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A

REVIEW

OF THE

PLACE-BILL.

A

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OF THE

PLACE-BILL.

WHEREIN

The Arguments on both Sides are fairly ſtated, and impartially conſidered.

To which is added, An

APPENDIX,

Addreſs'd to the

ELECTORS of *Great-Britain.*

Qua propter de ſumma ſalute veſtra, populique Romani, de veſtris Conjugibus ac Liberis; de aris ac Focis; de fanis ac templis; de totius urbis tectis ac Sedibus; de imperio, de libertate, de ſalute Italiæ, deque univerſa republica decernite diligenter ac fortiter.

CICERONIS, Oratio IV. in Catalinam.

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A

REVIEW

OF THE

PLACE-BILL.

THERE can hardly happen a more favourable Circumſtance for an impartial Writer, than when the Subject he propoſes to conſider is, in itſelf, of ſufficient Weight to demand the Attention of his Readers, and has been treated as ſuch by Authors on both Sides with their utmoſt Force. The *Place-Bill* is allowed, on all Hands, to have been a Debate of this Nature, and the frequent Attempts which have been unſucceſsfully made to procure it, as they confirm its Importance, muſt awaken, not only the Curioſity, but the Concern of every Man who has the leaſt Regard for the

Glory, or Freedom of his Country. It has already given Occaſion to a vaſt Variety of Pamphlets, and furniſh'd frequent Matter for our weekly political Productions: It has repeatedly been the Subject of Parliamentary Debates, in which the Arguments on both Sides have been conſidered with that Weight, and Dignity which becomes the Legiſlature. It may be reaſonably then preſumed there can remain very little of Importance to be added on either Side of the Queſtion. It is time therefore to review what has been already offered to our Conſideration in ſo many different Shapes, to collect the Arguments which thoſe who promote this Bill, and thoſe who oppoſe it, have ſeverally brought for their different Opinions, and give the Public an Opportunity of ſeeing in one View, the Subſtance of a Controverſy which they may neither have Time nor Inclination to examine in larger and more expenſive Diſſertations.

Without farther Preface, the *Place-Bill* is allowed on both Sides of ſuch vaſt Importance, and the Fate of it of ſuch Conſequence to the Peace and Happineſs of theſe Nations, that it is treated by one Party as a neceſſary Barrier to our Liberties which they affect to repreſent in the moſt apparent Danger without it, by the other as a Project big with Confuſion, and deſtructive not of the Miniſtry only, but of the fundamental

tal Rights and Privileges of the People. It is asserted and contended for by the First, as a Regulation absolutely requisite to the Preservation of the Constitution, without which it will be always liable to be subverted, and all the Blessings we enjoy as a free People, exposed to the Power of an *ambitious Prince*, or a *designing Minister*, should Providence ever *permit the first*, or *curse us with the last*. That we may, indeed, depend on his Majesty's Moderation and Goodness, and must be safe in the full Possession of our Liberties, whilst the Crown continues in any of the present Branches of his illustrious Family; but as it is our Misfortune that we cannot have an equal Security for their Lives, this Consideration, alone, must be an unanswerable Argument, for providing for our future Security by passing the Bill contended for, at a Time, when we may be assured of the Royal Sanction, which cannot be depended on, nor even expected, from a Prince who may, hereafter, form ambitious Views against our Liberties, and hope to render such Designs successful, by reducing both Houses of Parliament to a corrupt Dependance on the Crown. It is on the other Hand as warmly asserted, that such an Innovation cannot take Place, without producing such a Change in the Constitution, as must render the present Government impracticable, be productive of the utmost Confusion in the several

Branches of the Legiſlature, overturning the juſt Ballance of Power, to which they are reſpectively intitled, and in the End proving fatal to the Monarchy itſelf.

Before I enter into the Conſideration of the particular Reaſons alledged on both Sides in ſupport of their different Sentiments, I can't help obſerving with a good deal of Concern, that this Debate, like moſt others of our modern political Controverſies, has been carried on with a very unbecoming Warmth, and ſupported by very inelegant Reflexions. The Advocates for a Place-Bill treating all who differ from them as ſworn Enemies to Truth, Virtue, and Liberty, the proſtituted Tools of an ambitious and overbearing Miniſter, and as ſuch engaged in a Deſign to enſlave their Country by overturning the juſt Ballance of Power in favour of the Crown. In return, their Antagoniſts repreſenting them, as inveterate Foes to our Conſtitution, as Men of diſappointed and deſperate Ambition; as republican Viſionaries, whoſe Aim is Anarchy, and whoſe Market is Confuſion.

It is, indeed, impoſſible to return an Anſwer to ſuch general Charges, and it is therefore Pity there ſhould be need of any: By our Conſtitution no Man is ſuppoſed, much leſs treated as guilty, without ſome Overt-Act to ſupport the Accuſation, and I am ſorry that thoſe, who would be thought the

the Patrons and Defenders of it, ſhould think a contrary Treatment neceſſary for its Support. An Appeal to the Paſſions of Mankind by bold Inſinuations of the Danger of their Liberties, where no ſuch Danger can be made appear to their Reaſon, will, in the Opinion of every ſober Reader, be a ſtronger Proof of the Weakneſs, or Malice of the Writer, than the Juſtice or Truth of the Charge. Reflexions of this Kind, as they are always ungenerous in their Authors, ſo in Searches after Truth they are frequently dangerous to the Readers, as they have a natural Tendency to inflame a miſguided Zeal, at the ſame Time that they darken and confound their Underſtanding: However, as they require little Pains, or Genius; we too often find them ſubſtituted in the Room of Argument, it being for the moſt part a much eaſier Matter to rail than reaſon. . For my own part, as I think every Man has a natural Right to judge for himſelf, and ſee with his own Eyes, I ſhall always be of Opinion, that different Sentiments, in Politicks as well as Religion, are very bad Foundations for Scurrility and Ill-manners, though they have too often been made an Handle for ſuch Treatment in both. I ſhall therefore in the Proſecution of my preſent Deſign, exclude entirely from this Debate, every thing that appears to me only perſonal, abuſive of Men,

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but giving no Light into the Merits of the Controverſy. As Truth is the only Object of my Enquiry, I ſhall, without regret, leave the contending Parties in full poſſeſſion of all thoſe modern Flowers of Rhetorick, in which they have taken ſo much Pains to out-ſhine each other; nor ſhall I envy any Man the Reputation of being a ſevere or a witty Writer, if theſe Characters muſt be purchaſed at the Expence of Decency, and good Manners. It will be ſufficient for all the Ends I propoſe in this Review, to give the Arguments on both Sides in their full Strength, without departing from that Impartiality which can only entitle me to the public Attention, and from which I only hope for it. I ſhall afterwards with equal Freedom, wherever the Reaſoning appears to me fallacious, or inconcluſive, point out ſuch Defects, that my Readers may be the better enabled to judge for themſelves in this momentuous and weighty Queſtion.

Thoſe then who contend for a farther Limitation of the Number of Officers in the Houſe of Commons, lay it down as a fundamental Maxim, that the Eſſence of our Conſtitution conſiſts in a juſt Ballance of the ſeveral Powers of which it is compoſed, and that it can only be preſerved by the Freedom and Independency of its reſpective Branches: Whilſt theſe are maintained in the

the Exercise of all those distinct and separate Rights and Privileges to which they are respectively intitled, and in an especial manner whilst they preserve an absolute Freedom in all their Deliberations, and Determinations whatsoever, neither over-awed by the Frowns, nor corrupted by the Favours of the Court, this political Equilibrium will always subsist, and the Liberty of the People be secure, and flourish; but should the Time ever come, in which any one Branch of the Constitution should so command, or even influence the Operations of the other, as to controul their Proceedings or direct their Councils, this Ballance, and consequently the Constitution itself, would then be at an end, and that Protection which it gave to the Rights and Properties of the Subject, would be entirely in the Breast and at the Mercy of the overruling Branch of the Legislature. In such a Situation therefore should the Crown obtain this unnatural Predominance, and find means to over-awe or direct the respective Rights of the Lords and Commons, their *Deliberations* could only be considered as *a solemn Farce, their Votes as Echoes to the Throne, and themselves as the implicit Instruments of the Monarch's arbitrary Will.* It is not therefore, *say they*, the Continuance of Parliaments, but their Independency alone in which the Liberty of the

the Subject properly consists. The first may, and probably will be preserved should an absolute Monarchy ever be founded on the Ruins of our present happy Constitution; since there would be no occasion to put an end to the being of an Assembly, which had lost either the Inclination or Power of controuling its most arbitrary Decrees: Nay, it would, indeed, be impolitick and ridiculous to lay aside the Forms of such Meetings, since under the Cover of their Authority, the Monarch would be more absolute, and govern with less Opposition than he could hope to do without it. It was in this Manner the Romans lost their Liberties, whilst all the while they preserved their Senate; nor *Julius Cæsar*, nor *Augustus*, the greatest Names Antiquity affords us, presumed to govern without the Form of that once awful Assembly: Those wise and powerful Princes well knew they might safely trust the Votes of a Meeting which sat but as the Instruments of their arbitrary Commands, and could have nothing to fear in Favour of Liberty FROM THE DETERMINATIONS OF SLAVES. The Event confirmed the Prudence of this Conduct, and that glorious Republick, without any farther Struggles for their Liberty, degenerated into the most absolute State of Slavery, under the succeeding Emperors. Those Princes, though they most of them deviated

deviated from the Wiſdom and Moderation of thoſe great Men in every thing elſe, preſerved the ſame Form of Government, nor did *Rome*, till many Ages after receive any Laws from the moſt arbitrary Tyrants, but under the Sanction of the Capitol. In free Nations, who have been long uſed to Liberty, every Alteration in the ſettled Form of Government, delivered down to them from their Anceſtors, will always be dangerous, and frequently deſtructive: And the Reaſon is plain, ſuch undiſguiſed Attempts to introduce a Change in the Conſtitution, ſtrike too ſtrongly on the Multitude who may, indeed, be *trick'd*, but can ſeldom be *bully'd into Chains.* Had *Charles* I, or his Son *James*, ſufficiently attended to this Maxim, and inſtead of acting without Parliaments, contented themſelves with procuring a corrupt Influence over the Members, the firſt had never *loſt his head*, nor the laſt his *Crown.* The one might have filled his Treaſury, without having Recourſe to thoſe odious Means of Coat and Ship Money, raiſed by his own Authority, and the other might have had his diſpenſing Power confirmed, and his darling Prerogative eſtabliſhed, even by a Law without the Aſſiſtance of a ſtanding Army. For tho' unneceſſary Taxes are, in themſelves, equally burthenſome to the Subject, by whatever Hand they are impoſed, they will ſeldom

meet with any Oppoſition when levied under the awful Sanction of an Act of Parliament. It is true neither of theſe Princes were in Circumſtances to act with this neceſſary Caution, and it was happy for the Liberties of *Great-Britain* that they were not, *their civil liſts* were not ſufficient for the *neceſſary Penſions*, nor had they *Places* at that Time in the Diſpoſal of their Miniſters, either in Number or Value, equal to the *Taſk of corrupting a Houſe of Commons*; but ſhould the Time ever come when theſe happy Defects ſhall be ſupplied in ſome future Reign, by an immenſe Addition to the Civil Liſt, and a needleſs increaſe of Officers employed to collect it, may not our Liberties be in much greater Danger, from theſe Sources of Corruption, than ever they were from the moſt arbitrary Stretch of the Prerogative? The Revolution, and the Bill of Rights, conſequent upon it, has effectually ſhut that Door againſt Chains and Slavery; but it is to be feared has, at the ſame Time opened another, which, if not ſeaſonably prevented may prove more fatal to our Poſterity. It ought therefore, ſay theſe Advocates for a Place-Bill, to be one of the principal Objects of the Attention of the Legiſlature, to preſerve and maintain this Ballance; nor can too great a Regard be paid to a Point of this vaſt importance, for the Security of our national Freedom. This has always been the Senſe of former Parliaments,

ments, and it is hoped will always be ſo of future ones; the many prudent and ſalutary Laws, which have from Time to Time been enacted for this Purpoſe, declare the Sentiments they had of the Danger of an unlimited Number of Place-men in the Houſe of Commons. The Liberties we at preſent enjoy, were purchaſed at too dear a Rate by our gallant Anceſtors, not to deſerve our utmoſt Attention for their Defence: What Apprehenſions they had of this Matter, appear inconteſtibly from the Regulations already made in the Elections of our Repreſentatives. For this Purpoſe, a wiſe Reſtraint has been laid on the People from chuſing any Gentleman a Member of the Houſe of Commons, who is not previouſly poſſeſs'd of a certain ſpecified Eſtate, ſufficient, as it was then thought, to ſet him above a corrupt Dependance on the Crown. With a like View, have our Laws excluded from Seats in Parliament, all *Penſioners*, as a ſet of Men unworthy to be Truſtees for the Liberties of the People, who were themſelves under a pecuniary Influence from the Caprice of the Prince, or the Command of a Miniſter; this neceſſary Precaution was not long ſince attempted to be re-inforced with an Oath, by which every Member was obliged to ſwear, that he had received no *Gratuity* or *Reward*, much leſs a *conſtant Penſion*, from the Crown, for any Services performed in the Houſe; and

the *Manner in which that Bill miſcarry'd*, has been urged as a good Reaſon for paſſing the preſent. By another Act of Parliament all Officers concerned in the *Collection of the Cuſtoms*, the *Exciſe*, the *Poſt-Office*, the *Stamps*, and *Salt-Duties*, are rendered equally incapable of being elected Repreſentatives of any *County* or *Borough*, being eſteemed, by the Wiſdom of the Legiſlature, a Body of Men too much intereſted in the Cauſe of the Crown, to be proper Guardians of the Rights of the Subject. From the avowed Deſign of this Bill, and the Reaſons aſſigned for paſſing it, theſe Gentlemen would perſuade us, that could that Parliament have foreſeen the Time would come, when ſo great a Number of their Seats ſhould be taken up by *Officers of a ſtanding Army, entirely dependent on the Crown, for their preſent Commiſſions, and future Advancement*, they would, no doubt, as effectually have ſhut the Door againſt theſe *military Legiſlators*, as they did againſt the Collectors of any Branch of his Majeſty's Revenue. Yet farther, with a moſt eminent Regard to this great and important End, the Freedom and Independency of Parliaments; we have ſtill another Law enacted, which vacates the Seat of every Member of the Houſe of Commons, who ſhall accept a Place from the Crown, which he can no way regain, but by a new Election from the People. This Act, though ſufficiently declarative of the

