united to this formidable fleet, his own ſucceſsful ſquadron. The troops on board were commanded by lord Cathcart, but he unfortunately died at Dominica, and was ſucceeded by general Wentworth, between whom and the admiral an implacable animoſity ſubſiſted. To this is aſcribed the failure of the enterprize, though, undoubtedly, many natural cauſes of ſickneſs, and bad weather, materially co-operated. The reſtraint the commanders felt in acting, from their uncertainty with reſpect to the intentions of the French, who had a ſtrong ſquadron in thoſe ſeas under the marquis d'Antin, and who uſed every artifice and fineſſe they thought themſelves ſafe in diſplaying, was alſo a principal cauſe of the ill ſucceſs. Vernon made an attempt on Carthagena, which with all the force he poſſeſſed, and the advantage of being reſtrained by no ſpecific orders, was unſucceſsful and inglorious. The captures which were made at ſea, far from having a good effect, created animoſities between the ſoldiers and ſailors. Sickneſs raged, and a great mortality prevailed; an unſucceſsful attempt on the iſland of Cuba, completed the chagrin, diſappointment, and impatience of the men; and this powerful fleet, the operations of which had fixed the attention of all Europe, and made the friends of Spain deſpair of her empire in the New World, returned to England without having performed any thing to compenſate for the expence of its equipment *.

Not to interrupt the thread of the narrative, I have thus brought down the account of theſe expeditions, the failure of which drew ſo much unmerited cenſure on the adminiſtration of Walpole, to a period poſterior to the events immediately under conſideration.

Diviſions in the cabinet.

Soon after the prorogation of parliament, and the king's departure for Hanover, the diviſion in the cabinet increaſed to ſo high a degree, that at one time, the continuance of Walpole and Newcaſtle in office

* Tindal.

ſeemed

ſeemed incompatible; and it appears that Walpole, notwithſtanding the approach of a new parliament, had reſolved to obtain his diſmiſſion, even in the king's abſence. A temporary reconciliation was, however, effected, by the intervention of Horace Walpole, Pelham, and lord Hardwicke, and promiſes were made on both ſides to act with renewed cordiality. But the promiſes of ſtateſmen are fickle, and ſoon forgotten. Although a diſſolution of the miniſtry was prevented, yet the ſame jealouſy ſtill ſubſiſted. The moſt violent and indecorous altercations took place at the meeting of the lords of regency; and after the return of the king, even in the antichamber. Walpole ſeems occaſionally to have loſt his uſual moderation and good temper, and to have adopted the peeviſh fretfulneſs of Newcaſtle.

It was the object of Newcaſtle to ſend all the ſhips which could be ſpared to America, for the purpoſe of enſuring ſucceſs to the expedition in that quarter. Walpole thought that the affairs of Europe were too *much* ſacrificed to thoſe of America, and was apprehenſive leſt the coaſt of England ſhould be left expoſed. The Grafton, a ſhip of 70 guns, being diſabled from going to the Weſt Indies, it was propoſed in the council of regency, to ſend the Saliſbury, a 60 gun ſhip, in her room. To this the miniſter objected, and peeviſhly exclaimed, "What, may not one poor ſhip be left at home? Muſt every accident be riſqued for the Weſt Indies, and no conſideration paid to this country?" Newcaſtle having replied, that the number of Sir Chaloner Ogle's ſquadron ought not to be diminiſhed, Walpole made a long ſpeech, in the courſe of which, he exclaimed with great heat, "I oppoſe nothing, I give into every thing, am ſaid to do every thing, am to anſwer for every thing, and yet, God knows, I dare not do what I think right. I am of opinion for having more ſhips of Sir Chaloner Ogle's ſquadron behind; but I *dare not*, I *will not*, make any alteration;" and when the archbiſhop of Canterbury propoſed that the matter ſhould be taken into conſideration another day, he oppoſed it, and ſaid, "Let them go, let them go *."

But a ſcene of ſtill more petulant altercation took place ſoon after the king's return from Hanover. A difference of opinion had prevailed in the cabinet, concerning the mode of applying to the courts of Vienna, Berlin, and Peterſburgh, in which the ſentiments of Walpole had been over-ruled, and he bitterly complained to the king, that the diviſions of the cabinet obſtructed public buſineſs. In the next audience, the king remonſtrated with the duke of Newcaſtle and Harrington; and ſaid, "As to the buſineſs in parliament, I do not value the oppoſition, if all my ſervants act together, and are united;

* The duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 1, 1740. Hardwicke Papers.

But

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but if they thwart one another, and create difficulties in tranſacting public buſineſs, then indeed it will be another caſe." Coming out of the cloſet, the duke met Walpole, and mentioned the diſagreeable expreſſions which he had juſt heard, inſinuating, in reproachful language, that they had been adopted at his ſuggeſtion. Walpole denied the imputation, though he acknowledged that he agreed in the ſentiment. Newcaſtle ſaid, "When meaſures are agreed amongſt us, it is very right that every body ſhould ſupport them, but not to have the liberty of giving one's opinion before they are agreed, is very wrong." Walpole indignantly replied, "What do you mean? The war is your's—You have had the conduct of it—I wiſh you joy of it." The duke denied the fact, and they parted in mutual diſguſt *.

Situation of foreign affairs.

The ſituation of continental affairs was not ſuch as to compenſate for the miſcarriages in America, or to aſſiſt in compoſing the growing feuds in the cabinet.

Efforts of France.

An apparent harmony and good underſtanding had continued between the courts of Verſailles and St. James's, during the progreſs of the negotiation which terminated in the peace between the Emperor and the allies. Fleury and Walpole, both anxious to maintain tranquillity, courted each other with affected expreſſions of good will and amity; and lord Waldegrave, the channel of their mutual intercourſe, ably ſeconded the views of the Britiſh miniſter. The diſmiſſion of Chauvelin, which had been chiefly occaſioned or precipitated by the repreſentations of Waldegrave, did not render the French cabinet intrinſically more favourable to England. Amelot, who ſucceeded him, was of a pliant diſpoſition, and wholly ſubſervient to Fleury. The two nations were as oppoſite in their political ſentiments, as their ſhores to each other †. During the progreſs of the diſputes with Spain, Fleury affected to act a conciliating part, and tendered his good offices; but when the rupture took place, the French, however inclined to aſſiſt Spain, were not, from the decline of their naval force, in a condition to come forward with effect and energy. But when Fleury, deriving fond expectations from the pacific ſentiments of Walpole, attempted to intimidate England, by declaring that any conqueſts in Spaniſh America ſhould be the ſignal of immediate hoſtilities, and would inevitably bring on a general war in Europe, the Britiſh cabinet ſpurned at theſe menaces, and continued the expeditions to the Weſt Indies. Alarmed at this unexpected firmneſs, Fleury anxiouſly propoſed the mediation of France, and even offered to ſecure the payment of the £. 95,000, which the king of Spain had refuſed to liquidate.

* The duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 25, 1740.

† Littora Litteribus contraria.

But

But ſuch was the temper of the Engliſh nation, and ſuch the rancour againſt Spain, that the miniſter, however well inclined to an accommodation, could not venture to liſten to any propoſal of peace, and the mediation was declined.

The French cabinet foreſeeing, that if no compromiſe was effected, hoſtilies were inevitable, concluded, in the midſt of their amicable overtures to England, a family compact with Spain, laboured in every part of Europe to form alliances, and to iſolate England from the continent. They influenced, either in a direct or indirect manner, the wavering and puſillanimous counſels of the Dutch republic, who weakly conſidered the Spaniſh war as foreign to their intereſts as a diſpute between Nadir Shah and the Great Mogul. They governed Sweden, and directed the Porte; ſwayed the Imperial cabinet, and gave an impulſe to moſt of the German princes.

Counter efforts of England.

Walpole, aware of theſe intrigues and efforts, counteracted them by ſimilar exertions. Subſidiary treaties were made with Denmark, and with the king of Sweden, as Landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel, by which 6,000 Danes and 6,000 Heſſians were to be held in readineſs to be taken into Britiſh pay. Trevor, who had ſucceeded Horace Walpole at the Hague, ſtrained every nerve to rouſe the Dutch from their ſupineneſs and apathy. The Britiſh miniſter at St. Peterſburgh, acquired an aſcendency in the Ruſſian cabinet, and Robinſon ſucceeded in rouzing the Emperor to a ſenſe of the diſgraceful ſituation into which he had been plunged by the aſcendancy of French counſels, and in ſtimulating his fears and jealouſies at the boundleſs ambition of the houſe of Bourbon.

Death of the king of Pruſſia:

In the midſt of theſe tranſactions, the death of Frederick William, king of Pruſſia, opened a new ſcene of intrigue and exertion between the two rival courts, and Berlin became the center of negotiations which were to pacify or convulſe Europe. Frederick William, who united the diſcordant qualities of a pacific and military ſovereign, and who loved the image, while he dreaded the reality of war, had continued, almoſt during his whole reign, in a ſtate of wiſe but calumniated inaction. His ſon and ſucceſſor, Frederick the Second, whom poets and hiſtorians have ſtyled *the Great*, was a prince of aſpiring ambition, and poſſeſſed of talents, equally calculated for negotiation or action. He liſtened with affected complacency to the reſpective overtures of France and England, without declaring his deſigns, watching for a favourable opportunity to employ the well organiſed army, which he inherited from his father, to his own glory and intereſt.

The time ſeemed favourable to allay the jealouſy which had ſo long ſubſiſted between the houſes of Brunſwick and Brandenburgh. This had long been

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been a favourite meaſure with Walpole, who had in vain endeavoured to reconcile their jarring intereſts. He now ſucceeded in overcoming the pertinacity of the king, and in fixing the wavering reſolutions of the cabinet. At his inſtigation, a plan of a grand confederacy againſt the houſe of Bourbon, of which the king of Pruſſia was to be the ſoul, was formed by Horace Walpole *, approved by the duke of Newcaſtle, and ſubmitted to the king.

Of the Emperor.

While this meaſure was in agitation with a fair proſpect of ſucceſs, the death of the Emperor, Charles the Sixth, and of the Czarina, totally changed the ſyſtem of European politics, and deranged the meaſures of the Britiſh cabinet. In virtue of the pragmatic ſanction, Maria Thereſa, eldeſt daughter of the deceaſed Emperor, inſtantly ſucceeded to the whole Auſtrian inheritance. She was acknowledged by all the powers of Europe, excepting the elector of Bavaria, who alone had refuſed to guaranty the ſucceſſion of the female line, and conceived the moſt ſanguine hopes of being able to raiſe her huſband, Francis, great duke of Tuſcany, to the Imperial throne, ſo long poſſeſſed by her anceſtors. But the calm and ſunſhine which uſhered in the new reign, were ſoon overclouded. The king of Pruſſia revived an antiquated claim to part of Sileſia, and aſſerted his pretenſions, by leading an army, in the depth of winter, into that duchy. He was favourably received by the proteſtants, who formed two thirds of the natives, ſucceſſively occupied Breſlaw, the capital, and ſeveral other towns, without the ſmalleſt reſiſtance, and defeated, at Molvitz, an Auſtrian army, compoſed chiefly of veterans, under the command of marſhal Neuperg. The Britiſh cabinet, knowing the defenceleſs ſtate of the Auſtrian dominions, ſolicited Maria Thereſa to purchaſe the friendſhip of Frederick, by acceding to his demands, and by ſacrificing a ſmall part of her territories to ſecure the remainder. The queen of Hungary, however, peremptorily rejected all propoſals of accommodation, and appealed to Great Britain for the ſuccours ſtipulated by the treaty which guarantied the pragmatic ſanction. The ſucceſsful irruption of Pruſſia, brought forward numerous claimants to parts of the Auſtrian ſucceſſion. The electors of Bavaria and Saxony, the kings of Spain and Sardinia, all ſecretly abetted or openly aided by France, evinced a diſpoſition to join Frederick in hoſtilities againſt the houſe of Auſtria.

Accession of Maria Thereſa.

Invaſion of Sileſia.

* Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FIFTH.

1740—1741.

Meeting of Parliament.—Addreſs.—Views of Oppoſition.—Motion for the Removal of Sir Robert Walpole.—Speech of Sandys.—Conduct of the Tories.—Shippen withdraws.

UNDER theſe critical circumſtances, both at home and abroad, the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament aſſembled. The king, in his ſpeech from the throne, ſaid, "I acquainted you, at the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, that I was making preparations for carrying on the juſt and neceſſary war in which I am engaged, in the moſt proper places, and in the moſt vigorous and effectual manner. For this purpoſe ſtrong ſquadrons were got ready, and ordered to ſail upon important ſervices, both in the Weſt Indies and Europe, with as much expedition as the nature of thoſe ſervices and the manning of the ſhips would admit. A very conſiderable body of land forces was embarked, which is to be joined by a great number of my ſubjects raiſed in America; and all things neceſſary for tranſporting the troops from hence, and carrying on the deſigned expedition, were a long time in readineſs, and waited only for an opportunity to purſue the intended voyage. Meeting of parliament. Nov. 18, 1740.

"The ſeveral incidents which have happened in the mean time have had no effect upon me, but to confirm me in my reſolutions, and to determine me to add ſtrength to my armaments, rather than divert or deter me from thoſe juſt and vigorous methods which I am purſuing, for maintaining the honour of my crown, and the undoubted rights of my people.

"The court of Spain having already felt ſome effects of our reſentment, began to be ſenſible that they ſhould be no longer able to defend themſelves againſt the efforts of the Britiſh nation. And if any other power, agreeably to ſome late extraordinary proceedings, ſhould interpoſe, and attempt to preſcribe or limit the operations of the war againſt my declared enemies, the honour and intereſt of my crown and kingdoms muſt call upon us

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us to loſe no time in putting ourſelves into ſuch a condition, as may enable us to repel any inſults, and to fruſtrate any deſigns formed againſt us, in violation of the faith of treaties. And I hope any ſuch unprecedented ſteps, under what colour or pretence ſoever they may be taken, will inſpire my allies with a true ſenſe of the common danger, and will unite us in the ſupport and defence of the common cauſe.

"The great and unhappy event of the death of the late Emperor, opens a new ſcene in the affairs of Europe, in which all the principal powers may be immediately or conſequentially concerned. It is impoſſible to determine what turn the policy, intereſt, or ambition, of the ſeveral courts, may lead them to take in this critical conjuncture. It ſhall be my care ſtrictly to obſerve and attend to their motions, and to adhere to the engagements I am under, in order to the maintaining of the balance of power, and the liberties of Europe, and in concert with ſuch powers as are under the ſame obligations, or equally concerned to preſerve the public ſafety and tranquillity, and to act ſuch a part, as may beſt contribute to avert the imminent dangers that may threaten them *."

Addreſs of the commons:

He then, in the uſual language, demanded the neceſſary ſupplies, recommended them to prohibit the exportation of corn, which the great ſcarcity rendered neceſſary, and concluded by exhorting them to make proviſion for removing the difficulties which obſtructed the manning of the fleet. In the houſe of commons, when an addreſs was moved, teſtifying the gratitude and affection of the houſe, and their reſolution to ſupport the king in the vigorous proſecution of the war; the oppoſition propoſed to inſert the words, "to make a due examination into the application of the ſupplies given the laſt ſeſſion of parliament." But the inſertion of theſe words, which were intended to intimate a diffidence of adminiſtration, was negatived by 226 againſt 159, and the original addreſs was carried †.

Of the lords.

The great ſcene of political altercation during this ſeſſion was the houſe of peers, where the duke of Argyle, in particular, made a moſt conſpicuous figure on the ſide of oppoſition. The king was no ſooner withdrawn, and the ſpeech read by the lord chancellor, than the duke of Argyle ſuddenly roſe, before any of the miniſterial peers could make the cuſtomary motion, and propoſed an addreſs, to aſſure the king that the houſe would ſupport him with their lives and fortunes in proſecution of the juſt and neceſſary war in which he was engaged. After ſtating that the ancient mode of drawing up the addreſs was ſhort and general, reprobating the modern cuſ-

* Journals. † Ibid.

tom

tom of echoing back the ſpeech from the throne, paragraph by paragraph, and expreſſing approbation of every meaſure referred to in the ſpeech; he with great animation, and with no leſs acrimony, arraigned the mode of conducting the war, in which he declared that no one right ſtep had been taken either in the commencement or proſecution. He particularly blamed the miſcarriage of the expedition againſt Ferrol, and even inſinuated that ſecret orders had been given by miniſters againſt making any attempt on the coaſt of Spain, and that the ſailing of the grand fleet, which had been delayed, was the effect of the king's preſence. He mentioned the culpable neglect, and more than neglect, in not ſending ſupplies to admiral Vernon. He ſeverely reprobated the ſpeech, which he conſidered as the ſpeech of the miniſter, for not naming the power who might attempt to limit or preſcribe the operations of the war. He concluded by propoſing to revive the ancient method of addreſſing, ſimply to "congratulate his majeſty on his ſafe return to his regal dominions: To aſſure his majeſty that they would ſtand by him with their lives and fortunes, in the proſecution of the war; and as a further proof of their duty and affection to his majeſty's ſacred perſon, royal family, and government, to declare that they would exert themſelves in their high capacity of hereditary great council of the crown, (to which all other councils were ſubordinate and accountable) in ſuch manner as might beſt tend to promote the true intereſt of his majeſty and the country in the preſent juncture." Lord Bathurſt ſeconded the motion.

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This addreſs was oppoſed by lord Haverſham, who moved another. The previous queſtion being called for by the duke of Newcaſtle, the duke of Argyle's motion was negatived by 66 againſt 38; and an addreſs, according to the ordinary form, propoſed by lord Haverſham, paſſed on the motion without a diviſion; but a violent proteſt was ſigned by two and twenty peers *.

The great aim of oppoſition in this memorable ſeſſion was to increaſe the unpopularity of the miniſter by preſſing his miſconduct in the proſecution of the war, by imputing all the miſcarriages and ill ſucceſs to him, to harraſs him with repeated motions and queſtions relative to the production of papers and letters, and to the proſecution of the war, which might tend either to criminate him if granted, and if denied, to throw an odium on his myſteriouſneſs and uncandid reſerve. In the houſe of lords, in particular, various letters and copies of inſtructions were moved for, and refuſed only by ſmall majorities; others were carried which ought to have been denied, owing to the feeble reſiſtance of ſome members of the cabinet.

Views of oppoſition.

