

BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, December 8.

REPORT OF THE BUDGET.

Mr. Wilberforce, having seen how much the opinions of honorable Gentlemen might vary in the course of one day, had some hope of another change, from hearing them talk of to-morrow. If the present topic was so important, how did it happen that they overlooked it yesterday. He expected justice from all parties, and candour, though not from the Hon. Gentleman, yet from his hon. friend, (Sir W. Pakeney): he was therefore surprised to find him treat the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a general defence of the practice in question, which was only referred to upon an immediate necessity. The care of public credit was certainly his first duty; it was for him to watch over it with a fearful eye, and to adjust its balance with a careful hand; it was within his knowledge that the disclosure of this grant to the Emperor would have materially depressed credit, he was so far from being blameable for concealing it, that he deserved the thanks of the house, who would, doubtless, now that the question was before them, express their real sense of it. His merit, indeed, was the greater, because he must know the construction which opposition would put upon his conduct, and how the constitution would revive in their speeches only to be again slain by them. The present appearance of public credit had, perhaps, partly contributed to the better disposition lately shewn towards Lord Malmesbury at Paris, and was an influence how carefully it would be guarded by Ministers.

The hon. Mr. Youke declared this to be one of the most important debates he had ever heard in Parliament, though he had been a member of that House of Commons which the hon. gentleman so much delighted to call fertile; to which sort of calling names he would only reply, that he no more wanted spirits, or independence, in any way, than the hon. gentleman himself. The present question related only to the ways and means, which certainly were not to be withheld at the most dangerous period of a dangerous war, and the most critical one of a critical negotiation. With respect to the political part of the dispute, he thought the minister deserving of praise rather than blame. Had it been determined that no part of the vote of credit should go to our allies, however necessary it might be? He considered the deliverance of Germany to have been effected by this supply; and hoped that the question would be discussed to-morrow with all the deliberation and impartiality due to the circumstances of the country.

Mr. Harrison said, that if ministers had been without an opportunity of applying to Parliament either during, or immediately after the expenditure, a part of their present arguments would have been applicable; but were we for the sake of the price of stock, by which some gentlemen might derive great benefit, to fritter away the constitution, and assist the right hon. gentleman in the plan, which he was so obviously pursuing, of rendering the house of Commons a nullity. It was his object to keep every thing as it was, and to prevent any alteration he was now making for barracks, was one instance of it. A new structure of this sort was now forming on the high road near Stilton. Forty acres of land had been purchased for it, and the workmen were so numerous, that he thought they would cut each other's feet. To all expenses the poor were made to contribute, while nothing was given by the hon. gentleman, who had so many places and emoluments. But upon this subject he would not now trouble the House, as he intended to bring it before them by a motion shortly after the holidays.

Mr. Wilberforce explained. Mr. Curwen was convinced, that of all the questions discussed during his time in parliament, this was the most important. It was not the safety of Germany, but the safety and continuance of the constitution, that were now to be considered by the house. To take from any body their consequence in the eyes of the people, was to deprive that body of the means of being useful. The people did not care for five hundred and fifty-eight men; they revered the house, endued with all its privileges and useful rights. If this encroachment upon them was endured, he had no hesitation to say, that he could not respect the house. There was a talk, on the other side of candour expected from friends: for his part, if any friend meditated that violation of the constitution, which was the uniform object of all the minister's endeavors, no candor should shut his mouth.

The master of the rolls thought the greatest part of the debate so little connected with the question, he hoped his honorable friends would give no further answer to the gentlemen on the other side, who were certainly entitled to talk as long as they pleased, and the speaker was compelled to remain in the chair as long. The honorable member, however, rejoiced that he was not compelled to stay; and assured the house that he would not offer any defence of his honorable friend.

Mr. W. Smith had no hope to convince the honorable gentleman. So far, however, was the vote of credit from sanctioning the issue of money to the emperor, that in 1794, when a similar issue was intended for the king of Prussia, that design had been obviously pointed by his majesty's message, upon which the vote of credit was passed. The house ought to prefer this question, which was a question of their right and place in the constitution, to all others.

Lord Hawkebury thought the real object of the debate ought to be obtained as soon as possible; and that, if the sending of money to the emperor depended upon the present discussion, it would be better to decide the constitutional question first; but since it was now deferrable, for many reasons, and especially for those relative to the negotiation, that the supplies should be voted, he had only to suggest that this should be done immediately, and to hope that, upon the great constitutional point involved in the other question, a determination would be seriously given.