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Senſe the Houſe at that time had, of the Danger ariſing to the Conſtitution from the undue Influence of Places on their Members, and therefore wiſely intended to put a Stop to that pernicious Intercourſe between them and the Crown, has yet, in Experience, been found inſufficient to anſwer the End propoſed by it; it being ſcarcely ever known in Fact, that any Member who has accepted a Place, has failed of being returned to his former Station: For however difficult it may be for the Repreſentative of a *County*, or a *very populous Borough*, to ſecure his Seat in Parliament, ſhould he barter it for a Place; the Number of *ſmaller Boroughs*, (thoſe *Markets of Corruption and Bribery*) will always be open to receive him. Nay farther, the Advocates for this Bill, do not ſcruple to affirm, that an Aſſurance of being re-choſen, is generally made the neceſſary previous Qualification, without which no Place can be obtained: For a Proof of this they appeal to the Numbers in the preſent Houſe, who have been returned to their Places, even without Oppoſition, after they had parted with them to ſerve their Country *in a more advantageous Capacity.*

It being a ſtanding Rule with theſe *little Nurſeries of Venality and Proſtitution*, that whoever can obtain the Confidence, and Favour of the Miniſter, may always be ſure of theirs. Upon this Principle they imagine

imagine themſelves capable to account for a Fact, which would otherwiſe carry a very odd Appearance, why Gentlemen who have the Honour of repreſenting the moſt conſiderable Counties, and largeſt Corporations, have been ſeldom known to accept of *Publick Favours* from the Crown, but rather chuſe to transfer the *Rewards of their Services within Doors, to ſome Relation or Dependent without:* They are unwilling to quit a Place they can have no Aſſurance of regaining, or which, at beſt, they can only hope to purchaſe at an Expence too great for the Advantages they can receive from the Experiment. From this Fact, which has been found ſo invariably true, that we have but one Inſtance of a Member rechoſen for a a County or Shire in the preſent Parliament, they would infer two Things: Firſt, that the Senſe of the People without Doors, with relation to the Bill, in debate, is entirely in its Favour, when either their *Numbers are too great*, or *their Properties and Eſtates too large to admit of Corruption*; for otherwiſe no Reaſon can be aſſigned, why the Gentlemen who have been returned to ſerve for them, ſhould be more afraid to venture a ſecond Choice, by accepting Places, than the Members of a *Corniſh* Borough, or a Sea-port Town. It cannot even be ſuppoſed, that they have leſs Merit, or are leſs capable of ſerving the Crown, and therefore

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their not accepting Places, can only be owing to a Conſciouſneſs, that their Conſtituents are too numerous or too wealthy to be bribed into a ſecond Return: And farther, that by theſe Means, the good Intent of that Law is entirely fruſtrated, the Evils deſigned to be guarded againſt by it, continue in full Force, and therefore another, and more effectual, Act of Parliament is become abſolutely neceſſary to prevent the Effects of this dangerous Intercourſe between the Crown, and the Members: Since what has hitherto been done for this Purpoſe, is thus plainly eluded: This they contend can be no other than the Place-Bill; which, if obtained, will indeed lay the Ax to the Root of this Tree of Bitterneſs, and by deſtroying the very Ends of Corruption and Bribery, put an effectual Period to the Thing itſelf.

Yet farther, they argue the Reaſonableneſs of the Precautions taken in this Bill from the very Nature of the Office, and duty of a Repreſentative of the People.

The *Houſe of Commons* are by their Conſtitution, the Guardians of the People's Liberty, to them is delegated the important Office to watch over the Rights, and protect the Privileges of their Conſtituents: It is their Duty therefore, to promote their Intereſts, by encouraging ſuch Laws as may moſt effectually contribute to theſe great Ends; and refuſing their Aſſent to any which may

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be inconſiſtent with, or deſtructive of theſe invaluable Bleſſings. It is in particular their Duty to redreſs every publick Grievance, by puniſhing ſuch Offenders, who may be artful enough to evade the ordinary Forms of Juſtice, or powerful enough to ſcreen themſelves from the common Puniſhments appointed for Delinquents. Whilſt they act in this Manner, and preſerve themſelves independent on the Crown, unbiaſſed by its Favours, and fearleſs of its Frowns, the moſt daring Miniſter will always regard that Aſſembly, as an *awful Tribunal*, before which he is conſtantly liable to account for his Conduct, whoſe Wiſdom and Penetration cannot be eluded, and whoſe Authority, and Juſtice, will ever be ſuperior to his influence and Power: Whilſt he looks on them in this Light, he will reſpect their Judgment, and dread the Cenſure of a *Britiſh* Houſe of Commons, and whilſt he conſtantly feels their Independency, will hardly dare to enter into any Meaſures which may ſubject him to their Reſentment: But can this awful, this neceſſary Authority be maintained, if the Majority of its Members are ſuch whoſe Preſervation and Security depend on their neglecting, or acting contrary to, their Duty? Can we expect publick Grievances ſhall be redreſs'd, if thoſe very Men, whoſe Buſineſs, whoſe Duty, it is to prevent or remedy them, are become, themſelves, the

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Confederates, nay even the Dependents on ſuch as occaſion them? Can we hope Offenders ſhall be puniſhed, and their Crimes detected, when their very Judges have been Companions, and Sharers in the Plunder?

It is farther, the Duty of this Houſe, and of all its Members, to provide that no unneceſſary Burdens are laid upon the People, no exorbitant Taxes granted, nor any Money raiſed, but what is abſolutely neceſſary for the Service to which it is appropriated, and afterwards to ſee ſuch Sums properly apply'd to the Uſes for which they were deſigned, and at laſt regularly accounted for by the Perſons in whoſe Hands they have been entruſted. So long as this is done, it is impoſſible the Kingdom ſhould at any time want the neceſſary Supplies, on the greateſt, and moſt expenſive Emergencies: But is it reaſonable to expect that any Supply, however burdenſome or unneceſſary, if demanded by the Crown, will meet with a Refuſal from Men, who have a viſible Intereſt in paſſing the Grant? Or can we hope the Publick Money will either be expended with Frugality, or accounted for with Honour, if thoſe who have apply'd a large Share of it to their own Uſe, are to be the principal Inſpectors of thoſe Accounts? May not the moſt rapacious and guilty Miniſter, inſolent with the Plunder and Ruin of a Nation, before ſuch a Tribunal, and ſuch Auditors, boaſt with Safety, the Cleanneſs of his Hands,

and the Integrity of his Heart? May he not ſubmit the moſt ſhameful Accounts to ſuch Judges, whoſe Votes he has already pre-engaged, as Sharers in the common Spoil? In ſhort, let a Majority of ſuch Men be ſuppoſed, (and what ſhould hinder the Suppoſition but the Bill contended for?) and nothing can prevent their Approbation of the moſt blundering Meaſures, their Conſent to the moſt exceſſive and uſeleſs Grants, their enacting the moſt burdenſome and oppreſſive Laws, their paſſing the moſt ſcandalous Accounts, or acquitting the moſt heinous Criminals. Can the Votes be ſaid to be perfectly free, their Judgments unbiaſs'd, and their Proceedings guided by a ſteady regard to the good of their Country, who depend, if not for their Subſiſtence, at leaſt for the Support of their Luxury and Extravagance, on the arbitrary Will of a Prince, or the more ſlaviſh Dependance on a Miniſter? Such diſintereſted Virtue, ſay theſe Men, may amuſe Mankind in Speculation; but can never be ſafely depended on in Practice: And whenever the Rights, and Liberties of a Brave and Free People ſhall be reduced to a bare Dependance on ſuch inflexible Integrity, we may ſafely pronounce their Period muſt be near at Hand: Or ſhould it even be allowed that ſome Examples may be found, of Men ſuperior to all the Charms of Avarice or Ambition, ſteady to their Principles amidſt

midſt all theſe Scenes of Venality and Corruption, and unmoved by the Frowns or Flatteries of a Court, ſuch obſtinate Patriotiſm may indeed be the Object of our Admiration, but the Numbers will never be found ſufficient to deſerve our Confidence. The Happineſs and Glory of *Great-Britain* are Things too ſacred, and of too ſolemn Importance, to be ſubjected to ſuch dangerous Experiments. It can therefore, never be a wiſe or prudent Part, to entruſt their Preſervation in the Hands of ſuch Men, who have a perſonal Intereſt to betray them: At all Events they muſt be ſafeſt under their Care, who can have no ſuch Temptations, as having nothing to loſe, but in common with the reſt of their Fellow-Subjects, nor any thing to hope for from the Favour of an ambitious Prince or a deſigning Miniſter.

Again, ſay the Advocates for this Bill, it is eſſential to Liberty, that the Legiſlative Power ſhould always controul, and over-awe the Executive. In vain are good and wholeſome Laws enacted, if thoſe who made them, want either Power, or Inclination to provide for their Execution; and puniſh thoſe who ſhall dare to diſobey them: If therefore the Time ſhould ever come, when theſe diſtinct and ſeparate Powers, ſhall be in the ſame Hands; or, what is all one, if thoſe whoſe Buſineſs it is to put our Laws in Execution, ſhall ceaſe to be accountable to thoſe who made

them for the diſcharge of their Duty, our Conſtitution muſt be then at an end: Since in this caſe, the Perſons to controul, and thoſe to be controuled, would, in effect, be one and the ſame; and what Juſtice is to be expected, when Men are to judge in their own Cauſe, need not to be explained: When Miniſters muſt either condemn themſelves, or be acquitted by their pretended Judges, no Man can be at a Loſs to determine the Event. Parliaments inſtead of being a Check on miniſterial Corruption, will only prove a Support to their Ambition, and the Engine of their Power. To this Condition, ſay theſe Men, our Affairs are at preſent haſtening; the numerous Taxes which continue to oppreſs the People, and the Multitude of Officers employed in collecting them, have already added a great and dangerous Power to the Crown, which it is therefore, to be feared, may one Day ſwallow up the other Branches of the Legiſlature; or, what will be in every reſpect as bad, make them intirely dependent on itſelf. This Event is the more to be apprehended from the great Number of Officers, who have already Seats in Parliament, to which, it is probable, we ſhall have very large Additions attempted in the enſuing Elections. Theſe, if not at preſent the Tools of thoſe on whom they depend for what they now have, or hope for hereafter, can at beſt be expected to make a very

very weak Reſiſtance to the Encroachment of that Power, from which they derive their Subſiſtence, and which alone is capable to gratify their Avarice, or Ambition. This Increaſe, confeſs'd on all Hands, and bewailed by every honeſt, and diſintereſted Patriot, calls in the loudeſt Manner for a Limitation, which can only be effected by the Place-Bill: Other Remedies may, perhaps, palliate the Evil, this only can effectually remove it, and till this can be obtained, our Conſtitution muſt continue in the moſt apparent Danger, nor can we have any Security for our Rights and Privileges as a Free People; but what we derive from the Moderation of the Prince, and the Integrity of the Miniſter: Since it muſt be evident to the meaneſt Capacity, that if the Crown ſhould ever, by Influence over *Place-Men*, get the abſolute Direction of the Legiſlature, the Power of making Laws will as effectually be in the Prince, as if the Conſtitution had placed it ſolely in his own Breaſt. In this Caſe a *Britiſh* Parliament, like an Aſſembly of the ſame Name at *Paris*, might be employed in regiſtering the royal Edicts, but like them could have no Hand in the making them. Nay, the Laws themſelves, which ſhould ſecure all Men from Oppreſſion, would become the Tools of arbitrary Power, and be, in reality, the greateſt of all Oppreſſions: From being the Guardians of our Liberties, they would be em-

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ploy'd in the Defence of Tyranny, and prove it is to be feared, the ſtrongeſt Support of the Monarch's deſpotick Power. The uncontrouled, and uncontroulable Will of the Prince being thus made the Sanction of all Law, Slavery would be ſtampt with the ſpecious Name of Liberty, and thoſe who were appointed by the People to preſerve them from Chains, would themſelves be made uſe of to forge their Fetters.