* Lords' Debates, vol. 7. p. 418.

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At this period the oppoſition were diſunited amongſt themſelves, and could not be brought to form a conſiſtent party, moving regularly towards one great object, but thinking themſelves ſecure of ſucceſs, began already to quarrel about the ſpoils. The Tories jealous of the Whigs, complained, that though far inferior in number, they aſſumed a conſequence and ſuperiority to which they were not entitled. They ſuſpected that ſeveral of them had already begun to tamper with the party in the cabinet which was known to be adverſe to the miniſter. The death of Sir William Wyndham diſſolved the ties which had kept the Tories in union with the Whigs, and enfeebled both parties by a want of mutual confidence. From theſe cauſes the debates in the houſe of commons were not conducted with their uſual energy. But as the peers in oppoſition were more cloſely united, and leſs diſtracted with jealouſies, their efforts were more vigorous and concentrated, and their motions led to the perſonal attack on the miniſter, which diſtinguiſhed this memorable ſeſſion. To prepare the public mind, they entered into long and frequent proteſts, which during the interruption given to the publication of debates, conveyed their ſentiments unanſwered to the world.

Notice of motion.

Their motions and publications formed a prelude to the grand attack. On the 11th of February, Sandys, who is juſtly called by Smollet "the motion-maker," left his ſeat, and croſſing the floor to the miniſter, ſaid, that he thought it an act of common attention to inform him, that he ſhould on Friday next, bring an accuſation of ſeveral articles againſt him. Walpole thanked him for the information. Soon afterwards Sandys ſtood in his place, and acquainted the houſe, that he intended on the enſuing Friday to open a matter of great importance, which perſonally concerned the chancellor of the exchequer, and therefore hoped that he would on that day be preſent.

The miniſter immediately roſe, and received the intimation with great compoſure and dignity, thanked him for his notice, and after requeſting a candid and impartial hearing, declared, that he would not fail to attend the houſe, as he was not conſcious of any crime to deſerve accuſation. He laid his hand on his breaſt and ſaid, with ſome emotion,

"Nil conſcire ſibi, nulli palleſcere culpæ

Pulteney obſerved, that the right honourable gentleman's logic and Latin were equally inaccurate, and declared that he had miſquoted Horace, who had written *nullâ palleſcere culpâ*. The miniſter defended his quotation, and Pulteney repeating his aſſertion, he offered a wager of a guinea; Pulteney accepted

cepted the challenge, and referred the decision of the diſpute to the miniſter's friend Nicholas Hardinge, clerk of the houſe, a man diſtinguiſhed for claſſical erudition. Hardinge decided againſt Walpole, the guinea was immediately thrown to Pulteney, who caught it, and holding it up to the houſe, exclaimed, "It is the only money which I have received from the treaſury for many years, and it ſhall be the laſt*."

The public expectations were raiſed to the utmoſt pitch, the paſſages to the gallery were crowded at a very early hour, the concourſe was prodigious. Several of the commons ſecured their ſeats at ſix in the morning, and no leſs than 450 members attended on this important occaſion. The debate was opened at one o'clock. Feb. 13.

Sandys † began by obſerving, that among the many advantages ariſing from our happy conſtitution, there was one reciprocal to the king and people: The legal and regular method by which the people might lay their grievances, complaints, and opinions, before their ſovereign, not only with regard to the meaſures which he purſues, but alſo with regard to the perſons whom he employs. Speech of Sandys.

"In abſolute monarchies," he ſaid, "the people may ſuffer, but cannot publicly complain; and this want of communication is productive of the moſt dreadful calamities both to the prince and people. For as the monarch has no means of becoming acquainted with the public opinion, he often continues to purſue the ſame meaſures, and to employ the ſame men, until the diſcontents become univerſal; a general inſurrection takes place, and both he and his miniſters are involved in one common ruin. In this kingdom ſuch a misfortune can never happen, as long as parliaments aſſemble regularly and freely. For if diſcontents ariſe, when any of the meaſures purſued by the king's ſervants are injurious, and his miniſters unpopular, it is the duty of this houſe to give proper information and advice, and if we neglect to do ſo we betray not only our duty to our country and conſtitution, but our duty to our ſovereign. This being my opinion, and the opinion of every perſon who entertains true notions of our conſtitution, I can no longer defer making the motion of which I formerly gave notice.

"There is not a member of this houſe who is not ſenſible that both our

* Anecdote communicated by George Hardinge, eſq; ſon of Nicholas Hardinge.—Account by Sir Robert Walpole.—Stough's Papers.—Correſpondence.—Tindal, vol. 20, p. 486.—Chandler, 1740-1, p. 63. This ballot was carefully preſerved by Mr. Pulteney, and is now in the poſſeſſion of Sir William Pulteney, bart.

† The ſubſtance of this ſpeech is taken from an abſtract made by Mr. Fox.—Correſpondence.—From parliamentary Memorandums by Sir Robert Walpole.—Orford Papers.—Chandler.

foreign

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foreign and domeſtic affairs, for ſeveral years paſt, have been unſatisfactory to the majority of the nation. The people have ſuffered from paſt meaſures; they complain of preſent meaſures; they expect no redreſs, no alteration or amendment but from the interference of this houſe. Theſe are the ſentiments of the people; which ought to be repreſented to the king, in the proper method eſtabliſhed by the conſtitution.

"I have long expected, that ſuch a motion as I am now to make would have been brought forward by ſome other gentleman more capable than myſelf to enforce what I ſhall propoſe; but as no one has hitherto attempted it, and as this is the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament, I am unwilling it ſhould expire without anſwering the people's expectations, which, in this reſpect, are ſo juſt, ſo well founded, and ſo agreeable to the conſtitution. I therefore hope I ſhall be excuſed for attempting what I think my duty as a member of this houſe, and as a friend to the preſent happy eſtabliſhment."

He then lamented the miſerable condition of the nation; engaged in a war with one potentate, and likely to be involved in another, without one ally abroad, and under the preſſure of an immenſe debt at home. He ſaid that he would inquire by what means we were reduced to this ſituation, and would then make his intended motion.

Heads of accuſation.

In making this inquiry into the cauſes of our unfortunate condition, he ſhould firſt begin by conſidering foreign affairs, then advert to domeſtic affairs, and laſtly enter into the conduct of the war.

On foreign affairs.

In regard to foreign affairs, we had departed from the principles of the grand alliance which tended to depreſs our inveterate enemy the houſe of Bourbon, and had abandoned and loſt our old and natural ally the houſe of Auſtria.

Although it had been frequently aſſerted, that all the misfortunes of our foreign negotiations were principally owing to the peace of Utrecht; yet he was of another opinion. The evils of the treaty of Utrecht had been repaired by the quadruple alliance, and ſtill more by the glorious victory which admiral Byng had gained over the Spaniſh fleet, off the coaſt of Sicily; a victory, however, which ſerved no other purpoſe than to give riſe to the ſcandalous treaty of peace in 1721, a treaty highly diſhonourable to the nation, becauſe it agreed to reſtore the ſhips we had taken in an open and juſt war, and began with a negotiation, if not an engagement, to give up Gibraltar and Minorca, without ſtipulating any conditions for the advantage of this country, or obtaining an explanation of thoſe treaties, which even then began to be miſrepreſented on the part of Spain. In one word, this treaty re-eſtabliſhed the preponderance of the houſe of Bourbon.

But he could declare, from the higheſt authority, that we had even ſince that time been, with reſpect to foreign powers, in a moſt deſirable ſituation. The high authority to which he alluded was the ſpeech from the throne, in November 1724, which repreſented peace with all powers abroad; at home perfect tranquillity, plenty, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of all civil and religious rights; expreſſions which charmed every Engliſh ear. But that univerſal happineſs did not long continue. For ſoon after this period we entered into "that cloſe friendſhip and correſpondence with the court of France, which, to the infinite diſadvantage of this nation, has continued ever ſince, and which has now, at laſt, brought the balance of power into the utmoſt danger, if not to inevitable ruin." We declined availing ourſelves of the fortunate breach which had taken place between the two branches of the houſe of Bourbon, we declined taking advantage of the reſentment entertained by Philip againſt France, for the return of the Spaniſh infanta, we declined the offer of the king of Spain to ſubmit to the ſole mediation of England to ſettle the diſputes between him and the Emperor.

"But the moſt pernicious of all the pernicious meaſures was the treaty of Hanover. When the alliance between Spain and the Emperor was concluded, we, who by a very little dexterity, might then have duped France, who has duped us ſo often, inſtead of doing ſo, by the treaty of Hanover, flung ourſelves into her arms, and England's affairs ſeem, ever ſince, to have been managed by a French intereſt. Fleets had been ſent, one to the Baltic, another to the Weſt Indies, to inſult, and only to inſult, the Czar and the king of Spain; the three pretended articles of the Vienna treaty, which produced that of Hanover, were the eſtabliſhment of the Oſtend company, the taking of Gibraltar, and the placing of the Pretender on the throne. But when Gibraltar was beſieged, what aſſiſtance did we receive from France?" He was inclined to believe that no help was ſo much as demanded of the French, becauſe we knew none would be granted. The reparation of Dunkirk was a memorable inſtance of French ſincerity.

He then adverted to the preliminaries of the peace of 1727, and the act of the Pardo. He ſtated, that on the firſt complaints from the merchants, of Spaniſh depredations, the parliament thought fit to recommend pacific meaſures only. He then cenſured the treaty of Seville, by which Spaniſh troops were to be introduced into Italy. Don Carlos went thither, but we gained nothing; commiſſioners only were appointed, and when the parliament, in 1732, addreſſed to know what progreſs they had made, his majeſty's anſwer was, that they were to meet in four months; but by the delays of Spain, the conferences were not opened till 1734, a ſtrong proof of Spaniſh

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Spaniſh perfidy; yet we had introduced the Spaniſh troops, according to our treaty with the Emperor and States General in 1731. We then guarantied the pragmatic ſanction, and engaged to ſupport the Emperor in all his dominions, but ſaw him loſe Sicily and Naples, ſuffered France to gain Loraine, and the power of the houſe of Auſtria, which had been ridiculouſly magnified in order to vindicate the Hanoverian treaty, pulled down and brought to its preſent low and miſerable ſituation.

"That great man, admiral Vernon, ſaw this error, and gave frequent admonitions againſt the perfidy of France, in this very houſe, for which reaſon it was contrived, that he ſhould be excluded from the next parliament, and he was likewiſe denied his rank. Then came the ſecond complaint of depredations, when, by the management of one perſon, parliament was prevailed upon to be again pacific."

He then expatiated on the convention: He repeated moſt of the objections made to that treaty, which he called one of thoſe expedients on which the miniſter ſeemed to live from year to year, and when this treaty was ſhamefully broken by Spain, war was not declared, but an order iſſued at firſt for repriſals only. Negotiations, as he believed, ſtill went on, but ſoon after followed the preſent war.

On domeſtic affairs.

He then adverted to domeſtic affairs; after ſtating the national debt in 1716, he alledged that the debts of the army had been ſwelled from £. 400,000 to above two millions, and debentures iſſued for that ſum, of which part had been diſcharged from the produce of the ſinking fund, by which one perſon had gained conſiderable advantage.

To make and unmake, he urged, the famous bank contract, to ſecure from condign puniſhment thoſe, who by their wicked and avaricious execution of the truſt repoſed in them by the South Sea ſcheme, had ruined many thouſands; to commute public juſtice, and ſubject the leſs guilty to a puniſhment too ſevere, in order that the moſt heinous offenders might eſcape that which they deſerved; and to give up to the South Sea company the ſum of ſeven millions ſterling, which they had obliged themſelves to pay to the public, a great part of which ſum was given to old ſtock holders, and conſequently to thoſe who had never ſuffered by the ſcheme; were the ſteps by which diſhoneſt power was obtained. All the evils and none of the advantages of the French Miſſiſſipi ſcheme were adopted: Our South Sea ſcheme had *done us harm*, while theirs had liquidated their debts.

He then enumerated the debts and the produce of the ſinking fund in 1727, and aſſerted, that the national debt was not diminiſhed, although the ſinking

ſinking fund had ſince that period produced no leſs than fifteen millions, all which had been ſpent in Spithead expeditions, and Hyde Park reviews.

He next enumerated many inſtances of unconſtitutional conduct. A larger ſtanding army maintained than was neceſſary or conſiſtent with the conſtitution; augmented without cauſe. Squadrons fitted out at an enormous expence, to the great annoyance of trade, without being employed againſt enemies, or for the aſſiſtance of allies. All methods to ſecure the conſtitution againſt that moſt dangerous enemy, corruption, rejected or rendered ineffectual; many penal laws paſſed of an arbitrary tendency; public expenditure increaſed by the addition of new and uſeleſs offices; all inquiries into the management of public money perverted or defeated; votes of credit frequent; expences of the civil liſt increaſed; the abolition of burthenſome and pernicious taxes, and the diſcharge of the debt prevented, from a principle that the collection of taxes rendered a great number of placemen and officers neceſſary, whoſe votes gave weight to undue influence in elections and in parliament; the reduction of intereſt oppoſed, not by the influence of argument, but by another ſort of influence; officers diſmiſſed for voting againſt the exciſe ſcheme, one of the weakeſt or moſt violent projects ever ſet on foot or countenanced by any miniſter. Theſe, he obſerved, were the characteriſtic features of a corrupt and profligate adminiſtration.

On the conduct of the war.

He then entered on the conduct of the war. Vernon, who after having been excluded from his ſeat in parliament, and deprived of his rank, for oppoſing adminiſtration, had retired to the country, was the only perſon fit or willing to conduct the expedition to America; and yet even with theſe claims, he was not reſtored to his rank; though it was to be hoped that his meritorious ſervices would extort that mark of confidence. Vernon received on his departure the faireſt promiſes of being ſupported and ſupplied. How were theſe promiſes fulfilled? He ſailed from Plymouth on the 3d of Auguſt 1739, only with letters of repriſal, war not being declared till October, by which means his exertions were fettered and reſtrained. He ſailed with a fleet badly equipped, and badly ſupplied. In September, ſome bomb veſſels were ſent to him, which did not arrive at Jamaica till the 15th of January. No proviſions or ſtores were forwarded, and ſo ſcantily was he victualled, that on the 18th of March, he wrote to government, earneſtly preſſing for more ſupplies. He ſaid, that his letters on the table ſufficiently prove theſe facts; they diſplayed his opinion of the great things which he might have effected, had the number of land forces, which he earneſtly and repeatedly called for, been granted, forces which remained at home for no other uſe but to oppreſs the people; forces which ſhould not have been raiſed, or ſhould have been ſent out to vindicate

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the honour of their country againſt their oppreſſors in America, where alone offenſive meaſures could be carried on with effect. Admiral Haddock, he urged, was equally neglected; bitter complaints of want of ſupplies came no leſs from his ſquadron, and he was forced to act upon the defenſive. To that want, he ſolely attributed the eſcape of the Cadiz and Ferrol ſquadrons. He commended, in high terms, the care and diligence of admiral Haddock, in furniſhing convoys, and protecting the trade of the Mediterranean, and animadverted with equal acrimony on the culpable neglect of convoys at home, and the numerous cruiſers of the enemy, which infeſted the Channel, and ruined our commerce.

Things being thus, he ſhould now name the author of all theſe public calamities. After what he had ſaid, he believed no one could miſtake the perſon to whom he alluded: every one muſt be convinced that he meant the right honourable gentleman who ſat oppoſite to him, and the whole houſe might ſee that the right honourable gentleman took it to himſelf; that againſt him there was as general a diſcontent as had ever ariſen againſt any miniſter. Although this diſcontent had laſted ſo long, yet the right honourable gentleman ſtill continued in his poſt, in oppoſition to the ſenſe of the country; this was no ſign of the freedom of government, becauſe a free people neither will nor can be governed by a miniſter whom they hate or deſpiſe.

He had well conſidered the difficulty of perſonal attacks, yet he ſhould obey the voice of the people, and act like an honeſt man, and like an Engliſhman, in making his motion. He himſelf, merely a private man, protected only by his innocence, would fearleſsly enter the liſts againſt one who uſurped a regal power, who had arrogated to himſelf a place of French extraction, that of ſole miniſter; contrary to the nature and principles of the Engliſh conſtitution. He was well aware, that a common excuſe would be urged in his defence, that parliament had given a ſanction to many of the acts which he had enumerated. But the right honourable gentleman could not urge this exculpation, without ſubjecting himſelf to the charge of groſs inconſiſtency. He himſelf had accuſed the earl of Oxford of departing from the principles of the grand alliance, and of having ſacrificed the country to France, although all his meaſures had been ſanctioned by parliament. He obſerved likewiſe, that parliaments were not infallible, but reſembled other courts of juſtice. They judge from information, and if convinced that they had been miſled by falſe information, ſhould equally acknowledge their error, and alter their opinions.

"If it ſhould be aſked," he ſaid, "Why I impute all theſe evils to *one*

perſon, I reply, becauſe that one perſon graſped in his own hands every branch of government; that *one perſon* has attained the ſole direction of affairs, monopoliſed all the favours of the crown, compaſſed the diſpoſal of all places, penſions, titles, ribbands, as well as all preferments, civil, military, and eccleſiaſtical; that *one perſon* made a blind ſubmiſſion to his will, both in elections and parliament, the only terms of preſent favour, and future expectation, and continuance in office; and declared, in this very houſe, that he muſt be a pitiful miniſter who did not diſplace an officer that oppoſed his meaſures in parliament. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

"But even let us ſuppoſe no overſight, error, or crime in his public conduct, and that the people were ſatisfied with his adminiſtration, the very length of it is in itſelf a ſufficient cauſe for removing him. In a free government *too long poſſeſſion of power is highly dangerous. Moſt commonwealths* have been overturned by this very overſight; and in this country, we know how difficult it has often proved for parliament to draw an old favourite from behind the throne, even when he has been guilty of the moſt heinous crimes. I wiſh this may not be our caſe at preſent; for though I will not ſay, nor have I at preſent any occaſion for ſhewing, that the favourite I am now complaining of has been guilty of any crimes, the proof may then be come at, and the witneſſes againſt him will not be afraid to appear. Till you do this, it is impoſſible to determine, whether he is guilty or innocent; and conſidering the univerſal clamour againſt him, it is high time to reduce him to ſuch a condition, that he may be brought to a fair, an impartial, and a ſtrict account. As I am only to propoſe an addreſs to remove him from the king's counſels, I have no occaſion to accuſe him of any ſpecific crime. The diſſatisfaction of the people, and their ſuſpicion of his conduct are a ſufficient foundation for ſuch an addreſs, and a ſufficient cauſe for his removal. For no ſovereign of theſe kingdoms ought to employ any miniſter who is diſagreeable to the people, and when any miniſter is become unpopular, it is our duty to inform the king, that he may give general ſatisfaction by his removal. I ſolemnly declare, that I have, no reſentment againſt the right honourable gentleman; I have, on the contrary, received perſonal civilities from him, and have no private motives to wiſh him ill. But as I think it neceſſary, for the welfare of my country, that he ſhould no longer continue in his majeſty's counſels, who has bewildered himſelf in treaties, who has forfeited his word with every court in Europe, and againſt whom the voice of the world, is in uniſon with that of his country, I therefore move, That an humble addreſs be preſented to his majeſty, that he would Motion.