Mr. Fox agreed with an old maxim now out of fashion, that redress of grievances should always precede supplies. The only question for the house

now to decide was, whether what was called the apparent breach of the constitution was sufficient to justify the apparent delay of a few hours; for no man could say that such a delay would be more than an apparent one as to the real object of the supply. Could there be any doubt which appearance would be best for the house of Commons, the representatives of their jealous ancestors, to give hastily, without enquiry, and in the mean time, to withhold the public purse, and in the mean time, to discuss the conduct of their chief agent? Was a member of parliament to be told, that, because he had not urged an objection one day, he was disabled from offering it on another? He asked pardon, however, of the house and the country for this neglect, and was desirous to compensate for it by future vigilance.

That he had so often declared the constitution to be in danger, should now least of all be objected to him, when the House witnessed the extent to which that danger reached. It was his boast that he had often predicted it. All his fears were fully justified this night. If, in the debate on the Sedition Bill, he had said, that the spirit of the people of England would be so broken by it, as to encourage the minister in sending money to the Emperor without consent of Parliament, what exaggeration should he not have been accused of? His friends had been charged with saying frequently, that they were in the last dyke of the constitution. They fought as well as they could in every fortress; and was it to be expected, that, because ministers had conquered many, and those important ones, the defenders of them were, therefore, to lie down beneath their power? There would, indeed, soon be nothing worth fighting for. The defence of ministers was so disgraceful, that, if the present was a personal question, he could desire no greater triumph than to hear it. They had not transferred the whole vote of credit to the Emperor? Would any man say, that the Emperor was at all in the contemplation, or view of the house, when the vote of credit was passed? Here Mr. Fox desired to have his majesty's message read, and shewed, that when any loan or subsidy was intended to a foreign power, that object was always noticed in it. The other defence was, that it was wise to keep up public credit by concealing its real state, i. e. by deceiving those who would trust you. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) saw nothing dishonorable in this, and accused those who did not want of candour, desiring, no doubt, that gentlemen on this side of the House should defend their cause with just as much sincerity, zeal, and honor, as he opposed the minister, when he thought some appearance of opposition necessary. The House would not confound the question as to the proper application of this money, with that relative to the mode of obtaining it. It might be proper, or not, to send money to the Emperor; but had the minister so far abolished the constitution as to have the right of doing so without the consent of Parliament? Against such a doctrine he would contend in that House as long as it was possible by words, and otherwise if it was necessary, out of that house; for he would live and die by the freedom of the constitution of England. So far was he from being constant in his opinion, that he would be liable, if, without the consent of parliament, money might be sent out of the kingdom. There would always be a doubt attending our pecuniary transactions, and no man could urge against the suspicion of an enormous secret expenditure, the proceedings of parliament, and the impossibility, which hitherto had existed, that money could be disposed of without their knowledge.

The chancellor of the exchequer said, that he would refrain from any further argument upon the question this night, finding the intention of honorable gentlemen to bring it so speedily under discussion again.

Mr. Ballard said, that he would give his vote for the supplies; but, by doing so, he did not mean to imply on approbation of the minister's conduct in this mode of expending the public money, or to say that he did not think such a mark of disapprobation as would prevent the practice in future to be necessary from the house. The house then divided.

For the resolution 164—Against it 58—Majority 106.

On strangers being permitted to re-enter the gallery, we found Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox engaged in a conversation across the table, but they each spoke in a tone of voice so very low, that it was impossible to hear distinctly any thing they said. It was, however, generally understood that Mr. Fox had given notice of his intention to make some motion on Monday next.

The clerk then proceeded to read the resolution.

Mr. Bryan Edwards objected to the tax upon sugar. He said, it was not his intention to oppose in the smallest degree the supplies for the public service. He conceived that unanimity was particularly necessary at the present crisis, not only to give dignity to the proceedings of parliament, but also to support the honor and character of the country, and to give due effect to the negotiations in which we were at this time engaged. But he could not help calling the attention of the house to the proposed tax upon sugar, which he could not view as a measure either judicious or politic. If we looked to the situation of our West India possessions, we should find that the late dreadful insurrection in Jamaica had produced a loss to that island of 500,000. that Barbadoes, from the circumstances of the war had been driven to an expense of 900,000, and that the islands of St. Vincent's and Grenada had been so ravaged and distressed by the hostilities which had been carried on in them, that they were incapable of repairing the losses they had sustained. Our West India possessions being so conditioned, it could not reasonably be imagined that their produce was a fair object of taxation. If the burden of the proposed tax was intended to fall upon the planter, the measure was unjust; and, if it was intended to fall upon the consumer, it became burthen some and oppressive. His ideas were, that, if a tax must be levied upon this commodity, it should, at least, be considerably lessened, otherwise it would not fall to prove highly injurious to the planters, on whom he feared the burden must fall. Another

consideration was, the duty upon East-India sugar was not upon the same footing as that of the West-Indies, the duty being in a far less proportion. Instead, therefore, of laying an additional half crown a hundred upon both sugars, he thought the duty on the West-India produce should be less, and that upon the East-India more, in order to draw a proportion agreeably to the existing taxes upon those commodities. These ideas had arisen in his mind, not from any principle of opposition to the minister, but from the pursuit of motives, and he wished to submit them to the superior judgment of the chancellor of the exchequer.