That theſe, ſay the Advocates for this Bill, are not idle, or impoſſible Suppoſitions, thrown out to inflame the Paſſions of the Multitude, or influence the Votes of an approaching Election, will appear from a Review of the Nations round about us. The Monarchies of *France* and *Spain*, were once, if not as free as *Great-Britain*, at leaſt Strangers to the arbitrary Government, under which they at preſent groan. The Parliament of the one, and the Cortez of the other, were once poſſeſſed of Powers to which the preſent Members are altogether Strangers, and which there is little Probability their Poſterity will ever recover: They were ſummoned, not blindly to confirm the Commands of an arbitrary Maſter, but, like ours, to counſel and adviſe him. What their Power is now, requires no Explanation, their Hiſtories ſufficiently inform us, and may we never learn it by our own Experience. Should we carry our Enquiries ſtill farther, and trace the

the Accounts of *Denmark* and *Sweden*, but little higher than our own Memories, we ſhall find the Subjects poſſeſſed of even greater Degrees of Power, than were perhaps conſiſtent with the royal Prerogative, or even the Peace of thoſe Kingdoms; let us view theſe Nations in their preſent State, and learn, by their dear bought Experience, to guard, in time, thoſe Rights, which if once under any Pretence given up to the Power of the Crown, may like theirs, be impoſſible to be retrieved.

It is true, the Crown of *Sweden* has been obliged to part with a great deal of that Authority it claimed from the firſt *Guſtavus*, to the Death of the late King *Charles*, the diſputed Succeſſion to the Throne gave a fortunate Occaſion to their Dyets, to reſume that Power, they had wantonly given away to their former Monarchs, though whether the People are, in general, the freer or happier by this Alteration, may perhaps be a Queſtion not eaſily decided.

Should it be farther aſked how came theſe Nations, once famous for their Love of Liberty, thus reduced to a State of infamous Dependance on the Monarch's arbitrary Will? Were their Chains impoſed by ſome ſucceſsful Invader? Or did they tamely reſign their Freedom to the Artifices of a Court, which, by ſlow, but ſure Advances, eſtabliſh'd its own Authority on the Deſtruction of the Rights and Privileges of the People? Were

Synods

Synods bought to betray their Truſt? Or terrify'd into a Compliance by the prevailing Power of the Crown? The Anſwer, to the eternal Infamy of theſe pretended Guardians of the Subjects Liberty, muſt be, that they loſt their Freedom by their Treachery or Cowardice. The ſame Cauſes, ſay theſe Men, will for ever produce the ſame Effects; and the ſame Means which made theſe Nations Slaves, will, if not timely prevented, reduce us to the ſame Condition, ſhould future Princes, or future Miniſters ariſe capable of forming ſuch black and impious Deſigns.

To all theſe Conſiderations, they add, that a State of Slavery introduced by theſe Methods would be of all others the moſt intolerable, and the leaſt likely to be redreſs'd. To be overcome by a brave and generous Enemy, has been the Fate of many a gallant Nation; but to yield up thoſe Liberties to the Intrigues of the Cabinet, which our Anceſtors have at ſuch a vaſt Expence of Blood and Treaſure, defended in the Field, to be made the Tools of a haughty and overbearing Miniſter, who have ſo often defeated the open Attempts of the moſt daring Monarchs; and, what is ſtill worſe, to be ſacrificed by thoſe very Men, whom we ourſelves chuſe as the Guardians of our Conſtitution, will make *our Bondage emphatically grievous.* What we loſe by open Violence may be recovered by the ſame Methods it

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was taken from us, and will be ſo if we do not loſe our Courage with our Fortune; ſucceſsful Invaſions may for a Time bear down all before them, but whilſt the Spirit of Liberty remains, and we dare to be free, Opportunities will ſeldom be long wanting to reſtore us to our Rights and Privileges: But ſhould we tamely reſign theſe Bleſſings, or put it in the Power of thoſe to do it for us, who may think it their Intereſt to barter them for a Place or a Penſion; would not our Condition be equally undeſerving of Pity or Redreſs? By ſuch ſlow and unperceived Approaches Slavery makes its ſureſt Advances, and when Men are thus gradually brought to put on their own Fetters, they have ſeldom been known to have the Courage to ſhake them off; but ſhould they at laſt grow weary of their Chains, and boldly venture for the Recovery of their Freedom, this could by no other ways be effected, but by an open Reſiſtance, and an Appeal to Heaven, a Remedy ſo dangerous in the Event, ſo big with Ruin and Confuſion in the very Attempt, that Slavery itſelf is ſcarcely more to be abhorred.

It would then, ſay the Friends of this Bill, be an Inſtance of Infatuation and Folly, almoſt without Precedent, ſhould we neglect to guard ourſelves in the ſtrongeſt Manner againſt an Evil ſo difficult to be cured, and ſo fatal in all its Conſequences. It is in

vain to ſay ſuch a Caſe may never happen, or urge our preſent Safety under the Protection of his Majeſty's known Goodneſs and Moderation, theſe truly aimable and princely Virtues, with the Proſpect we have of their Continuance in his illuſtrious Family, indeed ſet the Danger at a Diſtance, but can never totally remove it: And the Time may come when the Remedy now contended for, may be out of our Power, and our Poſterity have Reaſon to curſe the Neglect of ſo favourable an Opportunity. Theſe, it is plain, were the Sentiments of former Parliaments, nor can there be any doubt but could they have foreſeen how ineffectual the Laws they paſſed would prove to anſwer the Ends deſigned by them, they would have entered into ſuch Meaſures as might have rendred the preſent Bill unneceſſary. Standing Armies, were things unknown to the Conſtitution in their Time, nor was it poſſible they ſhould foreſee the Debts of the Nation; and the Revenues of the Crown would ever ſupply their Places with Members, much leſs gain a Majority of mercenary Votes in the Houſe of Commons. The Evils they felt, or even apprehended, they provided againſt, and it certainly becomes us to do the ſame. If their Fears were not groundleſs, and their Precautions needful at that Time, our Apprehenſions muſt have a much better Foundation, by the viſible Increaſe of theſe Dependents

pendents on the Crown, whoſe unanimous Concurrence with all the Meaſures of the Court for many Years, if it does not prove that one and the ſame Influence governs and directs all their Determinations, it is undeniably a ſtrong Preſumption, that they are not invariably guided by the Dictates of impartial Judgment, unleſs it be reaſonable to affirm, that the Miniſtry have never been miſtaken, a Complement theſe Gentlemen don't ſeem diſpoſed to pay them. If it cannot then but be ſuppoſed, that a Conſideration had to their Places, may have ſometimes at leaſt affected their Deliberations, and determined their Votes in former Seſſions, they may do ſo again, and that Complaiſance which has been already ſhewn to their Patron, may hereafter be carry'd to very dangerous Lengths, ſhould a Majority of theſe Gentlemen be returned in any future Election.

To add yet a farther Weight to theſe Reaſons the Advocates for this Bill affirm, that the general Voice of the Nation determines the Debate in their Favour, that the Expedience and even Neceſſity of it appears from the frequent Inſtructions ſent up from different Parts of the Kingdom, all which unanimouſly agree in the Danger of delaying ſo ſeaſonable a Remedy for the Evils we at preſent feel, and the melancholy Proſpects we have of worſe to come. Nor is this the only Evidence they produce to ſhow

the Sentiments of the People on this important Queſtion; they go one Step farther, and aſſert, that the Manner in which it was lately rejected, is the ſtrongeſt Evidence, that even the Houſe of Commons themſelves, are ſenſible how popular the paſſing it would have been, and for this Reaſon alone, choſe to put an invidious Taſk on the Lords, which they were, either afraid, or aſhamed, to undertake themſelves. As it is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe they had changed their Minds with regard to this Bill, the ready Concurrence it met with in the lower Houſe, is no other way to be accounted for, but by the near approach of a new Election, in which they well knew they ſhould have but little Share, ſhould they diſoblige their Conſtituents, by refuſing ſo neceſſary a Defence of the preſent Conſtitution, and their own Liberties. Upon the whole, they conclude, that if the Reaſon of the Thing be apparently on their Side, confirmed at the ſame Time by the general Voice and Sentiments of the Nation, this Bill is, in itſelf, a juſt and neceſſary Precaution, againſt the exorbitant, and ſtill increaſing, Number of Officers in the Houſe of Commons; and as ſuch continue to hope, the Time will yet come, when it ſhall meet with a proper Reception, whatever may have been its Fate in former Parliaments.

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In Anſwer to theſe Reaſons; the Gentlemen who oppoſe this Bill obſerve, in the firſt Place, that it is a Matter of the higheſt national Importance, to examine every Attempt of changing our Conſtitution, without the leaſt regard to Names, or Sounds, or even the Pretences of thoſe who may propoſe ſuch an Alteration. That the real Deſigns of Politicians are not always quite as honeſt as their Pretenſions, it being the uſual Artifice of ambitious Men, to conceal their moſt pernicious Intentions, under the Sanction of the moſt popular Sounds. When the Liberties of a Nation are deſigned to be invaded, and the ſettled Peace and Order of Government deſtroyed, a pretended Concern for the Freedom of the People, and loud Exclamations of their Danger are the neceſſary Diſguiſes, by which ſuch *Patriot Traytors* can only hope to accompliſh their infamous Deſigns. When political Quacks ſet up for the Reformers of a State, the People muſt be firſt perſuaded, that it is really out of Order, and ſtands in need of their Aſſiſtance. The Experience, ſay they, of all Ages, ſufficiently proves the Danger of Innovations which can be juſtified by nothing but an abſolute Neceſſity, and even then have ſeldom been effected, but at the Expence of the publick Tranquillity and Peace. New Scenes of Government may indeed appear plauſible in Speculation, but when attempted to be

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put in Practice, will generally be found attended with greater Evils than thoſe they were deſigned to redreſs: Let them be ſuppoſed innocent in themſelves, nay, even beneficial and advantageous to Society; yet attempting them raſhly, may do unknown harm, ſhould they miſcarry, and coſt infinitely too dear, ſhould they ſucceed.

The Frame of Government, is a Machine too curious to admit of unneceſſary Alterations, and it will be found in Fact, that all ſuch Attempts, to change or alter its Motions, are much more likely to produce Confuſion than to improve or amend it. If theſe general Reflexions, ſay they, are verified by Experience, if Innovations of all Kinds, tho' really harmleſs, or even advantageous in themſelves, and conducted by Perſons of diſintereſted Views for the Benefit of their Country, are capable of ſuch pernicious Effects how much more dangerous muſt it be to admit of ſuch Schemes as, in their own Nature, tend to overthrow our preſent happy Conſtitution, and are propoſed by Men of whoſe real Deſigns we can have no reaſonable Satisfaction. Of this Truth, no Hiſtory can furniſh us with a more melancholy Proof than our own.

Thoſe Deſigns in the laſt Century, which in their full Growth involved the Nation in Blood and Ruin, brought our Monarch to the Block, deſtroyed our Hierarchy, and abſolutely

ſolutely overturned the very Foundations of civil Government, which involv'd us in a civil War at home, and render'd us infamous abroad, had their Beginning in *the diſintereſted Appearance of a* PLACE-BILL. A ſelf-denying Ordinance, (as it was then called) was made a ſcaffold to private Ambition, and under that ſpecious and unſuſpected Pretence, the Power of the Government was taken from the beſt, and placed in the Hands of the worſt Men in the Houſe of Commons. Thoſe who really meant nothing more than a neceſſary Redreſs of Grievances were removed, and thoſe whoſe warmer Heads were filled with Scenes of Blood and Slaughter, ſubſtituted in their Places: No ſooner were theſe State-Reformers in Poſſeſſion of their ill got Authority, but they threw off the Maſk they had made uſe of to obtain it: Show'd they deſigned nothing leſs than to exclude themſelves by *their own Votes*, and kept their Places in Defiance of *their own Ordinance*. It then appeared, but too late, that they had no other Intention but to deprive their Fellow-Members of their Share in this great Work of reforming the State, procure the ſupreme Command of the Army for themſelves or their Creatures, and thus uſurp an Authority infinitely more arbitrary than that attempted by the Crown. All this they accompliſhed, and the fatal Effects which attended their Succeſs, ought, ſay they,

they, to ſtand as eternal Monuments of the Danger our Government will always be in, by liſtening to the Schemes of ſuch *pretended Patriots*; and, if after having ſeen the Fate of our Anceſtors, we are weak enough to fall ourſelves into the ſame Snare, our Miſery will probably be as great, but deſerve much leſs Compaſſion than theirs. It will be allowed on all Hands, that their Pretences for Reformation were much better founded than ours, the Evils they ſuffered, and the Dangers which threaten'd them, were infinitely greater than are even complained of at preſent; *the Leaders* of that Oppoſition were in no Reſpects inferior to our *modern Patriots*, their Capacities were allowed as great, and their Zeal for Liberty (the darling Word at that Time, as it is now of ours) as remarkably diſtinguiſh'd; if then their Fears and Reſentments carry'd thoſe amongſt them, who really meant well, too far, and gave an Opportunity to thoſe whoſe Views were Anarchy in the State, and Confuſion in the Church, of leading them inſenſibly ſtill farther, till they could neither retreat with Safety, nor proceed without Guilt; will not the Caſe probably be the ſame with us, ſhould we be weak enough to follow their Example. From theſe terrible Effects of a pretended Zeal for the Liberties of the People, the ſeveral Parts of the Legiſlature ſhould certainly learn this important Leſſon, to maintain each

each their own Privileges with a calm Reſolution, but abſtain religiouſly from mutual Encroachments, ſince Experience has ſhewn us, that when once the inward Ballance of the Conſtitution is broken, endleſs Diſorders are like to follow, and no Part of the whole is in Danger of ſuffering more than that which at firſt appeared to be the Gainer.