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would be graciouſly pleaſed to remove the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole, knight of the moſt noble order of the garter, firſt commiſſioner, chancellor, and under treaſurer of the exchequer, and one of his majeſty's moſt honourable privy council, from his majeſty's preſence and counſels for ever."

Seconded by lord Limerick.

The motion was ſeconded by lord Limerick, who obſerved, that the nation was reduced to ſo low a ſtate by the miſconduct of the miniſter, that no reſource was left, excepting the increaſe of the land tax, and the anticipation of the funds. That the reins of government were conducted by a ſole miniſter, who lived by expedients, who had removed the beſt and ableſt men in the army, for no other demerit than for their parliamentary oppoſition to his meaſures.

Motion for Walpole to withdraw.

Wortley Montague then propoſed, in conformity to the order of the houſe, which requires that every member, againſt whom an accuſation is brought, ſhould retire while his conduct is examined, that Sir Robert Walpole ſhould be ordered to withdraw. He was ſeconded by Gybbon, who attempted to vindicate this unjuſt propoſal, by ſeveral inapplicable precedents.

Oppoſed.

The motion was warmly oppoſed by Bromley and Howe; and as the houſe appeared to favour that ſide of the queſtion, Gybbon, after urging, that if the motion for the removal ſhould be carried, neither the life, liberty, or eſtate of the miniſter would be affected by the deciſion, propoſed that he ſhould be firſt heard in his own defence, and then withdraw. This propoſal was ſtrenuouſly ſupported, and no leſs ſtrenuouſly reſiſted; it was called an unprecedented mode of proceeding, to charge a member in general terms, by ſpeeches only, without ſtating particular facts as crimes, or bringing any evidence to prove them, or him to be the author of them; and then to expect that he ſhould retire, and other members be permitted to load him with general accuſations, while he was not preſent to hear and make his defence. The houſe appearing convinced of the abſurdity and injuſtice of this propoſal, it was withdrawn, and reſolved that the miniſter ſhould hear all the charges brought againſt him, and ſhould be the laſt to reply.

Debate on the queſtion.

A long and violent debate then took place on the main queſtion. The principal ſpeakers in favour of the motion were Pulteney, Bootle, Fazakerly, Pitt, and Lyttleton.

The ſubſtance of their arguments was ſimilar to thoſe which had been advanced by Sandys; no direct accuſation was made, no ſpecific charge urged, no particular crime alledged, but a ſpecies of accumulative guilt, drawn from a long ſeries of ſuppoſed miſconduct, and founded on, what they called,

called, moral certainty, preſumptive evidence, probable proof, common fame, and notoriety of facts. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

They juſtified their proceedings by making a diſtinction between impeachments, or bills of pains and penalties, which affect the lives, liberty, or eſtates of the perſons accuſed, and an addreſs to remove a miniſter only, without attempting to inflict any legiſlative or judicial puniſhment. In the firſt caſe, they obſerved, legal evidence is neceſſary, and muſt be applied to the ſeveral heads of the accuſation, but in the other ſtrong preſumptions, founded upon public fame and notoriety, have been always held ſufficient.

Pitt obſerved, in his emphatic language, "That during the adminiſtration that was the object of cenſure, at home debts were increaſed and taxes multiplied, and the ſinking fund alienated; abroad the ſyſtem of Europe was totally ſubverted, and at this awful moment, when the greateſt ſcene was opening to Europe that has ever before occurred, he who had loſt the confidence of all mankind, ſhould not be permitted to continue at the head of the king's government *. Pitt.

Pulteney enforced the general tenour of the argument advanced by Sandys, with increaſed animation, wit, and eloquence. He particularly dwelt on his favourite topic, that the ſyſtem adopted and invariably purſued by the miniſter, tended to exalt the houſe of Bourbon, and depreſs that of Auſtria; and maintained his poſition by an analyſis of foreign tranſactions and treaties, that preceded and followed the treaty of Hanover, which he conſidered as the ſource of all ſubſequent degradations, and the cauſe of national diſgrace. Pulteney.

References were not only made to thoſe miniſters who had been impeached or cenſured by the houſe of commons, to Suffolk, Clarendon, and Lauderdale, but Walpole was compared to the moſt worthleſs favourites that had ever engroſſed the ear of former ſovereigns. Alluſions were even made to the minions of Edward the Second, Pierce Gaveſton †, and Hugh Le

* Heads of Pitt's ſpeech, in Sir Robert Walpole's Parliamentary Memorandums.

† About this time was publiſhed, "The Life and Death of Pierce Gaveſton, Earl of Cornwal, grand Favourite and Prime Miniſter to that unfortunate Prince, Edward the Second, King of England, with Political Remarks, by Way of Caution to all crowned Heads, and Evil Miniſters." It was accompanied with a caricature print, repreſenting the figure of Sir Robert Walpole, holding in his hands a label, inſcribed *Corruption*. Before him is the block, and the executioner with the axe. Behind him is a grenadier with a bag of money in his hand, on which is written *pay*; a hand in the clouds holds a ſword over his head. Underneath is a vignette, with a baboon in chains on one ſide, and on the other a hydra pierced with darts, incloſing this inſcription:

"Tho' evil miniſters awhile,
"May baſk themſelves in fortune's ſmile;
"They for their crimes muſt ſoon or late,
"Like Gaveſton, ſubmit to fate."

Deſpenſer,

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Deſpenſer, and he was accuſed of reſembling them in the giddineſs of their power, and the exorbitance of their grants.

Pelham and Fox.

The motion was oppoſed, with great animation and ability, by the friends of the miniſter. Pelham and Stephen Fox principally diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this debate; after vindicating the meaſures, both foreign and domeſtic, which had been ſo much arraigned, they reſted the chief part of the defence on the impropriety of the motion. They expoſed the violence and injuſtice of propoſing to have a member of the houſe, and a perſon in his high ſtation, puniſhed by the loſs of character and reputation, upon general allegations, which were not proved to be crimes, and which had received, in former examinations and debates, the approbation or conſent of the parliament, and in making Sir Robert Walpole an adviſer of the things alledged, as prime or ſole miniſter, without any other evidence than that of common fame *.

Sir Charles Wager.

The aſſertion of Sir Charles Wager made a great impreſſion on the houſe. With a view to combat the arguments that Walpole was ſole miniſter, the veteran ſeaman, who had been at the head of the admiralty nine years, ſaid, "That, to his knowledge, Sir Robert Walpole was as forward and zealous to promote the war as any of his majeſty's council, and that nothing was a moment wanted in his province, that of iſſuing money: That he had never interfered in recommending any one perſon to the admiralty board; and that if he had ever done ſo, he (Sir Charles) would have thrown up all his employments."

Conduct of the Tories.

The miniſter was not only defended by his friends, and thoſe who uſually ſupported the meaſures of government, but the motion was oppoſed by ſeveral Tories, as tending to introduce an inquiſitorial ſyſtem.

Lord Cornbury.

Lord Cornbury, in particular, obſerved, "The advocates for the motion, endeavour to advance a charge of *accumulative* guilt, to aggravate one crime by the ſuperaddition of another, and rather to intend a popular cenſure than a legal condemnation.

"I ſuppoſe no man will ſuſpect that an unjuſt partiality in favour of the gentleman, whoſe conduct is now the ſubject of examination, influences me to cenſure this mode of proceeding, ſince no man can want reaſons againſt it of the greateſt weight. Reaſons which deſerve the cloſeſt attention from every man of prudence and virtue, every man who regards his own ſafety, or the happineſs of future generations. No man, whoſe judgment is not overborne by his reſentment, and whoſe ardour for vengeance has not extinguiſhed every other motive of action, can reſolve to give the ſanction of his voice

* Account of the debate by Sir Robert Walpole. Correſpondence.

to

to a method of proſecution, by which the good and bad are equally endangered; and which will make the adminiſtration of public affairs deſtructive to the pureſt integrity, and the higheſt wiſdom.

"That ſuch muſt be the conſequence of charges like this, will appear no longer a paradoxical aſſertion, if it be remembered, that humanity is a ſtate of imperfection, that the ſtricteſt virtue ſometimes declines from the right, and that the moſt conſummate policy is by falſe appearances, or accidental inattention, betrayed into error. For how ſoon muſt that man be deſtroyed, whoſe high ſtation expoſes him to the continual obſervation of envy and malevolence, whoſe minuteſt errors are carefully remarked, and whoſe caſual failings are treaſured up as a fund of accuſations. How ſoon, if trivial tranſgreſſions ſhall be accumulated into capital crimes, may the beſt man complete the ſum of his offences, and be doomed to ignominy, to exile, or to death?

"In criminal proceedings, particular regard has been had to precedents, and ſurely the effects of a former accuſation of this kind, give us no encouragement to the repetition of it. From a charge of accumulative treaſon, the faction of the laſt age proceeded to the uſurpation of boundleſs authority, the ſubverſion of our conſtitution, and the murder of the king.

"I ſhall therefore continue to ſuppoſe every man innocent till he appears from legal evidence to be guilty; and to reject any charge of accumulative guilt, upon the ſame principles of regard to liberty, to virtue, to truth, and to our conſtitution, by which I have hitherto regulated my conduct; and for the ſame reaſons for which I have condemned the meaſures of the adminiſtration, I ſhall now oppoſe the preſent motion *."

Harley.

Edward Harley, member for Herefordſhire, brother to the lord treaſurer, and in a ſhort time afterwards earl of Oxford himſelf, evinced, on this occaſion, a ſpirit of moderation, not uſual with perſons engaged in party diſputes. He was one of the heads of the Tory intereſt, and his family had always diſtinguiſhed itſelf in oppoſition to Sir Robert Walpole. He ſaid, "Sir, I do not ſtand up at this time of night, either to accuſe or flatter any man. Since I have had the honour to ſit in parliament, I have oppoſed the meaſures of adminiſtration becauſe I thought them wrong; and as long as they are, I ſhall continue to give as conſtant an oppoſition to them. The ſtate of the nation, by the conduct of our miniſters, is deplorable; a war is deſtroying us abroad, and poverty and corruption are devouring us at home. But whatever I may think of men, God forbid, that my private opinion ſhould be

* Chandler.

the

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the only rule of my judgment! I ſhould deſire to have an exterior conviction from facts and evidences, and without this, I am ſo far from condemning, that I would not cenſure any man. I am fully ſatisfied in my own mind, that there are thoſe who give pernicious and deſtructive counſels; and, I hope, a time will come, when a proper, legal, parliamentary inquiry may be made, and when clear facts and full evidence will plainly diſcover who are the enemies of their country. A noble lord, to whom I had the honour to be related, has been often mentioned in this debate: He was impeached and impriſoned; by that impriſonment his years were ſhortened; and the proſecution was carried on by the honourable perſon, who is now the ſubject of your queſtion, though he knew at that very time, that there was no evidence to ſupport it. I am now, Sir, glad of this opportunity to return good for evil, and to do that honourable gentleman and his family, that juſtice which he denied to mine* ."

Shippen withdraws.

Shippen declared, " † that he looked on this motion as only a ſcheme for turning out one miniſter, and bringing in another; that as his conduct in parliament had always been regulated with a view to the good of his country, without any regard to his own private intereſt, it was quite indifferent to him, who was in or who was out; and he would give himſelf no concern in the queſtion." At the concluſion of theſe words he withdrew, and was followed by thirty-four of his friends.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SIXTH:

1742.

Reply of Sir Robert Walpole.—Motion negatived.—Similar Motion in the Lords.—Conduct and Anecdotes of Shippen.

THIS attack, concerted with ſo much previous care, and announced with ſo much oſtentation, was not calculated to alarm the miniſter. He ſaw the diſaffected Whigs feeble and heſitating: all the Tories, not excluding

* Chandler.—Tindal has recorded this ſpeech, as ſpoken in the houſe of lords by the earl of Oxford, which was certainly ſpoken by his uncle in the houſe of commons. By the death of his nephew, in the following June, he ſucceeded to the title.

† Chandler.

cluding thoſe who voted againſt him, averſe to the queſtion; many ſupporting him with a favourable diſplay of impartial and benevolent principles; the Jacobites ſcornfully turning their backs upon a party apparently united by no principle, and a motion brought forwards without due conſideration. He availed himſelf, with great ability, of the vantage ground on which he ſtood, and commenced the reply by a well conducted attack againſt the diſcordant parts of oppoſition. He fomented the diviſion between the Tories and Whigs in oppoſition, paid a delicate compliment to the Tories, and directed the ſhafts of his eloquence principally againſt the leaders of the diſaffected Whigs, whoſe motives of hoſtility were already ſuſpected by the public. Chapter 56. 1741.

He ſaid, "Sir *, it has been obſerved by ſeveral gentlemen, in vindication of this motion, that if it ſhould be carried, neither my life, liberty, or eſtate will be affected. But do the honourable gentlemen conſider my character and reputation as of no moment? Is it no imputation to be arraigned before this houſe, in which I have ſat forty years, and to have my name tranſmitted to poſterity with diſgrace and infamy? I will not conceal my ſentiments, that to be named in parliament as a ſubject of inquiry, is to me a matter of great concern; but I have the ſatisfaction at the ſame time to reflect, that the impreſſion to be made depends upon the conſiſtency of the charge, and the motives of the proſecutors. Had the charge been reduced to ſpecific allegations, I ſhould have felt myſelf called upon for a ſpecific defence. Had I ſerved a weak or wicked maſter, and implicitly obeyed his dictates, obedience to his commands muſt have been my only juſtification. But as it has been my good fortune to ſerve a maſter, who wants no bad miniſters, and would have hearkened to none, my defence muſt reſt on my own conduct. The conſciouſneſs of innocence is alſo ſufficient ſupport againſt my preſent proſecutors. A farther juſtification is alſo derived from a conſideration of the views and abilities of the proſecutors. Had I been guilty of great enormities, they want neither zeal and inclination to bring them forwards, nor ability to place them in the moſt prominent point of view. But as I am conſcious of no crime, my own experience convinces me, that none can be juſtly imputed. I muſt therefore aſk the gentlemen, from whence does this attack proceed? From the paſſions and prejudices of the parties combined againſt me; who may be divided into three claſſes, the Boys, the riper Patriots, and the Tories. The Tories I can eaſily forgive, Speech of Sir Robert Walpole.

* The ſubſtance of this ſpeech is taken from parliamentary minutes, in the hand writing of Sir Robert Walpole.—Orford Papers.—Chandler.

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they have unwillingly come into the meaſure, and they do me honour in thinking it neceſſary to remove me, as their only obſtacle. What is the inference to be drawn from theſe premiſes? that demerit with them ought to be conſidered as merit with others. But my great and principal crime is my long continuance in office, or, in other words, the long excluſion of thoſe who now complain againſt me. This is the heinous offence which exceeds all others: I keep from them the poſſeſſion of that power, thoſe honours and thoſe emoluments, to which they ſo ardently and pertinaciouſly aſpire. I will not attempt to deny the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of a party war; but in carrying on that war, all principles and rules of juſtice ſhould not be departed from. The Tories muſt confeſs, that the moſt obnoxious perſons have felt few inſtances of extra judicial power. Wherever they have been arraigned, a plain charge has been exhibited againſt them; they have had an impartial trial, and have been permitted to make their defence; and will they, who have experienced this fair and equitable mode of proceeding, act in direct oppoſition to every principle of juſtice, and eſtabliſh this fatal precedent of parliamentary inquiſition? and whom would they conciliate by a conduct ſo contrary to principle and precedent?

"Can it be fitting in them, who have divided the public opinion of the nation, to ſhare it with thoſe who now appear as their competitors? With the men of yeſterday, the boys in politics, who would be abſolutely contemptible did not their audacity render them deteſtable? With the mock patriots, whoſe practice and profeſſions prove their ſelfiſhneſs and malignity, who threatened to purſue me to deſtruction, and who have never for a moment loſt ſight of their object? Theſe men, under the name of the Separatiſts, preſume to call themſelves, excluſively, the *nation* and the *people*, and under that character, aſſume all power. In their eſtimation, the king, lords, and commons are a faction, and *they* are the government. Upon theſe principles, they threaten the deſtruction of all authority, and think they have a right to judge, direct, and reſiſt, all legal magiſtrates. They withdraw from parliament becauſe they ſucceed in nothing, and then attribute their want of ſucceſs not to its true cauſe, their own want of integrity and importance, but to the effect of places, penſions, and corruption. May it not be aſked, Are the people on the court ſide more united than on the other? Are not the Tories, Jacobites, and *Patriots* equally determined? What makes this ſtrict union? What cements this heterogeneous maſs? Party engagements and perſonal attachments. However different their views and principles, they all agree in oppoſition. The Jacobites diſtreſs the government they would ſubvert; the Tories contend for

for party prevalence and power. The Patriots, from diſcontent and diſappointment, would change the miniſtry, that themſelves might excluſively ſucceed. They have laboured this point twenty years unſucceſsfully; they are impatient of longer delay. They clamour for change of meaſures, but mean only change of miniſters. Chapter 56. 1741.