Mr. Pitt agreed with the honorable gentleman, that every practicable indulgence should be extended to the planter; but he had not the smallest doubt that the tax would ultimately be paid by the consumer. As to the proportion which the honorable gentleman wished to draw, he thought it already sufficiently in favor of the West-India proprietor, the duty upon the produce of this land being only 13s. per cwt. while that upon the East-India produce was 37l. 8s. per cent. ad valorem. The tax of half a crown a hundred upon each, he thought, was by no means an unreasonable proposition; although he was free to confess, that the statement of the honorable gentleman, respecting the situation of the West-India Islands, should have some weight with the house, in the future discussion upon the subject.

Sir William Young was also of opinion, that the statement of Mr. Bryan Edwards was entitled to much attention.

Colonel Harcourt did not think that the situation of the West-Indies was so bad, but that there was a fair prospect of the injuries they had sustained being amply repaired by our recent acquisitions in that quarter.

Mr. Pitt and Mr. Thornton said a few words each; after which the resolution was put, and carried.

On the resolution respecting the drawback upon coffee being read, Mr. Bryan Edwards made a few observations on the necessity of encouraging the growth and exportation of it; and, after some remarks from Mr. Pitt and Mr. Shwell, this and the other resolutions were put and carried, and the minister obtained leave to bring in bills pursuant to them.

The house adjourned at 10 o'clock till to-morrow.

Wanted,

A NURSE, to attend a sick Lady, a few miles from this city—a person well recommended, will be immediately employed, and liberally rewarded. For information enquire of the Editor of this Paper. February 24

A Young Gentleman,

WHO can come well recommended by a respectable merchant of this city, would be willing to engage either as a CLERK in an accounting-house, public office, or wholesale store. A line addressed to A. B. and left with the Printer of this Paper, will be duly attended to. February 23

College-Hall.

READINGS and RECITATIONS, Moral, Critical, and Entertaining. AT 7 o'clock, will be delivered, FIRST PART Anthony's Funeral Oration, Shakespeare. Zang's Triumph over Alonzo, Young. SECOND PART Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, Pope. Hamlet's Soliloquy on his Mother's Marriage, Shakespeare. Ode to Madnets, Parnis. THIRD PART Hamlet's Soliloquy on Death, Shakespeare. Ode on the Pillions, Collins. Alexander's Feast, Dryden. Tickets to be had of Mr. Poulton, jun. at the Library; at Mr. M'Elwee's looking-glass-store, No. 70, S. Fourth-street; and at Mr. Carey's, Bookeller, Market-street—Half a dollar each.

WANTED,

Pennsylvania Bank Shares, For which Cash, or approved Notes at 60 days, will be given, at the option of the Seller. February 20—Apply at this office.

New Theatre.

THIS EVENING, February 24, Will be presented, a Comedy, called

Every one has his fault.

Lord Norland, Mr. Warren. Sir Robert Ramble, Mr. Wignall. Mr. Solus, Mr. Morris. Mr. Harmony, Mr. Bates. Capt. Irwin, Mr. Cooper. M. Placid, Mr. Moreton. Hammond, Mr. Warren, jun. Porter, Mr. Warrell. Edward, Miss L'Estrange. Lady Eleanor Irwin, Mrs. Merry. Mrs. Placid, Mrs. Francis. Miss Spenser, Mrs. L'Estrange. Miss Woodburn, Mrs. Morris.

To which will be added, (For the ad time in this Theatre, and with the original Overture and French Music, compiled by Monsr. ROCHFORT, never performed in America.) A Grand, Serious, PANTOMIME BALLET, called

The Death of Capt. Cook;

[As performed in Covent-Garden Theatre, London, under the direction of Mr. BRYAN, upwards of FIVE HUNDRED NIGHTS, with universal applause.] With New Scenery, Machinery, Dresses and Decorations. Describing an Exact Representation of the Manners and Customs of the Natives of Owhyhee, in the Pacific Ocean.

Messrs. Byrne Francis Warren Darley Moreton Fox Warrell The Principal Characters by Messrs. J. Darley, J. Warren, Mitchell, Sig. Doctor, Macdonald, Morgan, M. St. Marc, M. Lavency, &c. Indian Women.—Mrs. Harvey, Mrs. Metcarter, Mrs. Doctor, Miss Milbourne, Miss L'Estrange, Miss Bates, Miss Oldfield, Miss Anderson, M'le Sophie, &c.

With DANCES, PROCESSIONS, &c. The Scenery designed and executed by Mr. MILBOURN. 144 On Saturday, THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE, with Entertainments.