If then, from the Effect, which this *ſelf-denying Ordinance (the Place Bill of that Day)* had in the Year 1640, we ought to be upon our guard againſt any Projects of a like Nature at preſent, we ſhall have yet ſtronger Reaſons for the utmoſt Jealouſy of all ſuch Attempts, if it can be as little diſputed, that in the Reign of the late King *William*, Bills of a like kind were propoſed, and actually paſſed, with no better a View than to defeat the Settlement of the Crown in the preſent royal Family, or at leaſt make the Government impracticable whenever that Succeſſion ſhould take Place. Theſe Facts, ſay the Oppoſers of a Place-Bill, though they may not directly prove that, becauſe the Act of Parliament, now contended for, is of a like Nature with thoſe Bills which were formerly intended to deſtroy the Conſtitution in Church and State, to murder the Perſon of the King, and deſtroy the Liberties of the People, to undermine the Revolution, and defeat the Proteſtant Eſtabliſhment, that it is now ſollicited

ſo warmly with any ſuch Intentions, yet they abundantly prove, that the greateſt Caution cannot too much guard againſt an Innovation of ſo dangerous a Nature, as in its firſt Inſtance effected the Subverſion of all our Liberties and Laws, and in its ſecond Attempt would probably have deprived us of all the Bleſſings we at preſent enjoy, had not the fatal Edge of this Republican Weapon been taken off by a ſubſequent Act, which reſtores to the People their natural Right of judging for themſelves, and re-electing any Member who may have accepted a Place from the Crown. If any Man can doubt whether we owe the preſent royal Family to the repeal of that Law, which abſolutely excluded every Man in Office, under the King, from a Seat in Parliament, let him recollect the Time when that Succeſſion was carry'd in the Houſe of Commons but BY ONE VOTE ONLY, and then ſay, if he thinks, that HAPPY, THAT EFFICACIOUS VOTE could then have been obtained, if the People had at that Time been debarred from chuſing any Gentleman as their Repreſentative, who was employed in the Service of King *William*, when even with their Aſſiſtance it paſſed with ſo much Difficulty and Oppoſition.

But farther, ſay theſe Gentlemen, we ought never to introduce a Change in our Conſtitution, but when the Evils we ſuffer for the want of it, are of ſufficient Importance

tance to juſtify ſuch an Alteration, and ſufficiently evident to demand it. There can be no end of providing againſt imaginary Dangers which have no Foundation but in the real or pretended Apprehenſions of Men avowedly diſſatisfy'd with the preſent Adminiſtration, becauſe unkindly deny'd a Place in it. If Remedies are to be applied againſt every Inconvenience, which the Fears of diſappointed Stateſmen affect to foreſee, new Bills muſt every Seſſions be paſſed, new Barriers raiſed to defend thoſe Liberties which were never deſigned to be invaded. If the Nation is never to be ſafe, till thoſe, who have themſelves no ſhare in the Adminſtration, ſhall declare they are ſatisfy'd with its Security, it muſt for ever be in Danger, and perhaps it may be better for us that it ſhould continue ſo, than to purchaſe their Approbation by gratifying their Ambition, and introducing a motley Miniſtry, whoſe mutual Jealouſies may probably bring upon us all thoſe Evils they at preſent pretend only to foreſee. It is not long ſince the Danger of the Church was as loudly bellow'd, as that of the State is at preſent, the Mob took the Favourite Hint, and the Cry ſucceeded to the utmoſt of their Expectations: The then Miniſtry were diſcarded after a glorious Adminiſtration, which will tranſmit their Names, with Honour to future Generations: Theſe zealous Defenders of Epiſcopacy poſſeſs'd themſelves of all the

Power they had been long aiming at; and what was the Event? Was the Church better ſecured under their Influence? Were any new Laws made in her Favour, or any new Barriers formed for her Protection? Always excepting the *ever memorable Schiſm Bill?* Or was it not in the moſt apparent hazard of being totally overturn'd by the Introduction of Popery and the Pretender. When Men are far gone in the Spleen, and imagine Diſtempers which have no real Exiſtence but in the Hypochondria, tho' they even ſwear they feel them in every other Part of the Body, no wiſe Phyſician will believe the Complaint, and none but a Quack pretend to remove it. It muſt then be nothing but a real Evil to be avoided, or a real Good to be obtained, which can make ſuch an Act neceſſary, or even prudent; but has any thing of the former Sort been made appear? Pretences will never be wanting, but has any Proof been offered of the Danger of the State? Does not every Man's Experience con- the Falſhood of ſuch Suggeſtions? We have lived now for half a Century under our preſent excellent Conſtitution in ſuch a State of domeſtick Tranquillity, in ſuch a full and ſecure Enjoyment of our Properties and Rights, both Civil and Religious, and of every Bleſſing which the beſt regulated Government can procure Mankind, as no Period of our own Hiſtory can exceed, and few

few can equal. What Attempts, they aſk, have been made, excepting in the latter End of the late Queen, when theſe Gentlemen, who are become ſuch zealous Defenders of our Conſtitution, were in the Adminiſtration, to deprive us of our Liberties? What Steps have been taken to advance the Power of the Crown, or weaken the juſt Influence of Parliament? Has the royal Prerogative been ſtretch'd as in former Reigns to the Infringement of the Rights of the Subject, or have the People been taught the exploded Doctrines of paſſive Obedience and Non-reſiſtance, to the arbitrary Will of the Monarch? Have our Courts of Judicature ever been filled with Judges of greater Integrity, or who complains of the Want of a due Adminiſtration of Juſtice? Was the venerable Bench of Biſhops ever better ſupply'd, or were Perſons more eminent for Piety and Learning ever promoted to thoſe high Stations in the Church? Has our Sovereign ever betray'd a Deſire to extend his Power beyond the Limits of the Conſtitution, or have his Miniſters aſſumed an Authority inconſiſtent with the Nature of their Places, and neceſſary to the Diſcharge of their Duty? What then are the Symptoms, from whence theſe *State Quacks* would infer a Sickneſs, or a Decay in the Conſtitution? What Signs do they produce, that its Vigour is in any Degree exhauſted, much leſs its End approaching?

ing? What need then of all this political Phyſick, where there are no Diſorders to be removed, or why muſt we expoſe ourſelves to the Danger of unknown and uncertain Remedies, when we have no Complaint to juſtify the Experiment? What then are the Evils which this Bill is to redreſs, are they real, or preſent? Or are they only imaginary and what may poſſibly happen, ſhould an *ambitious Prince*, a *deſigning Miniſter*, and a *ſlaviſh Majority in Parliament meet together at the* SAME TIME? If this be all, it will be Time enough to provide againſt ſuch future Dangers, at leaſt when they appear nearer, and more formidable than they do at preſent.

Again, ſay theſe Gentlemen, if this Innovation were neither ſo dangerous, nor unneceſſary as it appears to be, it ought however to be oppos'd, as a Project, which under Pretence of leſſening the Power oft he Crown, will in the Event take away th Rights, and conſequently leſſen the Power of the People. As our Conſtitution ſtands at preſent, we have always a Remedy in our own Power againſt the Influence the Crown can ever have over Place-Men in the Houſe of Commons: Becauſe we can always chuſe whether we will elect ſuch for our Members. By this juſt and happy Temperament the Ballance muſt always be preſerved, between the royal Prerogative, and the Liberty

berty of the Subject: Nor can the Wiſdom of the moſt ſubtle Politician diſcover any other Medium, which will ſo effectually make the *Monarch truly great*, and the People *really happy*. It gives the firſt a Power of chuſing his own Servants from among the beſt of his Subjects, from ſuch who by the Voice of the People themſelves have been declared worthy of their Confidence, a Choice which cannot but be highly beneficial to the Intereſts of the Community, whilſt the Crown has no Views inconſiſtent with their juſt Rights, and whenever it may be ſuſpected of any other Deſigns, the People will always preſerve a Power of ſhewing their Reſentment, by withdrawing that Truſt, and rejecting, as any longer worthy their Favours, all ſuch Members, as may be charged with voting under the undue Influence of the Crown. By the Laws at preſent in being the People are capable of protecting their own Liberties, and limiting, whenever they pleaſe, the Number of Place-men in the Houſe of Commons. If it appears to them, and they are undoubtedly the beſt Judges for themſelves, that theſe Men are ſo dangerous to the Conſtitution as the Advocates for this Bill affect to repreſent them, they can by their own Authority put a Negative on every Officer, nor will it be in the *Power of the Crown to get one Servant returned to the enſuing Parliament*. What then would theſe Men

Men have? To desire more than this must be the severest Satire on their own Conduct, as well as carry in it the highest Imputation of their want either of Honesty or Common Sense, and it may be affirmed it will be impossible to frame a Petition from any County, or Borough in *Great-Britain* soliciting for a Place-Bill, which must not be big with Contradictions, and run to the following Effect, *We the Freeholders of the County of ——under the deepest Sense of the Danger arising to our present happy Constitution, from the Liberty we enjoy of returning such Men, as in our Consciences we believe, if trusted, are likely to betray it, and at the same Time sensible of our own Incapacity to refuse a Bribe if offered in their Behalf, or give a Vote for some honester Representative; do make it our earnest request that this power, which we cannot make a proper use of ourselves, may be taken from our Posterity, who as they are likely to be as great Fools as we, may some Time or other abuse it, as we acknowledge we have ourselves too often done. To prevent all which Dangers to our dear Country, we repeat our Desire, that neither they nor we may any longer be suffered to exercise our own private Judgments, that a wholesome Restraint may be laid on the Freedom of our Votes, and our Hands for ever ty'd up from the Temptations of Bribery and Corruption, and your Petitioners shall ever*, &c. To pretend there-

therefore that this Right of chuſing for ourſelves ought to be taken from the People, becauſe they may ſometimes exerciſe it in a Manner diſpleaſing to thoſe who oppoſe the Adminiſtration is highly unjuſt, but to ſuppoſe, much more aſſert, that the People themſelves deſire it, has ſomething in it ſo big with Contradiction and Abſurdity, as muſt create the Laughter of every impartial Reader, if it does not deſerve a ſeverer Return. If the People have formerly choſe Gentlemen to repreſent them, who were at the ſame time in the Service of the Crown, it only proves they were, at the Time of Election, well ſatisfy'd with the Honour of their Members, and the Wiſdom of their Adminiſtration; and whenever they find Reaſon to alter their Opinion of either, nothing can prevent their ſending others, who they may judge better qualified to be the Guardians of their Liberties.

They add to all this, that the Bill they oppoſe would be equally injurious to the King and his Miniſters; it would reflect in the higheſt Manner on his Majeſty's Wiſdom, or be an open Affront to his Juſtice, ſhould his Choice alone of Perſons to ſerve him, without any other Reaſon, be ſufficient to exclude them from the Truſt and Confidence of his Subjects: A very unjuſt and ungenerous Return for all the Bleſſings we have enjoyed under his mild and gracious Adminiſtration.