"In party conteſts, why ſhould not both ſides be equally ſteady? Does not a Whig adminiſtration as well deſerve the ſupport of the Whigs as the contrary? Why is not principle the cement in one as well as the other, eſpecially when they confeſs, that all is levelled againſt one man? Why this one man? becauſe they think, vainly, nobody elſe could withſtand them. All others are treated as tools and vaſſals. The one is the corrupter, the numbers corrupted. But whence this cry of corruption, and excluſive claim of honourable diſtinction? Compare the eſtates, characters, and fortunes of the commons on one ſide, with thoſe on the other. Let the matter be fairly inveſtigated; ſurvey and examine the individuals who uſually ſupport the meaſures of government, and thoſe who are in oppoſition. Let us ſee to whoſe ſide the balance preponderates. Look round both houſes, and ſee to which ſide the balance of virtue and talents preponderates! Are all theſe on one ſide, and not on the other? Or are all theſe to be counterbalanced by an affected claim to the excluſive title of patriotiſm. Gentlemen have talked a great deal of patriotiſm. A venerable word, when duly practiſed. But I am ſorry to ſay, that of late it has been ſo much hackneyed about, that it is in danger of falling into diſgrace: the very idea of true patriotiſm is loſt, and the term has been proſtituted to the very worſt of purpoſes. A patriot, Sir! why patriots ſpring up like muſhrooms? I could raiſe fifty of them within the four-and-twenty hours. I have raiſed many of them in one night. It is but refuſing to gratify an unreaſonable or an *inſolent* demand, and up ſtarts a patriot. I have never been afraid of making patriots; but I diſdain and deſpiſe all their efforts. But this pretended virtue proceeds from perſonal malice, and from diſappointed ambition. There is not a man amongſt them whoſe particular aim I am not able to aſcertain, and from what motives they have entered into the liſts of oppoſition.

"I ſhall now conſider the articles of accuſation which they have brought againſt me, and which they have not thought fit to reduce to ſpecific charges; and I ſhall conſider theſe in the ſame order as that in which they were placed by the honourable member who made the motion. Firſt, in regard to foreign affairs, ſecondly, to domeſtic affairs, and, thirdly, to the conduct of the war. On foreign affairs.

"As to foreign affairs, I muſt take notice of the uncandid manner in

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which the gentlemen on the other ſide have managed the queſtion, by blending numerous treaties and complicated negotiations into one general maſs.

"To form a fair and candid judgment of the ſubject, it becomes neceſſary not to conſider the treaties merely inſulated; but to advert to the time in which they were made, to the circumſtances and ſituation of Europe when they were made, to the peculiar ſituation in which I ſtand, and to the power which I poſſeſſed. I am called repeatedly and inſidiouſly prime and ſole miniſter. Admitting, however, for the ſake of argument, that I am prime and ſole miniſter in this country; am I, therefore, prime and ſole miniſter of all Europe? Am I anſwerable for the conduct of other countries as well as for that of my own? Many words are not wanting to ſhew, that the particular views of each court occaſioned the dangers which affected the public tranquillity; yet the whole is charged to my account. Nor is this ſufficient; whatever was the conduct of England, I am equally arraigned. If we maintained ourſelves in peace, and took no ſhare in foreign tranſactions, we are reproached for tameneſs and puſillanimity. If, on the contrary, we interfered in the diſputes, we are called Don Quixotes, and dupes to all the world. If we contracted guaranties, it was aſked, why is the nation wantonly burthened? If guaranties were declined, we were reproached with having no allies."

After making theſe preliminary obſervations, on the neceſſity of conſidering the relative ſituation of Europe, when theſe engagements were contracted, and proving that the treaties were right at the time they were made, though they might not have had the deſired effect, he entered into a luminous recapitulation of the principal compacts, which had been adverted to in the courſe of the debate. They formed a connective ſeries, embracing paſt events, preſent advantages, and future contingencies, of which the various parts had ſuch a neceſſary dependance on each other, that any ſeparation muſt be fatal to the comprehenſion of the whole.

He took up the ſubject from the peace of Utrecht, which, by ſuffering a prince of the houſe of Bourbon to remain on the throne of Spain, had materially altered the balance of power in Europe, had produced new intereſts, and involved this country in a ſeries of delicate and complicated negotiations. The quadruple alliance was the conſequence of that treaty; but as he was not then in adminiſtration, he was not accountable either for its articles or effects, though he was unfortunately miniſter, and unwillingly acceſſary to the execution of it.

He ſhould, therefore, begin with the firſt act of that adminiſtration to which he had the honour to belong; a refuſal to accept of the ſole mediation

mediation offered by Spain, on the breach between Spain and France, occaſioned by the diſmiſſion of the infanta. "I hope it will not be ſaid," he obſerved, "we had any reaſon to quarrel with France upon that account; and therefore, if our accepting of that mediation might have produced a rupture with France, it was not our duty to interfere, unleſs we had ſomething very beneficial to expect from the acceptance. A reconciliation between the courts of Vienna and Madrid, it is true, was deſirable to all Europe, as well as to us, provided it had been brought about without any deſign to diſturb our tranquillity, or the tranquillity of Europe; but both parties were then ſo high in their demands, that we could hope for no ſucceſs; and if the negotiation had ended without effect, we might have expected the common fate of arbitrators, the diſobliging of both. Therefore, as it was our intereſt to keep well with both, I muſt ſtill think it was the moſt prudent part we could act, to refuſe the offered mediation.

"The next ſtep of our foreign conduct expoſed to reprehenſion, is the treaty of Hanover. Sir, if I were to give the true hiſtory of that treaty, which no gentleman can deſire, I ſhould, I am ſure I could fully juſtify my own conduct; but as I do not deſire to juſtify my own, without juſtifying his late majeſty's conduct, I muſt obſerve, that his late majeſty had ſuch information, as convinced not only him, but thoſe of his council, both at home and abroad, that ſome dangerous deſigns had been formed between the Emperor and Spain, at the time of their concluding the Treaty at Vienna, in May 1725. Deſigns, Sir, which were dangerous not only to the liberties of this nation, but to the liberties of Europe. They were not only to wreſt Gibraltar and Port Mahon from this nation, and force the Pretender upon us, but they were to have Don Carlos married to the Emperor's eldeſt daughter, who would thereby have had a probability of uniting in his perſon, or in the perſon of ſome of his ſucceſſors, the crowns of France and Spain, with the Imperial dignity, and the Auſtrian dominions. It was therefore highly reaſonable, both in France and us, to take the alarm at ſuch deſigns, and to think betimes of preventing their being carried into execution. But with regard to us, it was more particularly our buſineſs to take the alarm, becauſe we were to have been immediately attacked. I ſhall grant, Sir, it would have been very difficult, if not impoſſible, for Spain and the Emperor joined together to have invaded, or made themſelves maſters of any of the Britiſh dominions; but will it be ſaid, they might not have invaded the king's dominions in Germany, in order to force him to a compliance with what they deſired of him, as king of Great Britain? And

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if thoſe dominions had been invaded on account of a quarrel with this nation, ſhould we not have been obliged, both in honour and intereſt, to defend them? When we were thus threatened, it was therefore abſolutely neceſſary for us to make an alliance with France; and that we might not truſt too much to their aſſiſtance, it was likewiſe neceſſary to form alliances with the northern powers, and with ſome of the princes in Germany, which we never did, nor ever could do, without granting them immediate ſubſidies. Theſe meaſures were therefore, I ſtill think, not only prudent but neceſſary, and by theſe meaſures we made it much more dangerous for the Emperor and Spain to attack us, than it would otherwiſe have been.

"But ſtill, Sir, though by theſe alliances we put ourſelves upon an equal footing with our enemies, in caſe of an attack, yet, in order to preſerve the tranquillity of Europe, as well as our own, there was ſomething elſe to be done. We knew that war could not be begun and carried on without money; we knew that the Emperor had no money for that purpoſe, without receiving large remittances from Spain; and we knew that Spain could make no ſuch remittances without receiving large returns of treaſure from the Weſt Indies. The only way, therefore, to render theſe two powers incapable of diſturbing the tranquillity of Europe was, by ſending a ſquadron to the Weſt Indies, to ſtop the return of the Spaniſh galleons; and this made it neceſſary, at the ſame time, to ſend a ſquadron to the Mediterranean, for the ſecurity of our valuable poſſeſſions in that part of the world. By theſe meaſures the Emperor ſaw the impoſſibility of attacking us in any part of the world, becauſe Spain could give him no aſſiſtance, either in money or troops; and the attack made by the Spaniards upon Gibraltar was ſo feeble, that we had no occaſion to call upon our allies for aſſiſtance: a ſmall ſquadron of our own prevented their attacking it by ſea, and from their attack by land, we had nothing to fear; they might have knocked their brains out againſt inacceſſible rocks, to this very day, without bringing that fortreſs into any danger.

"I do not pretend, Sir, to be a great maſter of foreign affairs. In that poſt in which I have the honour to ſerve his majeſty, it is not my buſineſs to interfere; and as one of his majeſty's council, I have but one voice; but if I had been the ſole adviſer of the treaty of Hanover, and of all the meaſures which were taken in purſuance of it, from what I have ſaid, I hope it will appear, that I do not deſerve to be cenſured, either as a weak or a wicked miniſter on that account."

The next meaſures which incurred cenſure were the guaranty of the pragmatic

pragmatic ſanction by the ſecond treaty of Vienna, and the refuſal of the cabinet to aſſiſt the houſe of Auſtria, in conformity with the articles of that guaranty.

" As to the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction," he ſaid, " I am really ſurpriſed to find that meaſure objected to; it was ſo univerſally approved of, both within doors and without, that till this very day I think no fault was ever found with it, unleſs it was that of being too long delayed. If it was ſo neceſſary for ſupporting the balance of power in Europe, as has been inſiſted on in this debate, to preſerve intire the dominions of the houſe of Auſtria, ſurely it was not our buſineſs to inſiſt upon a partition of them in favour of any of the princes of the empire. But if we had, could we have expected that the houſe of Auſtria would have agreed to any ſuch partition, even for the acquiſition of our guaranty? The king of Pruſſia had, it is true, a claim upon ſome lordſhips in Sileſia; but that claim was abſolutely denied by the court of Vienna, and was not at that time ſo much inſiſted on by the late king of Pruſſia. Nay, if he had lived till this time, I believe it would not now have been inſiſted on; for he acceded to that guaranty without any reſervation of that claim; therefore, I muſt look upon this as an objection, which has ſince ariſen from an accident, that could not then be foreſeen, or provided againſt.

" I muſt therefore think, Sir, that our guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction, or our manner of doing it, cannot now be objected to, nor any perſon cenſured by parliament for adviſing that meaſure. In regard to the refuſal of the cabinet to aſſiſt the houſe of Auſtria, though it was prudent and right in us to enter into that guaranty, we were not, therefore, obliged to enter into every broil the houſe of Auſtria might afterwards lead themſelves into; and therefore, we were not in honour obliged to take any ſhare in the war which the Emperor brought upon himſelf in the year 1733, nor were we in intereſt obliged to take a ſhare in that war, as long as neither ſide attempted to puſh their conqueſts farther than was conſiſtent with the balance of power in Europe, which was a caſe that did not happen. For the power of the houſe of Auſtria was not diminiſhed by the event of that war, becauſe they got Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, in lieu of Naples and Sicily; nor was the power of France much increaſed, becauſe Loraine was a province ſhe had taken and kept poſſeſſion of, during every war in which ſhe had been engaged.

" As to the diſputes with Spain, they had not then reached ſuch a height as to make it neceſſary for us to come to an open rupture. We had ther reaſon to hope, that all differences would be accommodated in an amicable manner;

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manner; and whilſt we have any ſuch hopes, it can never be prudent for us to engage ourſelves in war, eſpecially with Spain, where we have always had a very beneficial commerce. Theſe hopes, 'tis true, Sir, at laſt proved abortive, but I never heard it was a crime to hope for the beſt. This ſort of hope was the cauſe of the late convention; if Spain had performed her part of that preliminary treaty, I am ſure it would not have been wrong in us, to have hoped for a friendly accommodation, and for that end to have waited nine or ten months longer, in which time the plenipotentiaries were, by the treaty, to have adjuſted all the differences ſubſiſting between the two nations. But the failure of Spain in performing what had been agreed to by this preliminary, put an end to all our hope, and then, and not till then, it became prudent to enter into hoſtilities, which were commenced as ſoon as poſſible after the expiration of the term limited for the payment of the £. 95,000.

" Strong and virulent cenſures have been caſt on me, for having commenced the war without a ſingle ally, and this deficiency has been aſcribed to the multifarious treaties in which I have bewildered myſelf. But although the authors of this imputation are well apprized that all theſe treaties have been ſubmitted to and approved by parliament, yet they are now brought forward as crimes, without appealing to the judgment of parliament, and without proving or declaring that all or any of them were adviſed by me. A ſuppoſed ſole miniſter is to be condemned and puniſhed as the author of all; and what adds to the enormity is, that an attempt was made to convict him uncharged and unheard, without taking into conſideration the moſt arduous criſis which ever occurred in the annals of Europe. Sweden corrupted by France; Denmark tempted and wavering; the landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel almoſt gained; the king of Pruſſia, the Emperor, and the Czarina, with whom alliances had been negotiating, dead; the Auſtrian dominions claimed by Spain and Bavaria; the elector of Saxony heſitating whether he ſhould accede to the general confederacy planned by France; the court of Vienna irreſolute and indeciſive. In this critical juncture, if France enters into engagements with Pruſſia, and if the queen of Hungary heſitates and liſtens to France, are all or any of theſe events to be imputed to Engliſh counſels? and if to Engliſh counſels, why are they to be attributed to one man?

On domeſtic affairs.

" I now come, Sir, to the ſecond head, the conduct of domeſtic affairs; and here a moſt heinous charge is made, that the nation has been burthened with unneceſſary expences, for the ſole purpoſe of preventing the diſcharge of our debts, and the abolition of taxes. But this attack is more to the diſhonour of the whole cabinet council than to me. If there is any ground for this

this imputation, it is a charge upon king, lords, and commons, as corrupted, or impoſed upon. And they have no proof of theſe allegations, but affect to ſubſtantiate them by common fame and public notoriety. Chapter 56. 1741.

" No expence has been incurred but what has been approved of, and provided for by parliament. The public treaſure has been duly applied to the uſes to which it was appropriated by parliament, and regular accounts have been annually laid before parliament, of every article of expence. If by foreign accidents, by the diſputes of foreign ſtates amongſt themſelves, or by their deſigns againſt us, the nation has often been put to an extraordinary expence, that expence cannot be ſaid to have been unneceſſary, becauſe, if by ſaving it we had expoſed the balance of power to danger, or ourſelves to an attack, it would have coſt, perhaps, a hundred times that ſum, before we could recover from that danger, or repel that attack.

" In all ſuch caſes there will be a variety of opinions. I happened to be one of thoſe who thought all theſe expences neceſſary, and I had the good fortune to have the majority of both houſes of parliament on my ſide; but this, it ſeems, proceeded from bribery and corruption. Sir, if any one inſtance had been mentioned, if it had been ſhewn, that I ever offered a reward to any member of either houſe, or ever threatened to deprive any member of his office or employment, in order to influence his vote in parliament, there might have been ſome ground for this charge; but when it is ſo generally laid, I do not know what I can ſay to it, unleſs it be to deny it as generally and as poſitively as it has been aſſerted; and, thank God! till ſome proof be offered, I have the laws of the land, as well as the laws of charity in my favour.

" Some members of both houſes have, it is true, been removed from their employments under the crown; but were they ever told, either by me, or by any other of his majeſty's ſervants, that it was for oppoſing the meaſures of the adminiſtration in parliament? They were removed, becauſe his majeſty did not think fit to continue them longer in his ſervice. His majeſty had a right ſo to do, and I know no one that has a right to aſk him, What doſt thou? If his majeſty had a mind that the favours of the crown ſhould circulate, would not this of itſelf be a good reaſon for removing any of his ſervants? Would not this reaſon be approved of by the whole nation, except thoſe who happen to be the preſent poſſeſſors? I cannot, therefore, ſee how this can be imputed as a crime, or how any of the king's miniſters can be blamed for his doing what the public has no concern in; for if the public be well and faithfully ſerved, it has no buſineſs to aſk by whom.

" As to the particular charge urged againſt me, I mean that of the army debentures,

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debentures, I am ſurpriſed, Sir, to hear any thing relating to this affair charged upon me. Whatever blame may attach to this affair, it muſt be placed to the account of thoſe that were in power, when I was, as they call it, the country gentleman: It was by them this affair was introduced, and conducted, and I came in only to pay off thoſe public ſecurities, which their management had reduced to a great diſcount, and conſequently to redeem our public credit from that reproach, which they had brought upon it. The diſcount at which theſe army debentures were negotiated, was a ſtrong and prevalent reaſon with parliament, to apply the ſinking fund firſt to the payment of thoſe debentures, but the ſinking fund could not be applied to that purpoſe, till it began to produce ſomething conſiderable, which was not till the year 1727. That the ſinking fund was then to receive a great addition, was a fact publicly known in 1726; and if ſome people were ſufficiently quick-ſighted to foreſee, that the parliament would probably make this uſe of it, and cunning enough to make the moſt of their own foreſight, could I help it, or could they be blamed for doing ſo? But I defy my moſt inveterate enemy to prove, that I had any hand in bringing theſe debentures to a diſcount, or that I had any ſhare in the profits by buying them up.

" In reply to thoſe who confidently aſſert that the national debt is not decreaſed ſince 1727, and that the ſinking fund has not been applied to the diſcharge of the public burthens, I can with truth declare, that a part of the debt has been paid off, and the landed intereſt has been very much eaſed, with reſpect to that moſt unequal and grievous burthen, the land tax. I ſay ſo, Sir, becauſe upon examination it will appear, that within theſe ſixteen or ſeventeen years, no leſs than £. 8,000,000 of our debt has been actually diſcharged, by the due application of the ſinking fund, and at leaſt £. 7,000,000 has been taken from that fund, and applied to the eaſe of the land tax. For if it had not been applied to the current ſervice, we muſt have ſupplied that ſervice by increaſing the land tax; and as the ſinking fund was originally deſigned for paying off our debts, and eaſing us of our taxes, the application of it in eaſe of the land tax, was certainly as proper and as neceſſary an uſe as could be made. And I little thought that giving relief to landed gentlemen, would have been brought againſt me as a crime.

On the conduct of the war.