The fourth night of THE WAY TO GET MARRIED will be on Monday next. Box, One Dollar twenty-five cents. Pit Seven Eighth's of a Dollar, and Gallery, half a dollar.

Gazette of the United States, AND Philadelphia Daily Advertiser.

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 24.

STOCKS.

Table with 2 columns: Stock Name and Price. Includes Six per Cent., Three per Cent., 4 1/2 per Cent., 5 1/2 per Cent., Deferred Six per Cent., BANK United States, Pennsylvania, North America, Insurance Comp. N. A. shares, and Pennsylv.

COURSE OF EXCHANGE.

Table with 2 columns: Location and Exchange Rate. Includes On London, at 30 days, at 60 days, at 90 days, and Amsterdam, 60 days, per guilders.

AN ODE

On the Birth-Day of his Excellency GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States of America. New Jersey, 23d of February, 1797

WHAT mean those strains, my fancy seems to hear? Waited so sweetly through the midnight air— Sure 'tis the gentle spirits of the Vale. Or Patriot Heroes who each danger brav'd, And died exulting in their country's fav'd, That fill with ecstasy the dying gale.

They come to hail the bright propitious morn On which their great compatriot was born. And other in the white-wing'd hours— Hark! how they bring the Lyre to themes sublime, Recount the deeds of heroes in each clime, And undisturb'd give the palm to ours.

See streaks of sapphir—gild the orient sky, And flying clouds announce some power is nigh. To give an energy to joys sincere. Yes, 'tis that heavenly maid, fair GRATITUDE, With all the Virtues as her bright prelude, Descending from yon lucid azure sphere.

She comes, the Sons of Freedom to inspire, To raise their ardent gratulations higher, And join the festive tributary song: She brings the Muses from their native hills, Anion groves, and ever-flowing rills, Each delicate emotion to prolong.

Let Nymphs and Shepherds join the mazy dance;— Let Mirth illumine the hours as they advance, And languid Age forget its crutch and care: Let pain be foon'd, and grief assume a smile— This natal day has magic to beguile, Or wipe from Sorrow's eye, the falling tear.

The thought of WASHINGTON, in every mind Mult'rais'd ideas grateful as relief. That pomp of language never yet express'd: That name rever'd, to LIBERTY so dear, Must prompt the fervent, unfeigned prayer, And sweet expressive Silence muse the cell.

COMMUNICATIONS.

BRUCE travelled to explore the source of the Nile—this had for more than two thousand years been an interesting object—but what can take so many French philosophers up and down our Western rivers and creeks, is an extraordinary thing!—Like rustic beauties, far removed from the touch of city vices, those distant scenes have doubtless many secret charms, unknown to the dull Americans who inhabit our cities and fill our philosophical societies. Perhaps it might do as well if these rustic beauties which have such astonishing attractions for foreign amateurs were kept more out of sight—male coquetry burrs their simplicity—and the mere celebrity which they may gain by the learned admiration of these travellers may perhaps be but a small compensation to their parents for the loss of reputation which these visits if often repeated might produce. If these philosophers are the only men whom the various Propaganda Societies in Europe can send us, we think we have many millionaires rather better quality'd for the purposes of settling a new country who are native Americans and not philosophers.

A paragraph in the Aurora—the author no doubt of the American Annual Register—affects to wonder at the silence of those who are censured in that work, and takes it as an evidence of guilt. A better account, however, can be given of this silence. It proceeds from a perfect indifference to the censure conveyed in that book. The author of it is generally known, and his character is such, as to render those whom he attacks quite unconcerned about any mischief he may attempt. The book, in question, is the veriest catch-penny that ever was published. It is the mere kitchen rattle-tattle of jacobinism. Neither those who are blamed nor those who are praised, if not of the meanest understanding or the grossest taste, can feel any excitement, except that of disgust, at any thing it contains. The paragraph in the Aurora is a competent specimen of the style and character of the whole performance. The author wrote it, no doubt, to endeavour to force his work into notice; but he will fill the left, and not the more of his book, by giving the public this sample of his talents. His bell method will be to get people to purchase without ever seeing a sentence he has produced.

The democrats call the attachment of the citizens to their "beloved fellow-citizen" idolatry. This is strange talk for men who "adore the people." Is their voice stupid idolatry? Yes or no, is equally a plea of guilty for the democrats. Either they quarrel with the people for their approving voice, or say no to the fact and quarrel with the truth. A stranger to America, and to both parties, would think the nation the stupidest and basest upon the earth, if he read and judged only from the jacobin gazettes. Yet this is the glorious conclusion our "patriots" "the adorers of the people" take such unwearied pains to establish. To lower the national character, and the national spirit too, to make Americans think themselves slaves, and to persuade the French to believe that we are cowards and traitors, are the "patriotic" talks assigned by their severe talk masters to the democrats (or American mongrels) and their gazettes.