It is refuſing the Crown, what it has a natural Right to demand, the Aſſiſtance of all its Subjects: Eſpecially at a Time when it may be juſtly apprehended it may ſtand in need of their utmoſt Abilities. It is laying a Foundation for groundleſs Jealouſies, of Deſigns formed by the Prince againſt their Liberties, which no Part of his paſt Conduct can juſtify, and which he has ſworn ſolemnly to preſerve. It is ſowing thoſe Seeds of Diſcontent, and Diſaffection in the Minds of the People, which may, hereafter, produce a plentiful harveſt of Confuſion; and ſpring up, if not into open Rebellion againſt his Perſon, into ſuch a determined Spirit of Oppoſition to his Government, as may encourage our Enemies abroad to injure and inſult us, and weaken our Preparations at home, for a juſt and neceſſary Defence, and what may ſtill be attended with Conſequences more fatal to the Peace and Happineſs of the Nation, it may tend to create a Diſlike of Parliaments themſelves, the fatal Source of all the Miſeries our Fore-fathers felt, and which we have hitherto been ſo happy only to read of. A King of *Great-Britain*, who commands the Affection and Confidence of his Subjects, will always be reſpected abroad, and powerful at home; but let this Bond of their mutual Happineſs be broke, either by unreaſonable Doubts of his Juſtice, or their Loyalty, and the Proſpect immediately blackens all

all around us, his Influence will be diſregarded in Courts abroad, and publick Credit will gradually decay at home. As it is impoſſible a King contented with his juſt Prerogatives, and a People ſatisfy'd with their legal Rights, can never have two ſeparate Intereſts, as the Glory of the one muſt include in it, the Happineſs of the other, who ever by dark Inſinuations of Deſigns formed againſt either, endeavours to deſtroy, or even weaken this Union, is a *Traytor to his King*, and *an Enemy to his Country*. Muſt not then the Honour of the Crown, and the Peace of the Subject be in the utmoſt Danger, ſhould the Time ever come, when it ſhall be out of the Power of the Prince to place his Confidence in any about him, who for that very Reaſon ſhall not be rejected by his Subjects? It is in vain to plead that the Jealouſies which make the Excluſion of Place-men neceſſary from the Houſe of Commons, are not founded in a Diſtruſt of his Majeſty, but a Diſlike to his Miniſters, ſince even allowing that the preſent Perſons in Power had given juſt Grounds for ſuch Apprehenſions, yet ſhould this Bill be ſuffered to paſs, every future poſſible Miniſtry muſt ſhare the ſame common Fate, and Place-men, yet unborn, be render'd incapable of an Honour to which their Births or Fortunes, would otherwiſe entitle them. Beſides it will be difficult to clear up his Majeſty's Character for Goodneſs

or Wiſdom in his preſent Choice of Men, who are ſo notoriouſly wanting in their Duty, that even their Succeſſors muſt ſuffer for their Crimes.

This brings me to conſider a farther Objection againſt this Excluſion of Officers from Seats in Parliament, by this Bill, ſay they, Penalties are inflicted, and Men abridg'd of their natural Rights, not only without any actual Proof of Guilt or Male-adminiſtration; but the Incapacity is tranſmitted to Perſons who it is impoſſible can have offended, becauſe they never had a Being. If Men in actual Poſſeſſion of Places under the Crown, have ever ſacrificed the Intereſts of their Conſtituents to the Commands of a Miniſter, or paſſed Votes inconſiſtent with their real Sentiments, from ſelfiſh Principles or private Views to their own Advantage, it is juſt they ſhould bear the Infamy they deſerve: but is it reaſonable the Places themſelves ſhould be branded for the Crimes of thoſe who enjoyed and abuſed them? Or that every Man who may hereafter accept them, ſhould be declar'd incapable of the publick Confidence, before it can be known whether he really deſerves it or not? If this Way of of reaſoning be allowed to be good for the future, will it not be equally juſt for the Time paſt? If all Men muſt be ſuppos'd Enemies to their Country, who may hereafter be entruſted with the Management of a Place, or

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an Office under the Crown, I am afraid, for the very ſame Reaſon, all who have formerly done the ſame Thing, muſt have been equally guilty? And if ſo, the preſent Advocates for this Bill, will, many of them at leaſt, be included in the Number of proſtituted Slaves. If they diſcharg'd their Offices with Integrity, uninfluenced by the Favours of the Crown, and independent on the Will of the Miniſter, if their Votes were always directed by a ſole Regard to the Intereſt of their Conſtituents, why may not the ſame Virtue be found, if not in the preſent Poſſeſſors, at leaſt in ſuch as may ſucceed them? Such groundleſs Averſions to Men in Place, can only tend to prevent Gentlemen of Fortune from entering into the Service of the Crown, or make them look on themſelves, when they are in it, as a Body of Men, with ſeparate, or even oppoſite Intereſts to the People. Should the former be the Caſe, the Officers of the Government muſt, many of them, be unworthily ſupply'd, ſince none would accept them, whoſe preſent Subſiſtence, or Proſpects of farther Advancement, would not almoſt neceſſarily ſubject them to the Power of the Miniſter. If Gentlemen of known and viſible Eſtates, are ſuppoſed incapable of reſiſting the Temptations of a profitable Employment, how much ſtronger muſt the Influence of Corruption affect thoſe who have nothing but their

Places

Places to ſubſiſt on, nor any other Dependance but the Favour of the Crown? Should the latter happen, and the Weight of publick Places have ſo prodigious an Influence as is pretended, what other Fate on ſuch a Diviſion of Intereſts could befal us, but continual inteſtine Struggles, and domeſtick Convulſions, till a Period ſhould be put to them, either by the Crown's Superiority, which muſt eſtabliſh arbitrary Power, or the Peoples Victory, which muſt terminate in Anarchy and Confuſion?

Will it be ſufficient to oppoſe to ſuch Conſiderations as theſe, general Harangues on the exorbitant Power of the Miniſter, or the Influence and Danger of Corruption, when they come attended with no Proofs; nay, when they they are contradicted in the ſtrongeſt Manner, by the very Perſons who are loudeſt in theſe Complaints? Theſe Gentlemen, many of them have, themſelves, ſerv'd in this double Capacity, of Member, and Placemen, and might have done ſo ſtill, at leaſt if we may believe their own Aſſertions, could they have been influenced in their Votes by a ſlaviſh Dependance on the Crown. If this was really the Caſe, it muſt be own'd they acted up to the Patriot-character they affect, they did their Duty, and deſerve the Eſteem and Confidence of their Conſtituents; but why muſt all this boaſted Honeſty, this inflexible Love to their Country be confined

to

to themſelves? They parted with their Places for refuſing to ſupport the Adminiſtration in Meaſures they thought wrong; but may not others with equal Honour and Conſcience keep theirs, by ſupporting thoſe very Meaſures, becauſe they think them Right? However, for once, let all Regards to Honour and Honeſty be confined to the narrow Circle of their own Party; two things will at leaſt unavoidably follow from their Example, firſt, that a Place may be enjoy'd without a ſlaviſh Dependance on the Crown, this can't be deny'd by Men, who were for many Years poſſeſs'd of great and profitable Employments in the State; they diſcharg'd them with a due Independency on thoſe who gave them, and why may not others do the ſame? And next, that a Poſt of Power or Profit is not ſo invincible a Temptation, but it may be parted with, when the Terms of keeping it are inconſiſtent with the Duty they owe to their Conſtituents, as Members of the Houſe of Commons. In either of theſe Caſes it is plain, by their own Confeſſion, a Place does not neceſſarily make a Man a Slave, and it is pity, without ſome better Proof, than has hitherto been offer'd to the contrary, that the preſent Poſſeſſors of them ſhould be treated as ſuch.

But it is farther objected, that the conſtant uniformity of theſe Mens Votes in Favour of the Court, is a ſufficient Evidence of their

corrupt

corrupt Dependance upon it, it being, as theſe Men would perſuade us, impoſſible that every Step taken by the Miniſter during, a long Continuance in Power, ſhould have been always right, in which he has nevertheleſs met with their ready and chearful Concurrence; but tho' the Truth of this Fact might perhaps be conteſted, let it for the preſent be taken for granted, the Anſwer will be obvious and plain. If a conſtant Concurrence with all the Meaſures of the Court be allowed a Proof of Bribery and Corruption, to what Motive muſt we aſcribe, as conſtant an Oppoſition? To affirm the Miniſtry have always been wrong, would be, at leaſt, as wild and incredible an Aſſertion, as to maintain they have always been right; let then our Adverſaries in this Caſe, be themſelves our Judges, and the ſame Reaſons the Promoters of this Bill can alledge in Vindication of their own Conduct, ſhall be ſufficient to juſtify thoſe who oppoſe it. If Motives, drawn from private Intereſt, create this remarkable Steadineſs and Uniformity on the one Side, are not the others as powerfully ſway'd by diſappointed Ambition and private Revenge? If a Deſire of keeping their Employments make Men blind to the real Faults of the Miniſter, may not the Hopes of ſucceeding them as powerfully prejudice others againſt Meaſures the moſt apparently beneficial to the Honour and Security of the Nation?

If

If the Support of the preſent Adminiſtration be the ſole Object of their Attention who are in it, I am afraid its overthrow will be found equally prevalent with thoſe who are out? When Men give themſelves up Slaves to any Paſſion, it is of little Conſequence to the Publick, whether Avarice or Revenge gain the Predominance; and Ambition diſappointed, is as dangerous a Maſter, as when indulged in the utmoſt Exceſſes of Power. Nay, we may ſafely go one Step farther, and affirm that there will always be leſs Danger from Perſons, who are in the full Gratification of their Deſires, and only want to maintain what they at preſent poſſeſs, than from Men, who, by repeated Diſappointments, are render'd deſperate in their Undertakings, and at the worſt have nothing to loſe. Have we not ſeen Men under the Influence of theſe ungovernable Paſſions, break through the ſtrongeſt Ties of Honour and Conſcience, combine with known *Traytors to their Country*, and aſſiſt with their Advice and Counſels the *avowed Enemies of our Religion and Liberties?* Would it be difficult to point out *the Man*, who after having aſſiſted in the Impeachment of an INFAMOUS FUGITIVE, has ſince become his *favourite Companion*, and the *boſom Partner of his moſt deſtructive Secrets?* If Patriots then, bred up in Schemes of Liberty, and early diſtinguiſh'd by the Favours of the Court, ſuperior,

by immenſe private Fortune, to all the Views of Avarice, and indulged in important Employments by the Crown, ſhall yet be thus enſlaved to theſe turbulent and unruly Paſſions, well may we pardon ſome Degrees even of Partiality to the Court, in Men, who perhaps really think its Meaſures right in the main. The worſt, however, that can be ſaid of the one Side is, that they are Slaves to a Miniſter, whilſt the other are, at leaſt, as much ſo to the Paſſions of diſappointed Ambition, or private Revenge, a much meaner Servitude, and a more cruel Maſter.

Once more, it is urged in Behalf of a Place-Bill, that the Admiſſion of Officers into the Houſe of Commons, eſpecially ſhould a Majority of the Members be compos'd of ſuch, unites the Legiſlative and Executive Powers, and by that Means deſtroys the Authority and Controul the Former ſhould always preſerve over the latter: Were this indeed true, in the Manner it is repreſented, the Objection would be of ſome real Weight, and deſerve the Attention of Parliament; there being nothing more obvious, than the Danger which muſt ariſe to the Conſtitution from ſuch an unnatural Union between two Powers, which ought, for ever, to be diſtinct. The Fact therefore is the only thing to be enquired into, becauſe except that can be prov'd, either from Reaſon, or Experience, or both, the Objection muſt fall to the Ground;

Ground; now the latter of these Criterions, it is evident, is against them, no Number of Place-men, who have ever yet obtained Seats in the House, having hitherto affected any such dangerous Superiority on the Part of the Crown, what may happen hereafter, can only be determined from the Reason of the Thing, which will conclude equally strong against such groundless Apprehensions, till it can be shewn to be a probable Event, that Gentlemen of Honour and Credit, shall no longer be employ'd in Offices of Trust under the Government; or what is still more incredible, should all unite to screen and protect Offenders against the State, for no other Reason, but because they themselves have a Share in the Administration. Should our own History be consulted on this Occasion, it will be much easier to produce Instances of good Ministers worry'd by Faction, than bad ones protected by Corruption in a House of Commons; by the former the great Lord *Strafford* fell a Sacrifice in the Reign of *Charles* I; and the honest, and upright Earl of *Clarendon*, under the Government of *Charles* II; if bad Ministers have ever been screen'd from the Vengeance their Crimes deserv'd, they have always ow'd their Safety to the Royal Prerogative, and not the Cowardice or Corruption of the Commons. These Considerations may serve at the same Time, as a sufficient Answer to what is far-

ther ſuggeſted by the Partizans of a *Place-Bill*, of the Danger ariſing to the Conſtitution from the Increaſe of Power to the Crown, by a Majority of Officers in the Houſe of Commons: It being impoſſible for the moſt *ambitious Prince* or *artful Miniſter*, to give theſe Gentlemen an equivalent for the Sacrifice they muſt make, not only of their Conſtituents, but of their own Liberties; ſince the very *Poſſeſſion of their Places*, which are ſuppos'd to be the *Price of Slavery*, muſt become more precarious under the arbitrary Will of an abſolute Monarch, than under a Conſtitution where the preferring Men to Places, and their Removal, will be the conſtant Object of the People's Attention; and where if any ſhould be diſmiſs'd from their Employments, for refuſing implicit Obedience to the Will of a Miniſter, or denying his Aſſent to Meaſures plainly deſtructive of the Glory or Freedom of the Nation, they could not be however, diſarmed of their Power of reſenting ſuch Treatment by warmer, and more vigorous Oppoſition in the Houſe. To overturn then, or even injure, the Conſtitution, if it can ever be effected by the Power of Corruption, muſt be the Work, not of a *Majority of Placemen, but of Beggars*: Till ſuch Time therefore as ſuch are employ'd in Poſts of Honour and Profit, who have no Property of their own, all Apprehenſions of Danger from this Quarter muſt be abſolutely groundleſs: It

is as certain as any political Propoſition can be, that ſo long as the People continue to chuſe, as they hitherto have done, Gentlemen of known Eſtates and Fortune, to Seats in Parliament, the Intereſt of Repreſentatives will for ever be the ſame with thoſe they repreſent; it being impoſſible that the latter can ſuffer in their Rights and Privileges, without involving the former in the ſame Ruin. To ſuppoſe Gentlemen capable of holding Places under the Security of our preſent Conſtitution, yet forming Deſigns inconſiſtent with their own Freedom, to pleaſe an ambitious Prince, or gratify a deſigning Miniſter, carries in it, beſides other Improbabilities, this monſtrous Abſurdity, that Perſons anxious, in the higheſt Degree to enrich themſelves, and aggrandize their Families, ſhould have no Concern at the ſame time about their Preſervation, that of Choice they ſhould prefer the moſt precarious Tenure to the moſt ſecure, and voluntarily give up their lawful Titles to what they enjoy, in exchange for the uncertain Favours of a Court; till therefore we ſee Men brought into Parliament who either have nothing of their own to loſe, or want common Senſe to underſtand the Value of Property, till Men are entruſted with the Management of the publick Revenues, who are not capable of taking care of their own; or what may poſſibly be as bad,

have

have none of their own to take care of, the Conſtitution can be in no Danger from their Employments under the Crown: But has any thing like this been pretended by the warmeſt Advocates for a Place-Bill? On the contrary, has not the Miniſtry been frequently reproach'd with the immenſe Property thoſe Gentlemen poſſeſs, who are at preſent intruſted with Poſts of the higheſt Importance in the Government?