" I ſhall now advert to the third topic of accuſation, the conduct of the war. I have already ſtated in what manner, and under what circumſtances hoſtilities commenced, and as I am neither general nor admiral, as I have nothing to do either with our navy or army, I am ſure I am not anſwerable for the proſecution of it. But were I to anſwer for every thing, no fault could, I think, be found with my conduct in the proſecution of the war. It has

from the beginning been carried on with as much vigour, and as great care of our trade, as was conſiſtent with our ſafety at home, and with the circumſtances we were in at the beginning of the war. If our attacks upon the enemy were too long delayed, or if they have not been ſo vigorous or ſo frequent as they ought to have been, thoſe only are to blame who have for many years been haranguing againſt ſtanding armies; for without a ſufficient number of regular troops in proportion to the numbers kept up by our neighbours, I am ſure, we can neither defend ourſelves, nor offend our enemies. On the ſuppoſed miſcarriages of the war, ſo unfairly ſtated, and ſo unjuſtly imputed to me, I could, with great eaſe, frame an incontrovertible defence; but as I have treſpaſſed ſo long on the time of the houſe, I ſhall not weaken the effect of that forcible exculpation ſo generouſly and diſintereſtly advanced by the right honourable gentleman who ſo meritoriouſly preſides at the admiralty.

" If my whole adminiſtration is to be ſcrutiniſed and arraigned, why are the moſt favourable parts to be omitted? If facts are to be accumulated on one ſide, why not on the other? And why may not I be permitted to ſpeak in my *own favour*? Was I not called by the voice of the king and the nation to remedy the fatal effects of the South Sea project, and to ſupport declining credit? Was I not placed at the head of the treaſury, when the revenues were in the greateſt confuſion? Is credit revived, and does it now flouriſh? Is it not at an incredible height, and if ſo, to whom muſt that circumſtance be attributed? Has not tranquillity been preſerved both at home and abroad, notwithſtanding a moſt unreaſonable and violent oppoſition? Has the true intereſt of the nation been purſued, or has trade flouriſhed? Have gentlemen produced one inſtance of this exorbitant power, of the influence which I extend to all parts of the nation, of the tyranny with which I oppreſs thoſe who oppoſe, and the liberality with which I reward thoſe who ſupport me? But having firſt inveſted me with a kind of mock dignity, and ſtyled me a prime miniſter, they impute to me an unpardonable abuſe of that chimerical authority which they only have created and conferred. If they are really perſuaded that the army is annually eſtabliſhed by me, that I have the ſole diſpoſal of poſts and honours, that I employ this power in the deſtruction of liberty, and the diminution of commerce, let me awaken them from their deluſion. Let me expoſe to their view the real condition of the public weal; let me ſhew them that the crown has made no encroachments, that all ſupplies have been granted by parliament, that all queſtions have been debated with the ſame freedom as before the fatal period, in which my

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counſels are ſaid to have gained the aſcendancy: An aſcendancy from which they deduce the loſs of trade, the approach of ſlavery, the preponderance of prerogative, and the extenſion of influence. But I am far from believing that they feel thoſe apprehenſions which they ſo earneſtly labour to communicate to others, and I have too high an opinion of their ſagacity not to conclude that, even in their own judgment, they are complaining of grievances that they do not ſuffer, and promoting rather their private intereſt than that of the public.

"What is this unbounded ſole power which is imputed to me? How has it diſcovered itſelf, or how has it been proved?

"What have been the effects of the corruption, ambition, and avarice, with which I am ſo abundantly charged?

"Have I ever been ſuſpected of being corrupted? A ſtrange phænomenon, a corrupter himſelf not corrupt Is ambition imputed to me? Why then do I ſtill continue a commoner? I, who refuſed a white ſtaff and a peerage. I had, indeed, like to have forgotten the little ornament about my ſhoulders, which gentlemen have ſo repeatedly mentioned in terms of ſarcaſtic obloquy. But ſurely, though this may be regarded with envy or indignation in another place, it cannot be ſuppoſed to raiſe any reſentment in this houſe, where many may be pleaſed to ſee thoſe honours which their anceſtors have worn, reſtored again to the commons.

"Have I given any ſymptoms of an avaricious diſpoſition? Have I obtained any grants from the crown ſince I have been placed at the head of the treaſury? Has my conduct been different from that which others in the ſame ſtation would have followed? Have I acted wrong in giving the place of auditor to my ſon, and in providing for my own family? I truſt that their advancement will not be imputed to me as a crime, unleſs it ſhall be proved that I placed them in offices of truſt and reſponſibility for which they were unfit.

"But while I unequivocally deny that I am ſole and prime miniſter, and that to my influence and direction all the meaſures of government muſt be attributed, yet I will not ſhrink from the reſponſibility which attaches to the poſt I have the honour to hold; and ſhould, during the long period in which I have ſat upon this bench, any one ſtep taken by government be proved to be either diſgraceful or diſadvantageous to the nation, I am ready to hold myſelf accountable.

"To conclude, Sir, though I ſhall always be proud of the honour of any truſt or confidence from his majeſty, yet I ſhall always be ready to remove from

from his councils and preſence, when he thinks fit; and therefore I ſhould think myſelf very little concerned in the event of the preſent queſtion, if it were not for the encroachment that will thereby be made upon the prerogatives of the crown. But I muſt think, that an addreſs to his majeſty to remove one of his ſervants, without ſo much as alledging any particular crime againſt him, is one of the greateſt encroachments that was ever made upon the prerogatives of the crown; and therefore, for the ſake of my maſter, without any regard for my own, I hope all thoſe that have a due regard for our conſtitution, and for the rights and prerogatives of the crown, without which our conſtitution cannot be preſerved, will be againſt this motion." Chapter 56. 1741.

This ſpeech made a deep impreſſion on the houſe. It was delivered in a moſt animated and faſcinating manner, and with more dignity than he uſually aſſumed. The motion was negatived by 290 againſt 106 *; a great and unuſual majority, which proceeded from the ſchiſm between the Tories and the Whigs, and the ſeceſſion of Shippen and his friends. Motion negatived.

The ſame motion was made by lord Carteret the ſame day in the houſe of lords, and ſupported with more pertinacity and vigour than in the commons. The ſchiſm between the Tories and Whigs had not extended to that houſe, and the lords in oppoſition acted uniformly and conſiſtently in one compact phalanx. Motion in the lords.

The principal ſpeakers againſt the miniſter were, the dukes of Bedford and Argyle, the earls of Sandwich, Weſtmoreland, Berkſhire, Carliſle, Abingdon, and Halifax, and the lords Haverſham and Bathurſt; the oppoſers of the motion were, the lord chancellor, the dukes of Newcaſtle and Devonſhire, the biſhop of Saliſbury (Sherlock) the earl of Hay, and lord Hervey.

The motion was negatived by 108 againſt 59, but a warm proteſt was ſigned by 31 peers. The prince of Wales was preſent, but did not vote; and it was remarked that ſeveral peers who had places under government, particularly the earl of Wilmington, did not divide with either party †. Negatived.

Immediately after the motion was thus diſpoſed of, the duke of Marlborough roſe, and moved to reſolve, "that any attempt to inflict any kind of puniſhment on any perſon, without allowing him an opportunity to make his defence, or without proof of any crime or miſdemeanour committed by him, is contrary to natural juſtice, the fundamental laws of this realm, and the antient eſtabliſhed uſage of parliaments; and it is a high infringement on the liberties of the ſubject."

* Journals.

† Lords' Debates. Tindal.

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The truth of the propoſition contained in this motion, was admitted by the warmeſt friends of the laſt motion; but, contrary to all principles of reaſoning, they inſiſted upon the treaties that lay before them, as being full evidences againſt the miniſter, but without offering one circumſtance of evidence to prove that thoſe treaties had been ſolely conducted by him, or that they were detrimental in themſelves to the honour and intereſt of the nation. They made, however, a faint endeavour to ſet aſide the motion upon the previous queſtion, but it was carried, though ſtrong proteſts were entered upon both queſtions *.

Conduct and anecdotes of Shippen.

In this whole tranſaction, the greateſt ſurpriſe was excited by the conduct of Shippen.

His receſſion expoſed him to much obloquy from the party whom he deſerted. Some inferred, that his abſence was purchaſed by a bribe †, and did not ſcruple to aſſert, that he received an annual penſion from government; others have been ſo unjuſt as to aſſert that this rumour was induſtriouſly raiſed by Walpole, to decry his integrity, and diminiſh his influence ‡. It might be ſufficient to refute this unjuſt reflection, by obſerving, that his wife's fortune placed him far above all temptation, and that he had exhibited a ſtrong proof of diſintereſtedneſs at a very trying period. When Shippen was committed to the Tower, for declaring that the only infelicity in his majeſty's reign was, that he was unacquainted with our language and conſtitution, and that the ſpeech from the throne was rather calculated for the meridian of Germany, than of Great Britain; the prince of Wales, then diſſatisfied with his father, ſent general Churchill, his groom of the bedchamber, to him, with the offer of a preſent of £. 1,000; which Shippen declined §. That he was honeſt and inflexible, is undoubted! Even Walpole himſelf has atteſted this truth, by repeatedly declaring, not only while he was at the head of affairs, but after his reſignation, not only during the life of Shippen, but after his death; that he would not ſay who was corrupted, but he would ſay who *was* not corruptible, that man was Shippen ‖.

The real cauſe of his receſſion, I am enabled to aſcertain, from the account of a perſon nearly related to him: Sir Robert Walpole having diſcovered a correſpondence, which one of Shippen's friends carried on with the Pretender, Shippen called on the miniſter, and deſired him to ſave his friend.

* Tindal, vol. 20, p. 429.
† Opinions of the ducheſs of Marlborough.
‡ Sheridan's Life of Swift, p. 222.
§ Etough, from Dr. Middleton, to whom it was communicated by Shippen.
‖ From lord Orford.

Sir

Sir Robert willingly complied: and then ſaid, Mr. Shippen, I cannot deſire you to vote with the adminiſtration, for with your principles, I have no right to expect it. But I only require, whenever any queſtion is brought forward in the houſe perſonally affecting me, that you will recollect the favour I have now granted you. It is likewiſe to be obſerved, that this was only a temporary truce, for he ſoon reſumed his accuſtomed oppoſition, and gave his aſſiſtance to thoſe ſtrenuous meaſures, which drove the miniſter from the helm. Chapter 56. 1741.

If uniformity of principles, and conſiſtency of conduct, be admitted as a merit, William Shippen certainly deſerves that eulogium as much or more than any other member of the houſe of commons. Yet in conſidering the perſons who formed the minority, we ought to be on our guard, leſt we miſtake the heat of party for true patriotiſm; and we ſhould alſo be wary in truſting to expreſſions which are become almoſt cant words, and have been handed from one writer to another, until they have been adopted as unqueſtionable truths. Thus he is called by various writers, "*the Engliſh Cato*," "*inflexible patriot*;" and Pope has ſaid of him,

I love to pour out all myſelf, as plain
As *honeſt Shippen*, or downright Montagne.

But though we may allow him to be honeſt and incorruptible, yet the appellation of true patriot, can by no means be juſtly conferred on him; unleſs we ſhould ſtyle that man a patriot, who was notoriouſly diſaffected to the proteſtant ſucceſſion, and publicly known to be in the intereſts of the Pretender; who did not affect even to conceal his ſentiments, who in the heterogeneous meetings of the oppoſition, frequently diſguſted the old Whigs with declarations on the neceſſity of reſtoring the Stuarts *; and who in company with his intimate friends, was often heard to declare, that he waited for orders from Rome, before he would give his vote in the houſe of commons.

The family of Shippen was ſettled in Cheſhire. His father, who was rector of Stockport, had four ſons, one of whom was preſident of Braſen Noſe college, Oxford, a man of diſtinguiſhed abilities, and of the ſame principles with his brother; and one daughter, who married Mr. Leyborne, a gentleman of reſpectable family in Yorkſhire.

William Shippen was born about the year 1672, and received his education at Stockport ſchool, which was conducted with great credit by a maſter whoſe name was Dale. He firſt came into parliament in 1707, for Bramber

* From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

in

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in Suſſex, in the place of John Aſgill, who was expelled for blaſphemy, by the intereſt of lord Plymouth, whoſe ſon Dixy Windſor, was his brother-in-law. He again repreſented that borough in 1710. In 1713, when he was choſen for Saltaſh in Cornwall, probably by government intereſt, but waved his ſeat in 1714, on being elected for Newton in Lancaſhire, through the intereſt of Mr. Legh of Lime Park, in Cheſhire, whoſe aunt, lady Clarke, was married to his brother Dr. Shippen, which place he continued to repreſent until his death. His paternal eſtate was very ſmall, not exceeding £. 400 a year, but he obtained a fortune of not leſs than 70,000 by his wife, who was daughter and co-heireſs of Sir Richard Stote, knight, of the county of Northumberland, by whom he left no children. His way of living was in all reſpects ſimple and œconomical. Before his marriage he never exceeded his income, and even afterwards his expences were not proportionable to the largeneſs of his eſtate.

For a ſhort period he had apartments in Holland-houſe, from whence he dates ſeveral of his letters to biſhop Atterbury, with whom he maintained a conſtant correſpondence, during his exile *. And William Morrice mentions him in one of his letters as a perſon who continued fixed to his principles, or as he expreſſes himſelf, *as honeſt as ever*. He ſeems to have had no country reſidence, except a hired houſe on Richmond-hill, but made excurſions in ſummer to his wife's relations in Northumberland. His uſual place of abode was London, in the latter period of his life, in Norfolk Street, and his houſe was the rendezvous for perſons of rank, learning, and abilities; his manner was pleaſing and dignified, and his converſation was replete with vivacity and wit.

Shippen and Sir Robert Walpole had always a perſonal regard for each other. He was frequently heard to ſay, Robin and I are two honeſt men. He is for king George, and I for king James, but thoſe men with long cravats (meaning Sandys, Sir John Ruſhout, Gybbon, and others) only deſire places, either under king George or king James.

By the accounts of thoſe † who had heard him in the houſe of commons, his manner was highly energetic and ſpirited as to ſentiment and expreſſion; but he generally ſpoke in a low tone of voice, with too great rapidity, and held his glove before his mouth. His ſpeeches uſually contained ſome pointed period, which peculiarly applied to the ſubject in debate, and which he uttered with great animation.

* Intercepted letters. Orford Papers.

† From the late earl of Orford.

Shippen

Chapter 3. 1741.

Shippen publiſhed ſeveral pamphlets, the titles of which I cannot aſcertain: he may be ſuppoſed to have obtained ſome reputation as a poet, by the mention which Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, makes of him in his poem, "The Election of a Poet Laureat:"

To Shippen, Apollo was cold with reſpect,
But ſaid in a greater aſſembly he ſhin'd:
As places were things he had ever declin'd.

Shippen wrote two political poems. Faction Diſplayed, and Moderation Diſplayed. In the firſt he draws the characters of the great Whig lords, under the names of the principal Romans who were engaged in Cataline's conſpiracy. This ſatire is ſevere and cauſtic, but the lines are, in general, rough and inharmonious. The concluding paſſage, which refers to the death of the duke of Glouceſter, is not without merit:

So by the courſe of the revolving ſpheres,
Whene'er a new diſcover'd ſtar appears;
Aſtronomers, with pleaſure and amaze,
Upon the infant luminary gaze.
They find their heavens enlarg'd, and wait from thence
Some bleſt, ſome more than common influence;
But ſuddenly, alas! the fleeting light
Retiring, leaves their hopes involv'd in endleſs night.

His wife was extremely penurious, and from a peculiarity of temper, unwilling to mix in ſociety. She was much courted by queen Caroline, but having imbibed from her huſband a great independency of principle, oſtentatiouſly affected to decline all intercourſe with the court.

The fortune which he received with his wife, and the money which he had ſaved, came to her on his death, in conſequence of a compact, that the ſurvivor ſhould inherit the whole. As neither he nor any of his brothers left any ſons, his paternal eſtate paſſed to his nephew Dr. Leyborne, principal of Albion-hall, Oxford, and Mr. Leyborne, a merchant of the factory at Liſbon. Shippen's widow lived to a great age: her infirmities being ſuch as to prevent her making a will, her ample fortune therefore devolved on her ſiſter Mrs. Dixie Windſor*.

* Shippen's niece, Miſs Leyborne, was married to the Rev. Mr. Taylor. She was mother to Mrs. Willes, widow of the late learned and much reſpected judge, to whom I am principally indebted for theſe anecdotes: A collateral branch of the family of Shippen is ſettled in Philadelphia, one of them married Laurens, who was preſident of the congreſs, and another, the American general Arnold.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SEVENTH:

1741.

Proceedings of Parliament on the Auſtrian Subſidy.—Grant of Three hundred thouſand Pounds to the Queen of Hungary.—Her Inflexibility—and diſaſtrous Situation.

Proceedings on the Auſtrian ſubſidy.

THE only parliamentary meaſure in this ſeſſion which deſerves farther notice, was the grant of a ſubſidy to the queen of Hungary, which finally involved England in a war with France. It was undoubtedly neither conſonant to the wiſhes or ſentiments of the miniſter, who had earneſtly exerted himſelf to bring about an accommodation between Pruſſia and Auſtria, to promote a meaſure calculated to encourage the obſtinacy of Maria Thereſa at a moment when ſhe ſeemed wavering and irreſolute. But the voice of the nation loudly echoed the unceaſing cry of oppoſition in favour of Maria Thereſa. The king was alarmed for his German dominions, the majority of the cabinet inclined to vigorous meaſures, and it was imagined that a decided reſolution of parliament to ſupport the houſe of Auſtria, would intimidate the king of Pruſſia, and induce him to lower his terms of accommodation.

April 8. In conſequence of theſe prevailing ſentiments, the king opened the ſubject in a ſpeech from the throne. He ſaid,

King's ſpeech. "At the opening of this ſeſſion, I took notice to you of the death of the late Emperor, and of my reſolution to adhere to the engagements I am under, in order to the maintaining of the balance of power, and the liberties of Europe, on that important occaſion. The aſſurances I received from you, in return to this communication, were perfectly agreeable to that zeal and vigour which this parliament has always exerted in the ſupport of the honour and intereſt of my crown and kingdoms, and of the common cauſe.