But it is farther inſiſted on, that how chimerical ſoever theſe Apprehenſions may be repreſented by the *Tools of the Miniſtry*, our Anceſtors were of a different Opinion; they ſaw at a much greater Diſtance thoſe Evils, which we affect to be inſenſible of in their neareſt Approaches; and wiſely provided ſuch Remedies, as to them appear'd moſt likely to prevent the Danger. The ſeveral Bills I have already mention'd were, as they ſay, enacted with this ſole View of excluding a Multiplicity of Officers from Seats in Parliaments. They particularly inſtance in three, which therefore may deſerve our Notice. The firſt relates to the Officers of the Cuſtoms, Exciſe, *&c.* who are all, to a Man, diſqualify'd from Seats in the Houſe of Commons. The Fact is, indeed, notorious, but if it can be ſhewn, that the Motives which gave riſe to this Bill, and the Reaſons which prevail'd with the Legiſlature for paſſing it at that Time, were entirely foreign to the preſent Caſe.

Caſe. If it can be farther prov'd that they were directly oppoſite to the Principles on which the neceſſity of a Place Bill are founded; the Advocates for the latter will have little Reaſon to triumph in any Advantage their Cauſe can receive from it? To judge then on what Principles our Anceſtors acted in the Excluſion they gave to theſe Gentlemen, it will be ſufficient to recite the Preamble to to the Bill, which I ſhall give the Reader, as they ſtand in the Statute of the 3d of *Will.* and *Mar.* Chap. 1. without any Alteration. The Act takes notice, '*that the Officers of* '*Exciſe, by Reaſon of the Greatneſs of their* '*Duty, and the extraordinary Powers given* '*to them, had frequently by Threats or Pro-* '*miſes, ſo far prevailed on Electors, that* '*they had been abſolutely debarred of the Free-* '*dom of giving their Votes, which, accord-* '*ing to the known Conſtitution of the Kingdom,* '*every Perſon ought to have, and enjoy*;' it then enacts, '*that any ſuch Officer who perſuades, or* '*diſſuades any Elector from giving his Vote,* '*ſhall forfeit one hundred Pounds, and be inca-* '*pable of executing any Office relating to the Ex-* '*ciſe.*' Is it poſſible for Words more plainly to expreſs the Meaning of the Legiſlature? Or can any Man doubt that the fundamental and uniform Principle on which they acted, was no other than a ſteady Regard to the Preſervation of the Peoples Right of Choice? Since theſe Officers were not declared incapable

pable of being elected barely as being Servants of the Crown, or becauſe they had charge of collecting the Revenue, but from the undue Influence which the Nature of their Offices might probably give them over their Electors. The Danger then, which our Anceſtors apprehended, and prudently endeavoured to prevent, did not ariſe from THEIR IMMEDIATE DEPENDANCE ON THE CROWN, but from THE DEPENDANCE OF THE PEOPLE UPON THEM. It was *the Manner of their getting into the Houſe, and not any Apprehenſion of what they might do when they were there*, that gave riſe to this Act of Excluſion. This, it muſt be confeſs'd, was a wiſe and juſt Regulation, in Favour of the Peoples Right of judging for themſelves. It was juſtly apprehended, that their Concerns with, and Intereſt in, ſo many of their Conſtituents, as were likely to be affected by the publick Revenues, and the abſolute Command which the ſuperior Officers will always have over the inferior, who often make no inconſiderable Part of ſome Corporations, might be able to controul the Freedom of Elections, and deprive the People of their undoubted Right of Choice. But would it not be a very extraordinary Manner of Reaſoning, to infer from a Law evidently deſigned to ſupport the Peoples Right of judging for themſelves, that therefore they ought to be depriv'd of this Right; as they certainly muſt

be

be if debarr'd the Liberty of chuſing ſuch Officers to repreſent them in Parliament, whoſe Employments give them no Command over their Votes, nor in any Manner controul the Freedom of their Elections? The Qualification Act, which has likewiſe been quoted on this Occaſion, has as little to do with a Place-Bill as the former. It was deſign'd, *or at leaſt pretended, to be ſo,* to ſupport the Dignity, and Honour of the Houſe of Commons, by reſtraining Members to the Poſſeſſion of a certain viſible Eſtate in Land, ſufficient to ſupport their Characters with proper Luſtre, and ſet them above the Power of Corruption. It would, I believe, be eaſy to ſhew from the Time, and Manner in which this Bill was introduced, that it was properly the Child of Faction, and intended to ſupport a *ſtupid and infamous Diſtinction betwixt the trading and Country Party:* The Advocates for the Bill had occaſion at that Time to court the latter, to whom they made the Complement of ſacrificing the Birth-right of Gentlemen of vaſtly larger Fortunes, only becauſe they thought fit to employ them in the Service of the Government, as Merchants: However, as that Act has nothing to do with a Place-Bill, I ſhall make no farther Remarks on it at preſent, it will be ſufficient to ſay, that as in Fact, it has never anſwer'd any valuable Purpoſe, ſo from

the looſe Manner in which it was drawn, there is but too much Reaſon to ſuſpect it was never deſign'd to do ſo. The laſt Inſtance produced in favour of this Bill, is an Act paſſed in the Reign of the late King *William*, abſolutely excluding from a Seat in Parliament, every Perſon who after the Acceſſion of the preſent Family to the Throne, ſhould hold any Place, or Office under the Crown. This, it muſt be confeſs'd, at firſt View, ſeems full to their Purpoſe, being the very thing they are aiming at at preſent: But without any Reflexions on the well known Deſign of that Bill, or the Character of thoſe who promoted, and at laſt paſs'd it, it will be ſufficient to ſay, that even before it came to be put in Execution, it was found ſo fruitful of Danger to the Conſtitution, that tho' it has never been abſolutely repealed, the Sting has been taken away, by a ſubſequent Clauſe, only requiring ſuch Perſons to be re-elected, which is all we are at preſent contending for.

I might, I believe, ſtop here, and refer it to every impartial Reader, whether a Bill ſo unneceſſary in itſelf, and ſo dangerous in its Conſequences, deſerves the Pains that has already been taken to promote it?

I muſt, however, beg my Reader's Patience, if I proceed yet one Step farther, and ſhow, that ſhould it ever paſs into a Law, it will, in all proba-

probability be found ineffectual to anſwer the Ends pretended to be ſerv'd by it. Let us only ſuppoſe a Majority in the Houſe of Commons, ſo infamouſly mean as to ſell their Country, betray the Rights of their Conſtituents, and give up their own Privileges, for any private Advantage, and what will it avail, that they are deny'd Places whilſt they continue Members? May not a Poſt of Profit be the Reward of a ſeven Years Dependance? Or even of a *Triennial Servitude in Corruption*, ſhould that Term hereafter be the Duration of Parliament. May not a Son, a Relation, or a Domeſtick, receive the Reward due to their Services in the Houſe? If ſuch Evaſions have not been hitherto put in Practice, it muſt be owing to the Honour of the Government, and the Integrity of the Miniſtry, and not the Difficulty, or Impoſſibility of the thing itſelf. Let then only be ſuppos'd, that in ſome future, diſtant Period of Time, an ambitious Prince, or an over-bearing Miniſter ſhould have Occaſion to employ theſe *venal Arts*, or ſhield their Crimes by introducing *ſuch a corrupt Dependance*, would the preſent Bill be found a ſufficient Barrier to the Evils it is pretended to prevent? The Sources of Corruption are too numerous to be ſtopt by this feeble Engine, and or indeed by any which the utmoſt Wiſdom of our State-Reformers will ever be able to invent: For I ſhall

make no Scruple to lay it down as a *Maxim*, even to theſe Machiavels in Politics, that wherever Members are willing to be corrupted, the Means of effecting it will never be long wanting. New Laws may indeed be made, and every Seſſions freſh Barriers form'd to ſupport our Conſtitution, but ſo long as thoſe who have it in their Power to give it up, are capable of being brib'd to betray it, the Danger will always remain, nay perhaps be greater and more imminent, the more ſecret the Methods are which may be taken to effect it. Should it then be aſk'd, What remains after all to be done? Or muſt we for ever be liable to the Evils which theſe Gentlemen ſo pathetically bewail? The Anſwer is obvious, and plain. Nothing but the perſonal Virtue of Men in general, and of our Repreſentatives in particular, can ſecure us againſt the Effects of Venality, and the Artifices of a Court: It is to this then we muſt truſt, preſerve ourſelves ſuperior to Corruption, and if we find this ſteady Virtue fail in any of our Repreſentatives, we have the Remedy in our own Power, by chuſing others, of whoſe Integrity we may have better Satisfaction. This is already in our own Power to do, without the Aſſiſtance of a Place-Bill; nay, it is probable, ſhould ſuch a one ever paſs, we may not be altogether ſo much at Liberty in this reſpect, ſince Perſons of whoſe Abilities

Abilities and Honour we have the greateſt Security, may be diſqualify'd to receive the Benefit of our Votes, and we deny'd the Advantages of their Services. This Foundation, and this only, we may depend on as ſufficient to ſuſtain the Weight of the Conſtitution, and an adequate Security to our Rights and Liberties: Since it is Folly, nay, even *Inſolence*, for Electors who are mean enough to ſell their own Votes, to expect more diſintereſted Virtue in thoſe who purchaſe them. Would we prevent the Effects of Bribery and Corruption in our Repreſentatives, we muſt our ſelves ſet the Example of that ſteady Patriotiſm in our own Conduct, which we hope for from theirs? And whilſt we thus preſerve ourſelves independent without Doors, there will never be any Danger of being made Slaves by thoſe *within*; but if by our own Neglect, we return Gentlemen to *Places in the Houſe*, who are capable of theſe criminal Submiſſions to a Court, it will be in vain to attempt preventing ſuch Influence by denying them *Places out of it*. If Perſons of Honour and Integrity, ſuperior by their perſonal Fortunes to the mean Neceſſity of Dependance on a Court, are made the Guardians of our Liberties, they muſt be ſafe in Defiance of the moſt ambitious Prince, or artful Miniſter; nor will it be in the Power of

of a *Place* to influence their Deliberations, or controul their Votes: But if they want theſe Virtues, there will always be ſufficient Means in the Power of a Court, to gratify their Avarice, or ſatisfy their Ambition. In the firſt Caſe therefore, the Bill contended for will be abſolutely unneceſſary, in the latter equally ineffectual.

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APPENDIX,

Addreſs'd to the

ELECTORS of *Great-Britain.*

An eſſe ulla major aut inſignior Contumelia poteſt, quam Partem Civitatis velut contaminatam haberi? Quid eſt aliud quam Exſilium intra eadem Mœnia quam Relegationem Pati? LIV.

Gentlemen,

I Have now finiſhed my Deſign, and laid before you the Subſtance of what has hitherto been offer'd on both Sides of this great and important Debate. I have done this in the moſt impartial Manner I am capable of, having neither omitted, nor diſguiſed any

any Thing I have met with from either Party with design, which appeared to me any way likely to assist the Reader, in forming a Judgment for himself on a Question of so much Consequence to the Freedom and Happiness of *Great-Britain.* As I am conscious to myself of writing under no Bias to any Party, being equally unknown to both, and willing to continue so; I please myself, I shall meet with no Enemies but those who are so to the Cause of Truth, and the Liberties of my Country.

Nothing then remains to be added on this Subject, but a serious Exhortation to you, *my Countrymen*, to examine the Reasons on both Sides with Candour, and Attention. Whatever private Views the Leaders of a Party may have in forming or opposing particular Schemes of Government, it is impossible the Body of the People can have any Interest inconsistent with the publick Good. Discarded Statesmen may be influenced by Envy, and Men in Power blinded by Ambition; but the Electors of *Great-Britain*, in their collective Capacity are liable to none of these unruly Passions, and are therefore the proper Objects of Appeal in all Matters in which their own Rights and Liberties are immediately concerned: It is yours to determine from your own Experience, of the Benefits which Government ought to produce, and those you actually enjoy, whether the Bill contended

tended for be really neceſſary for the Safety of our preſent happy Conſtitution, or whether it be not ſuch an Alteration as may be productive of much greater Evils than it can poſſibly prevent; it is yours to judge of the Deſigns which firſt brought it into the Houſe, and whether the paſſing it would not have been an Indulgence to the Wantonneſs of Oppoſition, and a fruitleſs, if not a dangerous, Gratification of ſuch a Spirit of Change as is never likely to be ſatisfy'd by the moſt reaſonable Conceſſions.

Give me leave, Gentlemen, on this Occaſion to lay before you a few general Conſiderations, which, as I am ſatisfy'd they have their Foundation in Truth, may ſerve as a Guide to your Enquiries, and aſſiſt your Determinations; for this Purpoſe it will be neceſſary to carry our Reſearches quite back to the Original of Government, and ſee upon what Foundations you have a Right of chuſing any Repreſentatives at all, becauſe the ſame Principle which firſt gave you a Title to this Privilege, will be highly ſerviceable to direct you in the proper Uſe and Exerciſe of it.

In this Enquiry it will appear, beyond Contradiction, that as all Government was inſtituted for the Sake and Benefit of Society, and Power originally lodged in the People; ſo the ſole Reaſon of being governed by any Repreſentatives muſt ariſe from the Impoſſibility of the whole Peoples aſſembling toge-

ther in their collective Capacity to act for themſelves. It is equally certain, that as if they could have ſo met, they would have had a full and abſolute Right of determining for themſelves, in all Affairs relating to their own Government; ſo under their preſent Situation their Liberty muſt conſiſt in a free and uncontrouled Choice of ſuch Perſons to repreſent them, as they ſhall think moſt proper to intruſt with the Care of their Intereſts: Hence then it unavoidably follows, that every Propoſition which tends to invade this Privilege, and much more, which openly and avowedly is deſign'd to deprive you of it, ſtrikes at your very being as a free People, and muſt affect your Liberties in the moſt eſſential and valuable Point.

This Privilege of determining for themſelves, who were the fitteſt Perſons to be intruſted as Guardians of their Rights, and Truſtees of their Properties, your Anceſtors enjoy'd, and maintain'd for ſeveral hundred Years without the Colour of Reſtraint; ſince it will appear upon a Review of our own Hiſtory, that it was never *legally* bounded or even qualify'd by *any Act of Parliament* from the Reign of *Henry* III, to the Revolution. From the firſt Inſtitution of Parliaments in their preſent Form, till that Time, every Man, or Corporation of Men, who had a Right to chuſe at all, had an abſolute Power of returning whom they pleaſed, nor

was

was any Freeman under any legal Incapacity of ſerving his Country as a Member of the Houſe of Commons, if his Conſtituents thought fit to elect him. You ſtill enjoy this Privilege in a very ample Manner notwithſtanding ſome Reſtraints which have been thought neceſſary Qualifications to preſerve the Dignity of Parliament, and prevent the effects of Bribery and Corruption.

It has been already prov'd, even to a Demonſtration, that even that Law, which at firſt Sight ſeems to carry an Appearance of reſtraining this Fundamental Right of Choice in the People, was enacted ſolely for its Preſervation, by excluding only ſuch Officers from being Subjects of their Election who might from the Power and Influence of their Places be likely to controul and over-awe their Votes. This was the Principle on which it was founded to prevent ſuch Men from being Candidates for your Favour who might command, or terrify you into a Compliance, it cannot therefore with any Appearance of Reaſon or Juſtice be extended to any other, who cannot be obnoxious to you on this Account, unleſs the Time ſhould come when it may be thought Offence ſufficient to deſerve a Diſqualification for a Gentleman in any Manner to ſerve the Crown; a Situation which I am ſure no Friend to our preſent happy Conſtitution will ever deſire to ſee;

and which none will labour to introduce, who is not an *Enemy to his King*, and a *Traytor to his Country*.

By the Privilege you now enjoy of determining for your ſelves, whether the Servants of the Crown are worthy to be the Guardians of the Publick Liberties, you hold the Ballance between the contending Parties which unhappily divide us; and who ſo proper to hold it as yourſelves? It is in your Power, whilſt you retain this Right in your own Hands to add to, or diminiſh from, either Scale as the Intereſt of both may appear to require it. The firſt Miniſter in *Great-Britain* can obtain no Seat in the Houſe of Commons without your Conſent, nor can the King himſelf be ſecure of one Servant there, who does not ſit by your Approbation. Are you apprehenſive of Danger from the Court? Are the Meaſures taken by the Miniſtry inconſiſtent, in your Opinion, with the Honour or Intereſt of *Great-Britain?* Are your Liberties invaded, or your Properties in danger? The Time is at Hand, without the Aſſiſtance of a Place-Bill, to ſhow a juſt Reſentment of what is paſs'd, and prevent all Apprehenſions of what may be to come: But if by any Means, or under any Pretence, you part with this Power, or let the Ballance be wreſted out of your own Hands, you may live to deplore the Danger of your Conſtitution when you are diſarm'd of every

Means

Means of redreſſing it. The Time may come, when a republican Faction may be ſeen triumphant in a Houſe of Commons, perhaps trampling on the juſt Rights of the Crown, which may then in vain ſtand in need of your Aſſiſtance to prevent that Anarchy and Confuſion, which are the natural Conſequence of the growth of ſuch Principles.

From whatever Quarter then evils may be apprehended, ſeek ſuch Remedies only, as are Conſtitutional, as are conſiſtent with your fundamental Rights, which if once given up, whatever may be the Pretence, you may probably be never able to recover. It is Folly to imagine you can ever ſtrengthen your Liberties by parting with your Power. If the Virtue of your Repreſentatives appear ſuſpicious, you muſt truſt to your own, if on a fair impartial Examination, they are found to have acted under the Influence of private Intereſt or Corruption, the Remedy is already in your own Hands, and would you, can you, have a better?

See then, *my Countrymen*, with your own Eyes, and judge from your own Experience, what the Importance of thoſe Privileges are, which theſe Advocates for a Place-Bill, would perſuade you to give up; you have it already in your Power to reject every Candidate you don't approve of, and why ſhould you deſire to be debar'd the Liberty of chuſing thoſe

you

you do? Will it not be eaſy from hence to determine who beſt deſerve your future Confidence, thoſe who oppos'd an Innovation ſo deſtructive of your natural and legal Rights, or thoſe who promoted it? Thoſe who, would have made you the Tools of their own private Ambition, and given you up to Slavery, under the ſpecious Pretence of preſerving your Conſtitution; or thoſe who, in Spite of popular Clamours, have dar'd to maintain your undoubted Title to judge for yourſelves? The Bill itſelf, was, without doubt, calculated to prepoſſeſs the Publick in favour of the former, and gain by ſpecious and unſuſpected Pretences a Majority without Doors, which they had in vain attempted to obtain within. It was an Engine formed and levelled at the Miniſtry, whoſe Deſtruction, ſince they had no other Means of effecting it, they were willing to procure by the overthrow of the Conſtitution itſelf: For this Purpoſe the Preſs has long labour'd with weekly Productions of Infamy and Scandal, and Writers who have no Property of their own, been taught to bellow for Liberty under the Terrors of a Jail: *Common-Senſe* has been made the Tool of Faction, and a well *known popiſh Jacobite* employ'd to roar out for *Freedom* and *Religion*; Craftſmen have been inſtructed to *weep* over the expiring Liberties of their Country, and *Champions to rail at Bribery and Corruption.* To you, Gentlemen, they make their laſt

Appeal,

Appeal, and for my own Part, I heartily join with them in the Iſſue. It is a Debate, in which the meaneſt Freeholder amongſt you is ſufficiently qualify'd to judge, ſince every Man can tell whether his Perſon is ſafe, his Property ſecure, and his Conſcience free; if they are, and who has yet dar'd to deny it, what Ground can there be to attempt unneceſſary Alterations in a Government, under which theſe Bleſſings are inviolably maintain'd. It is ridiculous to affright yourſelves, or ſuffer others to terrify you, with the Danger you are in of being made Slaves, whilſt you muſt always have it in your own Choice to continue free; but let it always be remembered, that this Security depends on the Preſervation of your Right of electing your own Repreſentatives, and judging how far the Servants of the Crown may deſerve a Share in the Confidence of the People; give up this under any Pretence whatſoever, and you loſe the only Means in your Power of ſupporting your Monarchy in its preſent undoubted Rights, ſhould it ever be attack'd by a growing republican Faction amongſt us. Reflect then, that Oppoſition to Place-Men, only as Servants of the Crown, cannot be eſtabliſh'd on any other Principle, but a Suppoſition that the Intereſt of the Crown will, at all Times, be naturally oppoſite to the Peoples, a Maxim abſolutely repugnant to the Nature of our Conſtitution, and which can never prevail, without

without proving fatal to the Monarchy itſelf. Whilſt you act under the Power of theſe Conſiderations, you will not, I perſuade myſelf, be induced to withdraw your Confidence from Gentlemen in Places for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they are Servants to the King, you will not oppoſe Miniſters only becauſe they are Miniſters, nor declare a Diſlike to the Government of your Country, from the ſole Conſideration that it is the preſent Eſtabliſhment. Such a Conduct muſt be productive of the wildeſt Anarchy, it muſt deſtroy the very being of our Conſtitution, civil Society itſelf muſt ceaſe whenever Governors come to be hated as ſuch, and Men in Power paſs as a ſynonimous Term for Traytors to their Country. In ſuch a Situation, with how much Juſtice might the Character of the Roman State, juſt before the total Diſſolution of that Republick, be apply'd to ours, *Ea demum eſt Romanorum Libertas nec Leges, neque Statuta, neque Senatus, neque Magiſtratus, neque Mores majorum vereri.*

That ſuch Inſinuations as theſe, are not entirely groundleſs, appears but too plain, from the paſt Conduct of theſe Advocates for a Place-Bill, which I ſhall always eſteem the beſt Rule of judging what their future is like to be. The Place-Bill, Gentlemen, is far from being the only Innovation that has of late been attempted amongſt us, bad as it

is

is, more dangerous Experiments have been offer'd, and preſs'd with equal Zeal; we have had Reaſons offer'd us for altering the *Duration* of Parliaments, the Reſtraints of the Riot Act have been thought too ſevere, and inconſiſtent with that unbounded Liberty which we ought to enjoy. Repreſentations, and ſtrong ones too, have been made by theſe Patriots, againſt Repoſing any Confidence or Credit in the King; nor have they with leſs Warmth contended for inſolently abridging the Royal Prerogative, and depriving their Sovereign of the ſupreme Command of the Army, notwitſtanding a Stratocracy or Military Tyranny muſt have been the unavoidable Conſequence of it. All theſe, and many more that might have been mention'd, have been the Projects of theſe modern Reformers of the State, theſe they have dar'd to propoſe at a Time when their Numbers were too inconſiderable, even to deſerve the Attention of the Houſe, to what yet unthought of Lengths might this all-changing, all-reforming Spirit be carry'd, ſhould they ever come to obtain a Majority there? Would it be difficult to ſhow how well theſe zealous Defenders of our Liberties have begun to copy the black original Plan drawn for them in 1641. May the Remembrance of that fatal Period preſerve us from purſuing the ſame Meaſures, as ever we hope to avoid the Miſery and Confuſion that attended them. I have now

before me the Sentiments of a right reverend Prelate on this Occaſion, his Lordſhip's diſtinguiſh'd Character, the Juſtice of his Reflexions, and the Beauty of his Language, will undoubtedly give a greater Weight to what I am endeavouring to lay before you, I mean the Danger of unneceſſary Innovations in the State, than any thing of my own, I ſhall therefore tranſcribe his own Words. Speaking of the Calamities which attended the civil War. 'Much, ſays he, of the Miſery 'the Nation underwent was owing to that 'unhappy Proneneſs, which there is in Man-'kind, to magnify the real Inconveniencies 'of their Condition, and add imaginary 'ones to them: Their own ill Conduct is 'always the laſt Thing they charge them 'upon, that of their Superiors, uſually the 'Firſt. For theſe Inconveniencies, they 'flatter themſelves there muſt be ſome Re-'medy; and then, whatever Scheme for 'Reformation, either their own Imagination 'preſents, or any Body elſe ſuggeſts, they 'embrace it immediately, run haſtily away 'with it, and ſoon grow too vehement, ever 'to conſider, whether it be not impracticable 'or ineffectual, unjuſt or pernicious.—— 'Alterations may not only be reaſonable to 'cure preſent Complaints, but neceſſary to 'prevent worſe Diſorders. But ſtill the ge-'neral Preſumption ſhould always be in fa-'vour of what is eſtabliſh'd; and no Innovations,