"The war which has ſince broke out, and been carried on in part of the Auſtrian dominions, and the various and extenſive claims which are publicly made on the late Emperor's ſucceſſion, are new events, that require

the utmoſt care and attention, as they may involve all Europe in a bloody war, and *in conſequence, expoſe the dominions of ſuch princes as ſhall take part in ſupport of the pragmatic ſanction to imminent and immediate danger.* The queen of Hungary has already made a requiſition of the twelve thouſand men, expreſsly ſtipulated by treaty; and thereupon I have demanded of the king of Denmark, and of the king of Sweden, as Landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel, their reſpective bodies of troops, conſiſting of ſix thouſand men each, to be in readineſs to march forthwith to the aſſiſtance of her Hungarian majeſty. I am alſo concerting ſuch further meaſures as may obviate and diſappoint the dangerous deſigns and attempts, that may be forming, or carried on, in favour of any unjuſt pretenſions, to the prejudice of the houſe of Auſtria. In this complicated and uncertain ſtate of things, many incidents may ariſe, during the time when, by reaſon of the approaching concluſion of this parliament, it may be impoſſible for me to have your advice and aſſiſtance, which may make it neceſſary for me to enter into ſtill larger expences for maintaining the pragmatic ſanction. In a conjuncture ſo critical, I have thought it proper to lay theſe important conſiderations before you, and to deſire the concurrence of my parliament, in enabling me to contribute in the moſt effectual manner to the ſupport of the queen of Hungary, the preventing by all reaſonable means the ſubverſion of the houſe of Auſtia, and to the maintaining the liberties and balance of power in Europe *."

Chapter 57. 1741.

When the commons returned, Clutterbuck † recapitulated the occaſion which had induced the king to make this application. He expatiated on the ambitious deſigns of France, expoſed the danger of Europe from the deſtruction of the houſe of Auſtria, the injuſtice of Pruſſia in the invaſion of Silefia, and the wiſdom and propriety of aſſerting the pragmatic ſanction, and fulfilling their engagements with the houſe of Auſtria. As by this conduct, he obſerved, the king would expoſe his electoral dominions, and as the danger would be increaſed not by any diſputes with the neighbouring princes, but by his firmneſs in aſſerting the general rights of Europe, and as the conſequences of this conduct would be chiefly beneficial to Great Britain, the houſe ought to ſupport him in the proſecution of this deſign: He concluded, "I hope every gentleman in this houſe, will agree with me, that we ought to declare our approbation of theſe meaſures, in ſuch terms as may ſhew the world, that thoſe who ſhall dare to obſtruct them, muſt reſolve to incur the reſentment of this nation, and expoſe themſelves to all the oppo-

Debate on motion for addreſs.

* Journals. Chandler. † A lord of the treaſury.

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ſition that the parliament of Great Britain can ſend forth againſt them. We ought to pronounce that the territories of Hanover will be conſidered on this occaſion as the dominions of England, and that any attack on one or the other will be equally reſented. I therefore move, that an humble addreſs be preſented, "to expreſs our dutiful ſenſe of his majeſty's regard for the rights of the queen of Hungary, and for maintaining the pragmatic ſanction; to declare our concurrence in the prudent meaſures, which his majeſty is purſuing for the preſervation of the liberties and balance of power in Europe; to acknowledge his majeſty's wiſdom and reſolution, in not ſuffering himſelf to be diverted from ſteadily perſevering in his juſt purpoſes of fulfilling his engagements with the houſe of Auſtria*."

Fox ſupported the addreſs, and obſerved, "If the propoſed oppoſition to the king of Pruſſia ſhould incite him, or any other power, to an invaſion of his majeſty's foreign dominions, we cannot refuſe them our protection and aſſiſtance; for as they ſuffer for the cauſe which we engaged to ſupport, and ſuffer only by our meaſures, we are, at leaſt as allies, obliged by the laws of equity, and the general compacts of mankind, to arm in their defence; and what may be claimed by the common right of allies, we ſhall ſurely not deny them, only becauſe they own the ſame monarch with ourſelves."

As for ſome time the oppoſition had been clamorous in arraigning the miniſter for not ſupporting the queen of Hungary, they could not conſiſtently reſiſt the motion. But fortunately, the expreſſion in the ſpeech alluding to Hanover, and the ſpecific declaration of the member who moved the addreſs, that the king's German dominions were the object of defence, gave them an opportunity of deſcanting on the popular topic of Hanoverian intereſt, without appearing to decry the propriety of ſupporting the pragmatic ſanction, or arraigning the principles on which the motion was founded.

Pulteney readily allowed the ambitious deſigns of France, and the neceſſity of counteracting them. He then obſerved, that the only hopes of effecting that beneficial purpoſe reſted on the houſe of Auſtria. For this reaſon the uniform exertions of this country had been employed in aggrandiſing that power, as a counterpoiſe to the increaſing weight of the houſe of Bourbon. But this wiſe plan was wholly overturned, and the fabric which this country had ſo long and ſo aſſiduouſly laboured to erect, was at once deſtroyed, by the treaty of Hanover, and from that time, almoſt to the preſent moment, almoſt all our exertions had been uniformly directed to the

* Gentleman's Magazine for 1742.

ſame

ſame miſchievous purpoſe. "By what impulſe," he added, "or by what infatuation, theſe aſſertors of liberty, theſe enemies of France, theſe guardians of the balance of power, were on the ſudden prevailed on to declare in favour of the power whom they had ſo long thought it their chief intereſt and higheſt honour to oppoſe, muſt be diſcovered by ſagacity ſuperior to mine. But after ſuch perplexity of councils, and ſuch fluctuation of conduct, if our concurrence is neceſſary to increaſe his majeſty's influence on the continent, to animate the friends of the houſe of Auſtria, or to repreſs the diſturbers of the public tranquillity, I ſhall willingly unite with the moſt zealous advocates for the adminiſtration in any vote of approbation or aſſiſtance, not contrary to the act of ſettlement, that important and well concerted act, by which the preſent family was advanced to the throne, and by which it was provided that England ſhall never be involved in a war for the enlargement or protection of the dominions of Hanover, dominions from which we never expected nor received any benefit, and for which therefore nothing ought to be either ſuffered or hazarded.

"If it ſhould again be neceſſary to form a confederacy, and to unite the powers of Europe againſt the houſe of Bourbon, that ambitious and reſtleſs family, by which the repoſe of the world is almoſt every day interrupted, which is inceſſantly labouring againſt the happineſs of human nature, and ſeeking every hour an opportunity of new encroachments, I declare that I ſhall not only, with the greateſt cheerfulneſs, bear my ſhare of the public expence, but endeavour to reconcile others to their part of the calamities of war. This I have advanced, in confidence that ſufficient care ſhall be taken, that in any new alliance, we ſhall be parties, not principals, that the expence of war, as the advantage of victory, ſhall be common; and that thoſe who unite with us ſhall be our allies, not our mercenaries."

The reply of the miniſter was ſpecific and manly: "We are obliged, by this treaty, to ſupply the houſe of Auſtria with twelve thouſand men, and the Dutch, who were engaged in it, by our example, have promiſed a ſupply of five thouſand. This force, joined to thoſe armies which the large dominions of that family enable them to raiſe, were conceived ſufficient to repel any enemy by whom their rights ſhould be invaded. But becauſe in affairs of ſuch importance nothing is to be left to hazard, becauſe the preſervation of the equipoiſe of power, on which the liberties of almoſt all mankind, who can call themſelves free, muſt be acknowledged to depend, ought to be rather certain, than barely probable; it is ſtipulated farther, both by the Dutch and ourſelves, that if the ſupplies ſpecified in the firſt article ſhall appear inſufficient, we ſhall unite our whole force in the

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the defence of our ally, and ſtruggle once more for independence, with ardour proportioned to the importance of our cauſe.

"By theſe ſtipulations, no engagements have been formed that can be imagined to have been prohibited by the act of ſettlement, by which it is provided, that the houſe of Hanover ſhall not plunge this nation into a war, for the ſake of their foreign dominions, without the conſent of the parliament; for this war is by no means entered upon for the particular ſecurity of Hanover, but for the general advantage of Europe, to repreſs the ambition of the French, and to preſerve ourſelves and our poſterity from the moſt abject dependance upon a nation, exaſperated againſt us by a long oppoſition and hereditary hatred.

"Nor is the act of ſettlement only preſerved unviolated, by the reaſons of the preſent alliance, but by the regular concurrence of the parliament, which his majeſty has deſired, notwithſtanding his indubitable right of making peace and war by his own authority. I cannot, therefore, imagine upon what pretence it can be urged that the law, which requires that no war ſhall be made on account of the Hanoverian dominions without the conſent of parliament is violated, when it is evident that the war is made upon other motives, and the concurrence of the parliament is ſolemnly deſired."

Sandys having made the ſame objection as Pulteney, and obſerved that the motion was inconſiſtent with the truſt repoſed in the commons by the conſtitution, who owe allegiance to the king of Great Britain and not to the elector of Hanover, was anſwered by Horace Walpole, who defended the treaty of Hanover. After a few remarks from Viner, againſt the propriety of oppoſing the king of Pruſſia's demands, before they were fully underſtood, lord Gage concluded the debate by obſerving, "I have always been taught that allegiance to my prince is conſiſtent with fidelity to my country, that the intereſt of the king and the people of Great Britain is the ſame, and that he only is a true ſubject of the crown, who is a ſteady promoter of the happineſs of the nation.

"For this reaſon I think it neceſſary to declare, that Hanover is always to be conſidered as a ſovereignty ſeparate from that of England, and as a country with laws and intereſts diſtinct from our's; and that it is the duty of the repreſentatives of this nation, to take care that intereſts ſo different may never be confounded, and that England may incur no expence of which Hanover alone can enjoy the advantage. If the elector of Hanover ſhould be engaged in war with any of the neighbouring ſovereigns, who ſhould be enabled by a victory to enter into the country, and carry the terrors of war through all his territories, it would by no means be neceſſary for this nation

tion to interpoſe; for the elector of Hanover might loſe his dominions without any diſadvantage or diſhonour to the king or people of England."

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It was evident that the minority, in making theſe obſervations, did not intend to oppoſe the motion, but only to caſt a reproach upon adminiſtration; for the queſtion was carried without a diviſion *.

Addreſs carried.

The addreſs being carried, the miniſter moved for an aid of £. 300,000 to the queen of Hungary. He briefly ſtated the neceſſity of preventing the diſmemberment of the Auſtrian dominions, in which the intereſts of Great Britain were neceſſarily involved. Shippen oppoſed the motion, in a ſpeech replete with ſarcaſtic irony. He ſaid, "though it cannot be expected I have forgotten the reſentment which I have formerly drawn upon myſelf by an open declaration of my ſentiments with regard to Hanover †, I ſtand up again with equal confidence, to make my proteſtations againſt any interpoſition in the affairs of that country, and to avow my diſlike of the promiſe lately made to defend it: A promiſe, inconſiſtent, in my opinion, with that important and inviolable law, the act of ſettlement! A promiſe, which, if it could have been foreknown, would, perhaps, have for ever precluded from the ſucceſſion, that illuſtrious family, to which we owe ſuch numberleſs bleſſings, ſuch continued felicity. Far be it from me to inſinuate that we can be too grateful to his majeſty, or too zealous in our adherence to him; only let us remember that true gratitude conſiſts in real benefits, in promoting the true intereſt of him to whom we are indebted; and ſurely, by hazarding the welfare of Great Britain in defence of Hanover, we ſhall very little conſult the advantage or promote the greatneſs of our king.

April 13. Auſtrian ſubſidy granted.

"It is well known how inconſiderable in the ſight of thoſe, by whom the ſucceſſion was eſtabliſhed, Hanover appeared, in compariſon with Great Britain. Thoſe men, to whom even their enemies have ſeldom denied praiſe for knowledge and capacity, and who have been ſo loudly celebrated by many who have joined in the laſt addreſs, for their honeſt zeal, and the love of their country, enacted, that the king of Great Britain ſhould never viſit thoſe important territories, which we have ſo ſolemnly promiſed to defend, at the hazard of their happineſs. It was evidently their deſign that our ſovereign, engroſſed by the care of his new ſubjects, a care which, as they reaſonably imagined, would ariſe from gratitude for dignity and power ſo

* It is remarkable that Chandler has omitted to mention this debate, although it is given in the Gentleman's Magazine, from which publication he took the ſucceeding debate. Tindal ſlightly alludes to it, in a manner, however, which authenticates the account in the Gentleman's Magazine. Neither Smollett or Belſham take the leaſt notice of it.

† Alluding to his commitment to the tower. See chap. 17 p 112.

liberally

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liberally conferred, ſhould in time forget that corner of the earth, on which his anceſtors had reſided, and act, not as elector of Hanover, but as king of Great Britain, as the governor of a mighty nation, and the lord of large dominions.

"It was expreſsly determined, that this nation ſhould never be involved in a war for the defence of the dominions on the continent, and doubtleſs the ſame policy that has reſtrained us from extending our conqueſts in countries, from which ſome advantages might be received, ought to forbid all expenſive and hazardous meaſures, for the ſake of territories from whence no benefit can be reaped *."

Viner followed Shippen in oppoſing the grant, and after conſidering the diſpute between Auſtria and Pruſſia as a buſineſs in which England had no immediate concern, exclaimed, "Are we to ſtand up ſingly in defence of the pragmatic ſanction, to fight the quarrel of others, or live in perpetual war that our neighbours may be at peace †?"

The miniſter and his friends took no notice of the indecorous alluſions in Shippen's ſpeech, but defended the motion on the ground of national faith. After a few obſervations from Pulteney, who ſupported the expediency of the meaſure, and ſome farther remarks from the miniſter, the queſtion was carried without a diviſion.

Effects of the grant.

This grant, however founded on juſtice and conſiſtent with national honour, muſt be lamented as premature, becauſe it fruſtrated the wiſe plan which Walpole was forming for the pacification of Germany. He ſaw and lamented the difficulties which prevented an accommodation with Pruſſia; he ſtrongly inculcated the neceſſity of a grand confederacy againſt France, and conſcious that all alliances to that purpoſe would prove inefficient and ineffectual unleſs Pruſſia was included, he laboured to overcome the pertinacious reſiſtance of the queen of Hungary. By his direction Horace Walpole had frequent conferences with count Oſtein ‡, the Imperial miniſter in London; in which he fully explained the ſtate of Europe, the deſigns of France, and the peculiar ſituation of England. He repreſented in ſuch ſtrong terms the fatal conſequences to be apprehended from the hoſtility of the king of Pruſſia, and the good effects to be derived from his alliances, as fully convinced the Auſtrian miniſter. Oſtein declared his ready aſſent to the force of theſe argu-

* Chandler.

† Ibid. This debate is greatly miſrepreſented by Belſham. He obſerves, "HONEST SHIPPEN *only* ventured to oppoſe this wild and wanton waſte of public money." To ſupport this aſſertion he has transferred Viner's ſpeech to the firſt ſeſſion of the next parliament. See Belſham, vol. 2. p. 44, 46.

‡ Letter from Horace Walpole to the duke of Cumberland, Nov. 29, 1746. Walpole Papers.

ments,

ments, and promiſed to place them in ſo favourable a light as ſhould induce the queen to cloſe with the propoſitions of Pruſſia. But this deſign was fatally counteracted by the ſpirit of Maria Thereſa, by her reliance on the promiſes of France, and particularly by the ill-judged enthuſiaſm of the Britiſh nation, which called loudly for the moſt active exertions in her favour. Chapter 57. 1741.

The vote of £. 300,000 had ſcarcely paſſed the commons, before lord Carteret aſſured Oſtein, that the grant of that ſubſidy was not owing to the good diſpoſition of the miniſtry, but extorted by the unanimous call of parliament, and the general voice of the people. Accordingly, the Auſtrian miniſter inſtantly changed his opinion, and inſtead of ſeconding the efforts of Walpole to perſuade his miſtreſs to enter into an accommodation with the king of Pruſſia, encouraged her to perſevere in rejecting his demands, becauſe the Britiſh nation would pour out the laſt drop of their blood, and ſpend their laſt penny in ſupport of her juſt cauſe *.

In conſequence of her inflexibility, the king of Pruſſia continued his inroads; he over-ran and conquered the remaining part of Sileſia, and the grand confederacy, planned and conſolidated by France, attacked the Auſtrian dominions on all ſides. The elector of Bavaria, at the head of 70,000 troops, took Paſſau and Lintz, ſummoned Vienna to ſurrender, made himſelf maſter of Bohemia, was inaugurated king at Prague, and expected every moment his elevation to the Imperial throne. Two French armies poured like a torrent over the countries of Germany. The one, under marſhal Broglio, joined the elector of Bavaria, and took poſſeſſion of Prague; the other, led by marſhal Maillebois, hovered on the banks of the Rhine, and threatening to ſpread themſelves over Weſtphalia, awed the electorate of Hanover, and compelled George the Second to deſert Maria Thereſa, and to accept a neutrality, which was condemned both at home and abroad as a ſcandalous and puſillanimous meaſure. Diſaſtrous ſtate of the houſe of Auſtria.

The king of Sardinia threatened hoſtilities, and a Spaniſh army, under the marquis of Montemar, marched from Naples towards the frontiers of the Milaneſe; while the infant, Don Philip, at the head of a conſiderable corps, was preparing to penetrate through Dauphiné and Savoy, into Auſtrian Lombardy.

Maria Thereſa, deſerted by Ruſſia and the United Provinces, and by all her allies, except Great Britain, quitted Vienna, which was preparing for a ſiege, took refuge at Preſburg, and threw herſelf on the affection and zeal of her Hungarian ſubjects. Compelled by imperious neceſſity, ſhe purchaſed

* Horace Walpole to the duke of Cumberland. Walpole Papers.

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the neutrality of Pruſſia, by the ceſſion of Lower Sileſia. Her ſituation was truly deplorable, and her diſaſters rebounded on the miniſter. To his ſiniſter auſpices it was attributed that the conſtellation of the houſe of Bourbon ſeemed aſcending to its zenith, and the ſtar of England and Auſtria declining towards the horizon.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-EIGHTH:

1741.

Diſſolution of Parliament.—State of the Miniſtry.—Walpole deſerted or ſecretly thwarted by many of his former Friends.—Succeſsful Exertions of the Oppoſition. — Weſtminſter Election. — Schiſm in the Cabinet. — Neutrality of Hanover.—Supineneſs of Walpole.—Clamours againſt him.

Cloſe of the parliament.

ON the 25th of April, the king put an end to the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament, in a ſpeech from the throne, in which, after thanking them for the zeal with which they had ſupported the meaſures of government, he added, " I will immediately give the neceſſary orders for calling a new parliament. There is not any thing I ſet ſo high a value upon, as the love and affection of my people; in which I have ſo entire a confidence, that it is with great ſatisfaction, I ſee this opportunity put into their hands, of giving me freſh proofs of it, in the choice of their repreſentatives *."