'vations, greater than need, ought ever to 'be attempted. Intereſt, Opinion, Reſent-'ment, Warmth of Temper, place different 'Things before different Perſons, in very 'ſtrong Lights; too ſtrong perhaps to ſee 'them diſtinctly; at leaſt to obſerve every 'Thing connected with them. Theſe Views 'however they act boldly upon, heat one 'another, ſometimes by Concurrence, ſome-'times by Oppoſition; doubt nothing in 'themſelves, ſuſpect nothing in thoſe who 'act with them, pardon nothing in thoſe 'who differ from them: deſtroy the 'quiet of Numbers who have not deſerved 'it, as well as their own; and all to do Miſ-'chief, it may be, even though they intend-'ed Good. For not only Schemes which 'look plauſible to ſuch Perſons, may be 'very hurtful notwitſtanding, perhaps to 'themſelves, perhaps to others, who have 'an equal Right to be conſider'd: But ſup-'poſing them innocent, yet attempting them 'raſhly, may do unknown harm, ſhould they 'miſcarry, and coſt infinitely too dear ſhould 'they ſucceed. If a Nation is to be put in-'to a Ferment for them, and the Multitude cal-'led in to be vehement about Matters of which 'they are no Judges; this in itſelf is a dreadful 'Evil, and may poſſibly ariſe to a deſtructive 'Heighth. For in ſome Circumſtances it is 'much eaſier to inflame Perſons than to fore-'ſee when they will cool; and there is one 'Point of yet greater Importance than re-

'forming Errors, preſerving Reverence to 'Authority—— it ought to be well thought 'of, that Perſons who begin with moderate, 'and moſt laudible Intentions, may forget 'themſelves, may be entangled with others, 'may be led, or drove, into doing what they 'greatly diſapprove, or may loſe all Power 'of ſtopping Miſchief, when it is once ſet to 'work, and have nothing left but to periſh 'with the Ship, in the Storm they have 'helped to raiſe. Theſe Dangers cannot in-'deed be Reaſons for complying with e-'very Thing; But they are powerful 'Reaſons for thinking cooly what de-'ſerves Oppoſition, and oppoſing it with 'Temper; for conſidering who are the Per-'ſons really to blame, and in what Degree 'they are ſo, and how difficult it is not to 'be ſo: For redreſſing Grievances by no 'other than regular Methods, for waiting for 'Opportunities, not forcing them: For ex-'amining faithfully the Purity of our own 'Intentions, for asking ourſelves often, how 'far we mean to go, and obſerving carefully 'what thoſe Perſons aim at, with whom we 'are engaged; for weighing well what Re-'medies the publick Conſtitution will bear, 'and what it is likely to ſink under, and how 'great Multitudes have their Fate involv'd 'in that of the whole*.' Such, *Gentlemen*, are the Bleſſings which would probably attend the

* Biſhop of *Oxford*'s Sermon before the Houſe of Lords, *May* 29, 1739.

the all-reforming Schemes of our modern Patriots, and ſuch the Advantages you may expect from their Labours.

As I am an Enemy to all Inſinuations of evil Deſigns, where they are not apparent in themſelves, or ſupported by ſufficient Facts to juſtify the making of them: I ſhall willingly ſuppoſe the Advocates for this Bill, as ſincere as they pretend, in their Profeſſions of Zeal for the Rights and Liberties of their Country; that they really foreſee, or at leaſt think they do, very dangerous Conſequences from the Growth and Progreſs of Corruption in the State, that they are acted by no Motives of private Malice, or diſappointed Ambition, that their Oppoſition to Men in Power, does not ariſe from their want of it themſelves; (theſe are certainly very large Conceſſions) and yet I ſhall not fear to affirm, that the Honeſty of their Hearts can never make amends for the Heat and Diſorder of their Heads; if then his Lordſhip's Maxims are founded on Reaſon, and juſtify'd by Experience, will it not be the higheſt Inſtance of Credulity to riſk once more thoſe Liberties, which were then ſo near being totally deſtroy'd, in the Hands of Men of the ſame Principles. All Encouragement given to Men of this innovating Humour, muſt be highly dangerous to the Conſtitution, it being impoſſible to tell what Conceſſions on the Part of the Crown, will be ſufficient to ſilence their

their Clamours, and ſatisfy their Fears. It is yours therefore, your Intereſt and Duty, to prevent the Storms, which Men of this raſh and forward Temper would be likely to raiſe, by ſending Perſons of cooler Heads to ſerve as your Repreſentatives: Men firmly attach'd to your *whole Conſtitution*, and equally Friends to the juſt Rights of the Crown, and the legal Privileges of the People. Theſe Intereſts are in their own Nature inſeparably united, and it is impoſſible to ſerve the one without the other; if then the Candidates for your Favour, are Man of theſe Principles, you will rejoice to have them in the Service of both, if their Sentiments are different from theſe, I am ſure they deſerve to be employ'd in neither.

The preſent Situation of our Affairs abroad, the neceſſary War we are already engag'd in, and the uncertainty how much farther it may be extended by the Acceſſion of new Allies to our avowed Enemies, demand the ſtricteſt Harmony and Union amongſt the ſeveral Branches of the Legiſlature, and the moſt entire Confidence between the King and his Subjects: But can theſe be ſupported by an open Declaration of our diſtruſt in his Majeſty's Meaſures, and our Diffidence of thoſe he has choſen to employ in his Service? Is this a Time to encourage groundleſs Suſpicions of imaginary Dangers, to inſinuate Deſigns againſt our Liberties at home, when

when the Trade and Honour of the Nations are ſo powerfully attack'd abroad, to inſpire the deluded Multitude with Jealouſies of their Governors, and weaken the Hands of the Adminiſtration, by miſrepreſenting their Abilities, or infuſing Doubts of their Integrity?

Give me leave, *Gentlemen*, before I entirely finiſh this Addreſs, to obſerve, that as from the Conviction of my own Conſcience, on a diligent, and impartial Review of the preſent Controverſy, I heartily diſapprove the Bill contended for, as unneceſſary in itſelf, as dangerous in its Conſequences, as unſeaſonable at this Time, and ineffectual at all Times: So I particularly diſlike the Methods by which it has been promoted, and gain'd the Popularity its Advocates ſo much boaſt off. As the Bill, itſelf, has a very near Reſemblance of the *ſelf-denying Ordinance*, I have already mention'd; the Means made uſe of to recommend it without Doors have been very near the ſame. I mean, infamous Inſinuations of Treachery and Ambition in the Heads and Generals of the Army, and Corruption and Venality in the inferior Officers: Addreſſes, nearly reſembling the Inſtructions we have lately ſeen from ſeveral Corporations, were encouraged from every Quarter, with bold, but groundleſs Charges againſt the beſt Members of that Houſe; and the Mob without Doors were taught to do more than Petition for a farther Reformation within: By

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theſe Means, thoſe Gentlemen who really meant well to the Rights of the Crown, and the Liberties of the People, who only oppos'd the unjuſt Extention of the former, in order to preſerve the latter, were oblig'd to give up their Power, and reſign their Places to a ſet of Men, the avow'd Enemies of Monarchy, and Patrons of Anarchy and Confuſion. The very ſame Methods have been notoriouſly practis'd in the Caſe before us. It would tire the Reader's Patience, and exceed the Limits deſign'd for this Addreſs, to recount the various Methods our modern Reformers of the State, have employed to render the Preſent Adminiſtration equally infamous, and expoſe them to equal Vengeance. Writers, notoriouſly known for Falſhood and Proſtitution, have been long engag'd in this ſalutary Work, their Libels have been encourag'd, and diſpers'd thro' the moſt diſtant Parts of *Great-Britain*. In theſe the People have been taught to look on an honourable Gentleman, entruſted with the higheſt and moſt important Affairs of State, in all the different Lights of Ignorance, Treachery, Avarice, and Ambition: In his Negotiations abroad he has been repreſented, ſometimes as a Dupe to foreign Courts, at other times as a Penſioner: In his Conduct at home, as a Traytor to his royal Maſter, whoſe Confidence he abuſes, and whoſe Honour he betrays: As a Plunderer of the publick Revenue,

Revenue, inſolently aſſuming a Character, inconſiſtent with the Laws of our Conſtitution, and like a Whirlpool, drawing every Thing within the Circle of its own Vortex. In vain has he paſſed repeated Parliamentary Enquiries, and been juſtify'd in his Conduct both at home and abroad, by the publick Concurrence of both Houſes of Parliament, to all this, they have a ready Anſwer, his Judges are brib'd, and thoſe who ought to condemn him, become Sharers in his Crimes. Hence naturally ariſes the Neceſſity of a Place-Bill; and indeed, were the Truth of the Premiſes made to appear even to a Probability, I ſhould readily concur in any Methods to abridge him of a Power he had ſo notoriouſly abuſed: Here then I readily join Iſſue with his Accuſers, but as they have hitherto offer'd nothing to prove his Guilt, I ſhall produce the moſt inconteſted Evidence of his Innocence. Long had the Nation been taught to expect a Day of Vengeance, and even foreign Courts deluded with Aſſurances of his Fall: The *ever memorable Motion* was at laſt made, in which *the united Strength of the Oppoſition* had combin'd, to juſtify the *Charges their Tools* had ſo liberally brought againſt him. Need I mention the Event of that important Day: He was acquitted, *Gentlemen*, in a Manner, in which Bribery could have no Influence, acquitted by his very Enemies. Men long miſled by Clamour, had

their Eyes then open'd by Enquiry, and join'd many of them, in an open Vindication of his Innocence; whilſt others modeſtly withdrew, aſhamed at once of their own Credulity, and the Folly of his Accuſers. As theſe Facts cannot be contradicted, the Inference will be equally ſtrong and concluſive; and the very Foundations of a Place-Bill, which were laid on the Suppoſition of his Guilt, and their Corruption, irrecoverably overthrown. Need I after this add, that as there could be no Occaſion for the Miniſter to offer a Bribe, there is as little Probability, that the Gentlemen poſſeſs'd of Places in the Houſe of Commons, would accept of one. It would be ridiculous to pretend, that Men of Fortune, Integrity, and Honour ſhould concur to promote diſhoneſt Purpoſes for the Sake of a private Advantage, which their perſonal Property had ſet them above the want of, or that the ableſt Officers ſhould be ſingled out to carry on the weakeſt Meaſures. Men of this Stamp would diſdain to ſubmit to ſo infamous a Drudgery. Their Characters will always be a ſufficient Security to the People for the Honour and Integrity of their Actions: Since the Accompliſhment of wicked Views, by ſuch Means, is as inconſiſtent as the Co-exiſtence of Light and Darkneſs, as the Agreement of Wiſdom and Folly, of Virtue and Knavery.

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I have now finiſh'd all I deſign'd to ſay on this Subject; if the above Conſiderations are of any Weight in themſelves, I pleaſe myſelf, they will have a ſuitable Effect on your Conduct, on this important Occaſion. In the Review of this Debate, I have acted with the utmoſt impartiality on both Sides; I have neither omitted, nor deſignedly miſrepreſented any of the Arguments, which the Advocates for a Place-Bill have hitherto produced, and tho' in my Addreſs to you, Gentlemen, I have made no ſcruple to own, that I ſee no Neceſſity, nor even any probable Advantage to the Conſtitution from the paſſing it, yet I am far from deſiring to impoſe my own Sentiments on any, who may ſee Reaſon to differ from me. It is yours to determine, each Man for himſelf, it is your undoubted Right to do it, and it will be your Intereſt to do it without Favour or Affection. Your Repreſentatives, with whom you have entruſted the Care of your Rights and Privileges, as Freemen, or Freeholders of *Great-Britain*, are now about to reſign that important Charge, and you will become, in a few Days, the Guardians of your own Liberties: If they have been well taken care of, under their Conduct, you will, without doubt, have juſt Reaſon to repoſe the ſame Confidence in them again; if they have done their Duty, and acquitted themſelves with Integrity and Honour, Gratitude and Intereſt, both plead for the Continuance

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of your Favour, to thoſe who may again deſire it: If any have acted otherwiſe, it is now in your Power to ſhow a proper Reſentment, by diſmiſſing them from a Charge, which they have either neglected, or been found incapable of executing; above all, if any ſhall have been found mean enough to proſtitute their Votes, on any account whatſoever, let ſuch feel the ſtrongeſt Marks of your Indignation: But, at the ſame Time, always remember that the Proof be ſufficient to ſupport the Charge; you will not therefore think it a ſufficient Evidence of Corruption, that one Gentleman enjoys a Place under the Government, nor take it for granted, that another who oppoſes the Adminiſtration, acts therefore from Motives of Envy or Revenge. It is certainly no impoſſible thing, that a Man's Intereſt and his Judgment may both go together, and it would be a very raſh and cruel Cenſure, to infer, that becauſe his Vote was agreeable to the firſt, it muſt be contrary to the laſt. Above all, take care, that whilſt you condemn Corruption in your Repreſentatives, after they are choſen, you don't yourſelves encourage it by Venality in your Choice. Theſe plain and obvious Rules, obſerv'd in your future Elections, you may reaſonably hope the Continuance of the Bleſſings you at preſent enjoy, your Monarch glorious, and your Country happy.

FINIS.