Writs were iſſued for electing a new houſe of commons, returnable the 25th of June.

Conteſt of parties.

On the expiration of the parliament commenced the ſtruggle of the contending parties, which was to terminate in the removal, or the firm eſtabliſhment of Walpole.

May 7. The king goes to Hanover.

Notwithſtanding a ſtrong remonſtrance from Sir Robert Walpole, the king embarked for his German dominions.

Precarious ſituation of Walpole.

The miniſter was left in a precarious ſituation, to manage the elections, in the midſt of an unſucceſsful war, at variance with the majority of the cabinet,

* Journals, vol. 12. p. 337.

binet, and with the general ſpirit of the nation againſt him, at a time when the fears of Jacobitiſm, and the dread of a popiſh Pretender, had begun to ſubſide. In this emergency, either betrayed by his pretended friends, deſerted by thoſe who ought to have ſupported him, deceived in imagining that the triumphant majority which had thrown out the motion to remove him, was an indication of the people's affection, or conceiving that a firm coalition between the Tories and diſaffected Whigs, could not take place in time to oppoſe him, he abandoned himſelf to an inconſiderate ſecurity, and neglected to take his uſual precautions.

Conteſted election for Weſtminſter.

The firſt great oppoſition to government took its riſe in the city of Weſtminſter, where the court was ſuppoſed to poſſeſs an unbounded influence. It had been uſual for the electors to return the two members who were recommended by the crown. The repreſentatives in the laſt parliament were, Sir Charles Wager, firſt lord of the admiralty, and lord Sundon, a lord of the treaſury; and it was ſuppoſed that they would have been rechoſen as uſual, without oppoſition. But lord Sundon was very unpopular: he had been raiſed from a low condition to an Iriſh peerage, through the intereſt of his wife, who had been favourite bed-chamber woman to queen Caroline. The other candidate, Sir Charles Wager, was unexceptionable, both in his public and private character, but his attachment to the miniſter was a ſufficient objection.

Some electors of Weſtminſter propoſed, very unexpectedly, admiral Vernon, then in the height of his popularity, and Mr. Irwin, a private gentleman of conſiderable fortune. The oppoſition at firſt deſpiſed, became formidable; and Sir Charles Wager being ſummoned to convoy the king to Holland, the management of the election was entruſted to ignorant veſtrymen and violent juſtices. The party in oppoſition to the court candidates, became very tumultuous. The majority of the electors were decidedly in favour of the miniſterial candidates, but lord Sundon was imprudently adviſed to cloſe the poll, to order a party of guards to attend, and while the military power ſurrounded the huſtings, the high bailiff returned him and Sir Charles Wager. This imprudent conduct highly exaſperated the populace; the guards were inſulted, Sundon was attacked, and narrowly eſcaped with life.

And other places.

The example of the oppoſition at Weſtminſter, diffuſed a general ſpirit throughout the kingdom, and violent conteſts were excited in all quarters. Large ſums of money for ſupporting the expences were ſubſcribed by Pulteney, the duchеſs of Marlborough, and the prince of Wales, who contracted great debts on this memorable occaſion, and the managers of oppoſition em-

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ployed this money with great advantage. Lord Falmouth gained over many of the Corniſh boroughs, which had uſually returned the members recommended by the crown: The duke of Argyle exerted himſelf with ſuch effect in Scotland, that he baffled all the efforts of his brother, the earl of Ilay, who had long managed the intereſt of the crown in that quarter; and the majority of Scottiſh members, who had formed a ſtrong phalanx in favour of government, were now ranged on the contrary ſide. Theſe acquiſitions were conſidered by oppoſition as a ſure omen of ſucceſs; and Dodington, in a letter to the duke of Argyle, drew a comparative ſtatement of the two ſides, in the future parliament, highly unfavourable to the miniſterial party *. He juſtly obſerved, that a majority of ſixteen, which was the utmoſt that the moſt ſanguine friends of the miniſter could entertain hopes of forming at the commencement of the ſeſſion, would ſoon become a minority. He laid down a plan of conduct and attack, which was wiſely formed, and ably executed, the homogeneous parts were conſolidated, and the whole phalanx, however divided and diſcordant in other reſpects, moved on uniformly to one great object, the removal of the miniſter.

Clamours againſt the miniſter.

Many cauſes concurred, in the preſent criſis, to render the efforts of Walpole for ſecuring a ſufficient majority in the new parliament ineffectual. He had continued ſo long in full power, that many, like the ſubjects of the Pope during a long reign, pined for a new adminiſtration, from a mere deſire of change. Others formed dreams of future ſplendour and happineſs, which were to beam on the nation, when the miniſter was removed; that miniſter, who was ſtyled the father of corruption, who was accuſed of ſquandering the public money, and of drawing from the plunder of his devoted country, ſuch immenſe riches as no individual had ever before amaſſed; who alone prevented the ſuppreſſion of numerous taxes, the abolition of the national debt, and obſtructed thoſe plans of reform, which were to reſtore credit and dignity to the king and parliament. His fall was to produce a new æra, the revival of the golden age; a junction of all parties was to take place, and the ſovereign, inſtead of being the chief of a ſect, was to become at once the father of his people, and to reign in the hearts of his ſubjects. Theſe notions were induſtriouſly circulated, and greedily ſwallowed by the deluded populace, until his removal became an object of national concern.

The popular clamour for a war with Spain had been ſo violent, that the reſiſtance of the miniſter was deemed a ſhameful puſillanimity and deſertion

* Dodington to the duke of Argyle, June 28, 1742. Correſpondence.

of

of national honour, and became the favourite theme of ſatire and contumely, both in proſe and rhyme. "Sir Robert Walpole," as Burke juſtly obſerves, "was forced into the war in 1739, by the people, who were inflamed to this meaſure, by the moſt leading politicians, by the firſt orators, and the greateſt poets of the times. For that war Pope ſung his dying notes. For that war Johnſon, in more energetic ſtrains, employed the voice of his early genius. For that war Glover diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the way in which his merit was the moſt natural and happy. The crowd readily followed the politicians, in the cry for a war which threatened little bloodſhed, and which promiſed victories, that were attended with ſomething more ſolid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder *." Chapter 58. 1741.

But even thoſe who acted with him laboured to undermine his power. Wilmington wiſhed his downfall, truſting that if that event ſhould take place, he ſhould ſucceed as firſt lord of the treaſury. He caballed with the principal leaders of oppoſition, and in a letter † to Dodington, congratulated him on his ſucceſs in the elections of Melcomb and Weymouth, againſt the candidates ſupported by the miniſter. Newcaſtle, who had hitherto acted an underpart, aſpired to be leader of the Whigs, and flattered himſelf that on the removal of Walpole, a conſiderable addition of power would be placed in his hands. He had even made clandeſtine overtures to the duke of Argyle, which had been diſcloſed to the miniſter ‡. Schiſm in the cabinet.

The miniſter was alſo greatly embarraſſed with the conduct of foreign affairs, on which he was not always confidentially conſulted. The negotiation which ſettled the neutrality of Hanover, was begun and nearly concluded, not only without his approbation, but almoſt without his knowledge §. The firſt poſitive information he received of it, was a private letter from the king, which was delivered to him in the preſence of the duke of Newcaſtle, to whom he never diſcloſed the contents ‖. He was apprehenſive leſt the nation ſhould impute to him a meaſure ſo extremely unpopular. He complained that lord Harrington, the ſecretary of ſtate who attended the king to Hanover, had not given earlier notice to the cabinet of England, and he told a foreign agent ¶, that the neutrality of Hanover was compulſory, and could not affect England. On mature reflection, however, he appreciated the neceſſity of the meaſure, and though diſſatisfied with Coolneſs of the king.

* Thoughts on a Regicide Peace.
† Correſpondence, May 16, 1741.
‡ Extract from Sir Robert Walpole.
§ From the earl of Hardwicke.
‖ Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke. July 19, 1741. Hardwicke Papers.
¶ Zambini to baron Haſſang. Orford Papers.

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the commencement of the negotiation, approved and ſanctioned its concluſion.

Virulent calumnies.

Every means was now employed to traduce his character. The moſt calumnious reports were invented and diffuſed. It was rumoured that admiral Haddock had orders to avoid meeting and intercepting the Spaniſh tranſports carrying troops to Italy, for the purpoſe of taking poſſeſſion of Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, for Don Philip, under the guaranty of England. Even ſuch wild and abſurd fictions *, that he had betrayed to Fleury and Patinho, the projected operations againſt Spain, and that he received from thoſe miniſters large remittances to bribe the parliament, were audaciouſly advanced, and confidently believed.

The miniſter had been no ſooner forced into the war, than the mode of conducting it became an object of obloquy and cenſure. Violent murmurs were diffuſed throughout the nation, grounded on the ill ſucceſs of the war, the loſs of the commerce with Spain, of which thoſe who forced the miniſter to commence hoſtilities moſt loudly complained; the neutrality of Hanover was repreſented as inconſiſtent with the dignity and intereſts of England, and falſely imputed to him. To theſe immediate cauſes of complaint were added apprehenſions of future evils; the concluſion of a diſhonourable peace with Spain was ſaid to be in agitation, of which the baſis was to be

* Theſe idle reports were repeated in an infamous pamphlet, intitled, "A Key to ſome late important Tranſactions, in ſeveral Letters from a certain Great Man, nobody knows where, wrote nobody knows when, and directed to nobody knows who," 1742. In the Memoirs of Madame Pompadour, is inſerted a pretended letter from Sir Robert Walpole, to cardinal Fleury, requeſting 3 millions of livres, to bribe the Engliſh parliament. "Je païe un ſubſide à la moitié du parlement pour le tenir dans les bornes pacifiques: mais comme le roi n'a pas aſſez d'argent, & que ceux à qui je n'en donne point ſe déclarent ouvertement pour la guerre, il conviendroit que vôtre eminence me fît paſſer trois-millions-tournois, pour diminuer la voix de ceux que crient le plus fort. L'or eſt un métail ici qui adoucit le ſang trop belliqueux. Il n'y a point de guerrier fougueux dans le parlement, qu'une penſion de deux-mille livres ne rende très pacifique. Ni plus ni moins, ſi l'Angleterre ſe déclare, il vous faudra païer des ſubſides aux puiſſances pour faire la balance, ſans compter que les ſuccès de la guerre peuvent être incertains; au lieu qu'en m'envoïant de l'argent, vous achetez la paix de la premiere main, &c. &c." Memoires de Pompadour, tom. 1. p. 58. I ſhall employ no time in diſcuſſing this letter, the numerous falſities and abſurdities of which exhibit the ſtrongeſt internal evidence that it is a forgery. It would not have been worth while to notice ſuch a letter, inſerted in a ſpurious publication, had it not been quoted as authentic, by the anonymous biographer of the earl of Chatham, with a malicious intention (v. 1. p. 122.) and had not the ingenious author of "Anecdotes of diſtinguiſhed Perſons," recently given his ſanction to this unfounded rumour. "The cardinal, like our excellent "miniſter Sir Robert Walpole, was forced "into an expenſive and ruinous war by the "clamour of faction, and the folly of the people. On the cardinal's part, indeed, he had "taken the moſt effectual method of keeping "the two great nations of France and England "in perfect harmony with one another: *He uſed* "*to remit to Sir Robert a certain ſum of money* "*occaſionally, to be diſtributed among ſuch who,* "*from diſappointment and diſguſt of ſervice, were* "*likely in this country to counteract his pacific in-*"*tentions.*" Vol. 4. p. 239.

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the reſtitution of Gibraltar and Minorca; the aggrandiſement of France, the abaſement of the houſe of Auſtria, the eſtabliſhment of the elector of Bavaria on the throne of the Empire, who would always remain attached to the houſe of Bourbon, and the guaranty of Parma to Don Philip, which would be a ſhameful breach of the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction.

Supineneſs of the miniſter.

The majority by which the motion to remove him was rejected, the death of Sir William Wyndham, and the retreat of Bolingbroke into France, rendered him indolent, and inſpired him with too much confidence in the ſupport of the king, and in the ſtrength of his friends. "His ſucceſs on this occaſion," as a contemporary pamphleteer juſtly expreſſes himſelf, "threw him into a lethargy of power. He imagined that the breach between the Whigs and the Tories was too great to be repaired during the time of electing a new parliament; he thought that it would daily become wider; he ſeems to have miſtaken the motives which induced the Tories to act as they did, and formed too favourable a judgment of the temper and ſpirit manifeſted by the people on that unjuſt motion. He gave them time to reconcile this temporary ebb, and ſuffered the popular opinion againſt him to flow back again with increaſing violence *."

Activity of oppoſition.

While the miniſter laboured under this preſſure of great unpopularity; while he was arraigned for the meaſures of others, of which he was accuſed of being the ſole director; while the cabinet was divided, and the ſupport from the crown ſo feeble; the exertions on the ſide of government were inadequate to the vigorous efforts made by oppoſition. The Tories and Jacobites were reconciled with the diſaffected Whigs, and all united to demoliſh their common enemy. Letters from the Pretender † were circulated among the Jacobites and high Tories, exhorting them to uſe all their efforts for the purpoſe of the diſgrace of Sir Robert Walpole; and ſuch was the temper of the people, that his fall became the open or ſecret wiſh of all parties.

* A View of the whole Conduct of a late Eminent Patriot, p. 148.

† From lord Orford.—Enough alſo, in a letter to Horace Walpole, ſays, "The Pretender, as was your great brother poſitively aſſured me, to his certain knowledge, ſent at leaſt an hundred letters, which were tranſmitted to his friends, in November 1741. The purport of them was to engage them to uſe all poſſible endeavours, in order to compaſs Walpole's demolition." Walpole Papers.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTY-NINTH.

1741—1742.

Meeting of Parliament.—Complexion of the new Houſe of Commons.—King's Speech.—Walpole permits an Alteration to be made in the Addreſs.—Small Majority in Favour of the Boſſiney Election.—The Appointment of a Chairman of the Committee of Election carried againſt him.—Loſes the Queſtion of the Weſtminſter Election.—Adjournment of the Houſe.—Ineffectual Attempt to detach the Prince of Wales from the Oppoſition.—Houſe again aſſembles.—Walpole loſes the Chippenham Election.—Adjournment of the Houſe of Commons, at the King's Requeſt.—Sir Robert Walpole created Earl of Orford, and reſigns.—Affecting interview with the King.—Regret of his Friends.

Meeting of the new parliament.

THE new parliament aſſembled on the 4th of December; when Arthur Onſlow was rechoſen ſpeaker. On the 8th, the king made a ſpeech from the throne. He ſaid:

King's ſpeech.

"It is always a great ſatisfaction to me to meet you aſſembled in parliament; and eſpecially at this time, when the poſture of affairs makes your counſel and aſſiſtance ſo neceſſary; and when by means of the new elections, I may have an opportunity of knowing the more immediate ſenſe and diſpoſition of my people in general, from their repreſentatives choſen, during a ſeaſon, which has been attended with a great variety of incidents of the greateſt conſequence and expectation, and during the courſe of the war, in which we are engaged with the crown of Spain; a war, in itſelf, juſt and neceſſary, entered into by the repeated advice of both houſes of parliament, and particularly recommended to me, to be carried on in America, which has been my principal care. I can therefore make no doubt, but that you are met together, fully ſenſible of our preſent ſituation, and prepared to give me ſuch advice, as ſhall be moſt conducive to the honour and true intereſt of my crown and kingdoms."

He next mentioned the powerful confederacy formed againſt the queen of Hungary, &c. "Had other powers," he ſaid, "that were under the like engagements with me, anſwered the juſt expectations they had ſo ſolemnly given,

given, the ſupport of the common cauſe had been attended with leſs difficulty. I have, purſuant to the advice of my parliament, ever ſince the death of the late Emperor, exerted myſelf in ſupport of the houſe of Auſtria. I have endeavoured, by the moſt proper and early applications, to induce other powers that were equally engaged with me, and united by common intereſt, to concert ſuch meaſures as ſo important and critical a conjuncture required; and where an accommodation ſeemed to me to be neceſſary, I laboured to reconcile thoſe princes, whoſe union would have been the moſt effectual means to prevent the miſchiefs that have happened, and the beſt ſecurity for the ſafety and intereſt of the whole. Although my endeavours have not hitherto had the deſired effect, I cannot but ſtill hope, that a juſt ſenſe of the common and approaching danger will produce a more favourable turn in the counſels of other nations." He then exhorted parliament to put the nation in a condition of aſſiſting its friends, defeating its enemies in any attempts they might make againſt him or his dominions, and concluded with an exhortation, that they would act with unanimity, vigour, and diſpatch *. Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

The remarkable caution with which the king had always mentioned any thing relating to his allies, made this ſpeech the more noticed, and it was generally ſuppoſed not to have been dictated by the miniſter †, a circumſtance which ſeemed to demonſtrate, that there was a preponderating party againſt him in the cabinet.

It ſoon appeared from the complexion of the houſe, and the conduct of the miniſter, that his power and influence were on the decline. An addreſs of thanks being propoſed by Henry Herbert, ſome of the oppoſition objected to a clauſe, "for returning his majeſty the thanks of this houſe, for his royal care in proſecuting the war with Spain." Sir Robert Walpole now felt, for the firſt time, the awkwardneſs of his ſituation, and he appeared "ſhorn of his ſtrength." Inſtead of oppoſing with ſpirit any alteration in the addreſs, and manfully declaring that the misfortunes of the war could not be charged upon government, he attempted to palliate the loſſes which the nation had ſuffered, and to ſhew that the war had not been ſo unſucceſsful as it was repreſented, and weakly agreed, for the ſake of unanimity, to omit the paragraph relating to the Spaniſh war ‡. Pulteney availed himſelf of this conceſſion; and attributed it to fear and conſcious guilt. He Proceedings.

* Journals.—Chandler.
† Tindal, vol. 20, p. 525.
‡ Tindal, vol. 20, p. 526.—Chandler.

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made a long and animated ſpeech, full of perſonal invectives; and anticipated the triumph of his party, by an alluſion to the balance of power. He ſaid, that not being in the ſecrets of government, he was ignorant of its ſtate abroad, but congratulated the houſe that he had not for many years known it to be ſo near an equilibrium there as it was then *. He then recapitulated the principal charges which had been urged againſt Sir Robert Walpole from the beginning of his adminiſtration; dwelt very particularly on the miſmanagement of the war with Spain, and even carried his reproach ſo far as to accuſe him of being influenced by the enemies of the proteſtant eſtabliſhment.

Walpole repelled this intemperate attack with unuſual feebleneſs; and after a ſhort but general juſtification of the meaſures of government, concluded with ſaying, "*I am very far from hoping or deſiring that the houſe* ſhould be ſatisfied with a defence like this; I know, by obſerving the practice of the opponents of the miniſtry, what fallacies may be concealed in general aſſertions; and am ſo far from wiſhing to evade a more ſtrict inquiry, that if the gentleman who has thus publicly and confidentially accuſed the miniſtry, will name a day for inquiring into the ſtate of the nation, I will ſecond his motion †."

Addreſs amended.

This challenge was accepted; the addreſs, without any mention of the Spaniſh war, was voted; the motion made by Pulteney to fix a day for conſidering the ſtate of the nation, was ſeconded by Walpole, and the 21ſt of January was appointed for that purpoſe.

The coolneſs of the addreſs, and the omiſſion of the clauſe relating to the war, eſſentially hurt the miniſter. It led his intereſted followers to ſuſpect, that his power was declining; while his friends, who were ſteady in their attachment to the houſe of Brunſwick, were of opinion, that ſtronger aſſurances were due to the king, for the dangers to which he expoſed his electoral dominions, the French having already violated the ſtipulated neutrality, and threatened to take up their winter quarters in Hanover ‡.

Proceedings on elections.

The great points on which the two parties exerted their reſpective ſtrength, were the deciſions on conteſted elections. Ever ſince the Ayleſbury conteſt, when the houſe of commons aſſumed to itſelf the power of judging finally on the qualifications of the electors, which had been ſo warmly oppoſed by Walpole, in the commencement of his parliamentary career, the deciſion on

* Orlebar to Etough, December 10, 1741. Correſpondence.

† Chandler, vol. 13, p. 47.

‡ Tindal, vol. 20. p. 527.

elections became a mere party buſineſs. The merits of the caſe were ſeldom conſidered, and the queſtions were almoſt wholly carried by perſonal or political intereſts. At the opening of this parliament, there were more conteſted elections than uſual; and as the power of the two contending parties ultimately depended on the deciſion, every nerve was ſtrained by both ſides in favour of their reſpective friends, the miniſter had been heard to declare, that there ſhould be no quarter given in elections, and his friends truſted that the deciſions would chiefly be in his favour. But theſe ſanguine hopes were fruſtrated by the activity of oppoſition, the lukewarmneſs of many of his real friends, and treachery of his pretended partiſans. The oppoſition made it a principal object to attend on theſe occaſions, and it was eſteemed infamous to deſert a committee of election *. On the other hand, many of thoſe who ſupported government often ſtaid away, and not unfrequently voted againſt the candidates countenanced by the miniſter. Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

The firſt diviſion which took place was on the Boſſiney election, and the party favoured by the miniſter carried it only by 222 againſt 216. With this ſmall majority, Walpole acted as he had done in former parliaments. He did not ſufficiently adapt himſelf to the change of circumſtances, or conſult the temper of the houſe in the queſtion which was next moved, for chooſing a chairman of the committee of elections. This was a point of great conſequence, becauſe he poſſeſſed conſiderable power in influencing the deciſions referred to the committee. Walpole acted with much imprudence in propoſing Giles Earle, one of the lords of the treaſury, who had been chairman during the two laſt parliaments, and was exceedingly unpopular. The oppoſition ſupported Dr. Lee, who was much more beloved and reſpected by all parties than his antagoniſt. The queſtion was accordingly carried, from perſonal conſiderations, againſt the miniſterial candidate, by a majority of 242 againſt 238. The loſs of this queſtion gave a mortal blow to his intereſt, and redoubled the ſpirit of his adverſaries. The fatal conſequences were immediately viſible; ſeveral unſucceſsful candidates, who had depended on his ſupport, withdrew their petitions.

But the fate of the miniſter was almoſt decided by the determination on the Weſtminſter election, which was one of the points he moſt wiſhed to carry, and in which he had flattered himſelf with the moſt ſanguine hopes. On the petition of the two rejected members, complaining of an undue election and return, the queſtion was carried againſt the ſitting members Deciſion of the Weſtminſter election. December 22.

* Dodington to the duke of Argyle, June 18, 1741. Correſpondence.

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by a majority of four, and the election was declared void. A motion for adjournment was negatived, and the returning officer was ordered to be taken into cuſtody, by a majority of 217 againſt 215. A ſecond motion to adjourn was alſo loſt, and it was unanimouſly reſolved, that the preſence of armed ſoldiers, at an election of members of parliament, was a high infringement of the liberties of the ſubject, a manifeſt violation of the freedom of election, and an open defiance of the laws and conſtitution.

Receſs.

On the 24th, the houſe adjourned to the 18th of January; and that ſhort interval was employed by the miniſter in attempts to increaſe his friends, and to maintain himſelf in power, but all his efforts were ineffectual.

The ſtate of his own health was a principal cauſe of his downfal. He had ſuffered at the latter end of the preceding year from a ſevere illneſs *. His memory was no longer ſo ſtrong, nor his method of tranſacting buſineſs ſo ready as before. Hence he was incapable of making thoſe exertions which his critical ſituation rendered neceſſary; of unmaſking his treacherous friends; of expoſing his enemies, and of adopting ſuch meaſures as would have enabled him to act with vigour, or to retire with dignity. During this ſeſſion he appeared in general abſent and thoughtful. He ſeemed to have loſt, in many inſtances, that contempt of abuſe, and command of temper, for which he had been remarkably diſtinguiſhed: he was either, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, ſilent, or he was irritable and fretful. In one inſtance he publicly declared, that if he could collect the real ſenſe of the houſe on the difficult and dangerous ſituation of affairs, he would ſupport it as a miniſter in the cabinet. But when he made this declaration, he did not intimate his own opinion; a circumſtance which, according to the late earl of Hardwicke, who was preſent on this occaſion, proved the diſtreſs and concern under which he laboured †. The loſs of the Weſtminſter queſtion ought to have been the ſignal of his immediate reſignation, and many of his friends were of that opinion. But he ſtill appeared anxious to retain his power as long as he was able; and during the receſs of parliament, he made an ill-judged application to ſeduce the prince of Wales from his party, in which his own ſagacity and knowledge of mankind ought to have convinced him, that he had no chance of ſucceeding. Being informed that the members of oppoſition propoſed to renew the motion in parliament, for increaſing the eſtabliſhment of the prince, he prevailed on the king, not without the greateſt difficulty, to offer an increaſe of £. 50,000 to his annual income, and to inſinuate hopes

Application to the prince of Wales.

* From lord Orford.

† From the late earl of Hardwicke.

that

that his debts ſhould be paid, provided he would not oppoſe the meaſures of government. A meſſage to this purpoſe was conveyed to the prince by the biſhop of Oxford *, at the inſtance of lord Cholmondeley, and by command of the king. The prince, after due expreſſions of duty and affection, declared that he conſidered the meſſage as coming from lord Cholmondeley, and not from the king, and therefore would not liſten to any propoſition of a ſimilar import, ſo long as Sir Robert Walpole continued at the head of adminiſtration †.

The reſignation of Sir Robert Walpole was now conſidered as certain both by his friends and enemies; but he had ſtill more mortifications to experience before his fate was ultimately decided.

Meeting after the receſs.

On the 18th of January the parliament again aſſembled; and on the 19th the queſtion on the Berwick election was carried, without a diviſion, in favour of Alexander Hugh Campbell, againſt the candidate who was ſupported by the court. On the 20th, a bill, brought in by Sir John Ruſhout and Sir John Hynde Cotton, for taking, examining, and ſtating the public accounts, paſſed without oppoſition.

* Secker, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury.

† As many erroneous narratives of this tranſaction have been given to the public, I ſhall ſubjoin an account, which I found among the Walpole papers, in the hand-writing of Sir Robert Walpole, and bearing the following endorſement; "An account of what paſſed between H. R. H. and lord Oxford, January 5, 174½, with the printed letter that paſſed between the king and prince upon the breach."

"An account of what the biſhop of Oxford ſaid to the prince of Wales, from lord Cholmondeley, authorized by his majeſty, January 5, 174½.

"That if his royal highneſs would write a dutiful letter to his majeſty, expreſſing his concern for what was paſſed, in ſuch a manner as might be conſiſtent with his majeſty's honour to accept, repreſenting the uneaſy circumſtances of his fortune, and referring them to his majeſty's goodneſs, lord Cholmondeley had full and ſufficient ground, from his knowledge of his majeſty's intentions and diſpoſitions, to aſſure his royal highneſs that his majeſty would be reconciled to him; and would add 50,000 a year to his preſent income, and would not require any terms from him, in relation to any of thoſe perſons who were in his royal highneſs's ſervice, counſels, or confidence, nor retain any reſentment or diſpleaſure againſt him.

"To this lord Cholmondeley added, that there was no doubt but that his royal highneſs's debts would in this caſe be provided for, in ſuch a manner as upon farther conſideration ſhould be found moſt proper and practicable.

"The anſwer of his royal highneſs, January 5, 174½. "His royal highneſs uſed ſtrong expreſſions of duty and affection to his majeſty, and anſwered further to this purpoſe: That if this had been a meſſage directly from his majeſty, it would have been his duty to have written a letter to H. M. on the occaſion; but as it was a propoſition that came from lord Cholmondeley, in the manner I had mentioned; his anſwer to lord Cholmondeley was, that he would not hearken to it, ſo long as Sir Robert Walpole was in power, by whom he conceived himſelf to have been greatly injured, and to whom he thought the moſt prudent advice for Sir Robert Walpole himſelf, and the public, was, that he ſhould retire; and that he, the prince, had before this received intimations of the ſame nature with thoſe I had now ſaid to him, and deſired not to have any more, whilſt Sir Robert continued in power."

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oppoſition. On the 21ſt, Pulteney made the celebrated motion for referring to a ſecret committee the papers relating to the war, which had been already preſented to the houſe. As this motion involved in it numerous charges againſt the conduct of the war, ſtated the neceſſity of a parliamentary inquiry, and brought on perſonal invectives againſt the miniſter, Sir Robert Walpole took a conſiderable ſhare in the debate, and was rouſed to the moſt animated exertions. In this laſt effort, he is ſaid by his friends to have exceeded himſelf, and evinced ſuch a conſummate knowledge of foreign affairs as aſtoniſhed the houſe. He was alſo ably defended by Pelham, Winnington, and Sir William Yonge; the queſtion, however, would have been carried but for the influence of lord Hartington, who brought over two Tory members, and by this means, to uſe the expreſſions * of Sir Robert Wilmot, ſaved the country from twenty-four tyrants! The motion was negatived by a majority of only three, in the fulleſt houſe known for many years, for 503 members voted.

On this queſtion every exertion was made by oppoſition, and every art uſed to ſecure a majority. The purport of the intended motion was not previouſly known. The miniſter was taken unawares; many of his friends had retired; many abſented themſelves by deſign; others, who were ſent for in the courſe of the debate, declined, under various pretences, making their appearance, while all his opponents remained at their poſts. The efforts were ſo great on both ſides, that members were brought in from the chamber of ſickneſs. Several voted in that condition on the ſide of oppoſition; but ſome who intended to have ſupported the miniſter were prevented from appearing at the diviſion. They had been placed in an adjoining apartment belonging to lord Walpole, as auditor of the exchequer, which communicated with the houſe. The adverſaries, aware of this fact, filled the keyhole of the door with dirt and ſand, which prevented their admiſſion into the houſe till the diviſion was over †. On this occaſion as general Churchill was ſitting next to the prince of Wales, who was in the houſe of commons to hear the debates, a member was brought in who had loſt the uſe of his limbs. "So," ſays the prince, "I ſee you bring in the lame, the halt, and the blind." "Yes," replied the general, "the lame on our ſide, and the blind on your's ‡." The ſmall majority in favour of government, notwithſtanding all the exertions made by the miniſter, was ſo ſure a ſignal of his defeat, that a motion to addreſs the king for copies of

* Sir Robert Wilmot to the duke of Devonſhire, January 23, 174½. Correſpondence.

† Sir Robert Wilmot's letters. Correſpondence.

‡ From lord Orford.

the

the memorials and letters, and other papers ſent to and from the king of Pruſſia, which had been rejected on the 18th of December, by a majority of 24, now paſſed without a diviſion.

Loſs of the Chippenham queſtion.

At length, on the 28th, the oppoſition finally triumphed. A queſtion on the Chippenham election was carried againſt the miniſter, by a majority of one, 237 againſt 236, and the party gained ſo conſiderable an acceſſion, by the deſertion or abſence of ſeveral members of the court party, that the final deciſion of the Chippenham election was carried againſt the miniſter, by a majority of 16, 241 againſt 225. Walpole ſeemed to have anticipated this event, and met it with his uſual fortitude and cheerfulneſs. While the tellers were performing their office, he beckoned Sir Edward Bayntun, the member whoſe return was ſupported by oppoſition, to ſit near him, ſpoke to him with great complacency, animadverted on the ingratitude of ſeveral individuals who were voting againſt him, on whom he had conferred great favours, and declared he ſhould never again ſit in that houſe *.

Feb. 2.

On the 3d of February the houſe adjourned at the king's command, ſignified by the chancellor, to the 18th.

Created earl of Orford.

On the 9th Sir Robert Walpole was created earl of Orford, and on the 11th he reſigned.

Reſigns reluctantly.

It is aſſerted by a contemporary hiſtorian †, who poſſeſſed great means of information, that the miniſter would have ſooner retired, if the ſtate of the nation and of parties had not rendered his continuance in power neceſſary for the arrangement of a new adminiſtration, and for preſerving the tranquillity of the country; and that he continued in office ſolely in compliance with the wiſhes of his friends. The papers which have been committed to my inſpection, and the undoubted information which I have received, enable me to contradict this aſſertion. He retired unwillingly and ſlowly: no ſhipwrecked pilot ever clung to the rudder of a ſinking veſſel with greater pertinacity than he did to the helm of ſtate, and he did not relinquiſh his poſt until he was driven from it by the deſertion of his followers and the clamours of the public. Speaker Onſlow, who knew him well, declared that he reluctantly quitted his ſtation ‡; and if any doubt ſtill remains, we have the teſtimony of the miniſter. "I muſt inform you," he obſerves in a letter to the duke of Devonſhire, "that the panic was ſo great among, what ſhall I call them, my own friends, that *they all* declared that my retiring was become abſolutely neceſſary, as the only means to carry on the public buſineſs with honour and ſucceſs §."

* From Sir Edward Bayntun.

† Tindal.

‡ Onſlow's Remarks. Correſpondence, Period IV.

§ Sir Robert Walpole to the duke of Devonſhire, February 2, 1741-2. Correſpondence.

It

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

It has been alſo aſſerted with no leſs confidence, that the king himſelf was become weary of a miniſter, who had ſo long directed his affairs, who had ſo often oppoſed and obſtructed his inclination for war, and who was ſtill endeavouring to remove every obſtacle which impeded the return of peace. But the ſame documents enable me to adduce an honourable teſtimony of the good faith and firmneſs of George the Second. Although the aſperities which time and vexation occaſioned in both their tempers, produced a momentary diſſatisfaction, yet the king had contracted, by long habit and experience of his capacity for buſineſs, a high regard and eſteem for his long-tried counſellor. In vain the earl of Wilmington and the duke of Dorſet had enforced the neceſſity of his removal, the reſolution of the king was unſhaken, and he did not conſent to his reſignation until the miniſter himſelf made it his expreſs deſire *.

Affecting interview with the king.

The interview when he took leave of the king was highly affecting. On kneeling down to kiſs his hand, the king burſt into tears, and the ex-miniſter was ſo moved with that inſtance of regard, that he continued for ſome time in that poſture; and the king was ſo touched, that he was unable to raiſe him from the ground. When he at length roſe, the king teſtified his regret for the loſs of ſo faithful a counſellor, expreſſed his gratitude for his long ſervices, and his hopes of receiving advice on important occaſions †.

Affection and regret of his friends.

When his reſolution to reſign was known, he received more honours than had been paid to him in the plenitude of power. His laſt levee was more numerouſly attended than his firſt. The concourſe of perſons of all ranks and diſtinctions was prodigious; and their expreſſions of affectionate regard and concern extremely moving.

Anecdote of Soame Jenyns.

The ex-miniſter received many proofs of diſintereſted attachment from perſons to whom he had never ſhewn any mark of particular attention. Among others, Soame Jenyns gave a teſtimony of his approbation, thus recorded in the words of his biographer. "Unknown to Sir Robert, and unconnected with him by acquaintance or private regard, he ſupported him to the utmoſt of his power, till he retired from his high ſtation, making room for thoſe who ſoon ſhewed the loſs the nation had ſuſtained by the ſad exchange. After he had retired, Soame Jenyns waited upon Sir Robert at Chelſea, when, amongſt other things which paſſed in converſation, lord Orford acknowledged the ſupport he had given him, during the time that he had ſitten in parliament, and in expreſſions of great thankfulneſs; at the ſame time

* Lord Hartington to the duke of Devonſhire, February 4, 1741-2. Correſpondence.

† Lord Hartington to the duke of Devonſhire. Correſpondence.

declaring

declaring, that had thoſe to whom, during his meridian of power, he had ſhewn the greateſt friendſhip, and loaded with all the favours he could confer on them, but borne as kind diſpoſitions to him as he had done, who had not been diſtinguiſhed by any particular regard, he would not then have paid a viſit to an ex-miniſter *."

The old clergyman of Walſingham, who was maſter of the firſt ſchool in which Sir Robert Walpole was inſtructed, came to Houghton, and told him that he had been his firſt maſter, and had predicted that he would be a great man. Being aſked why he never had called on him while he was in power, he anſwered, "I knew that you were ſurrounded with ſo many petitioners craving preferment, and that you had done ſo much for Norfolk people, that I did not wiſh to intrude." "But," he added in a ſtrain of good-natured ſimplicity, "I always inquired how Robin went on, and was ſatisfied with your proceedings †."

* Life of Soame Jenyns, p. 37.

† From Lord Orford.