

when the loan was voted to the Emperor, he did not bind himself never to treat for peace without consulting, or without including this country.

However, after the Right Hon. Gentleman told the House that his situation hindered him from going into a full detail on this subject, the point for him was not whether he told enough, but whether he understood what was told. He understood him to say, "that measures were taken by his Majesty's Ministers to meet any disposition on the part of France towards a peace." The whole therefore might be, that measures were taking with the allies to beat the French into this disposition; for war might be a measure to reduce the French to this. But if measures were taking with our allies to effect a peace, was there not sufficient time to make the necessary communications to the Emperor respecting the reception or the offer of peace. If even negotiation was in train, the conduct of ministers was an instance of slowness that he could not account for, and that he considered reprehensible. But the intention of ministers to negotiate was admitted: the question was, whether or not they would agree to the motion? Their agreeing to the motion could not be a disadvantage; it would be an advantage. If they agreed to it the people would be more satisfied. They would give Europe an opportunity of knowing the sincerity of the French: and he asked did they imagine they would have a worse peace by avowing their own disposition, and shewing the intentions of the enemy?

This suspicious manner of negotiating would operate as a greater difficulty than the specification of terms. It would be a greater bar to the returning blessings of peace, than the cession of islands, or the abandonment of provinces. It would give birth to mutual jealousy, and alienate the minds of both countries, so as to protract the happy period both ardently longed for. This frequently had been the case before in our wars with France; peace was retarded more, at all times, from want of confidence in the enemy, than from ineligible terms.

There was no man in that House such a bigot to the whig party, and he himself had his prejudices in favour of them, as not to see that, in the war respecting the succession, so glorious to this country, in the reign of Queen Anne, when conferences for a peace were opened at Gettruydenburgh, the peace of Utrecht was more delayed through such jealousy and want of confidence, than from the difficulty of fixing specific articles. The delay was owing in a great measure to the inextinguishable jealousy excited in this way. Beside the difficulty of specifying terms, which would be greater now than at any former period, there was a degree of asperity unprecedented from the change of the government and the nature of the contest.

His conclusion from this argument then was, that an unequivocal declaration for peace would be a great step to its attainment. But the Right Hon. Gentleman argued, that such a declaration would fetter administration. This argument had been so often used by Ministers, that it lost its force. At those periods when peace might be had with more advantage, it was urged, that such a resolution would cripple the hands of government. Yet that negotiation which they then thought humiliating, they now think fit to make. It was urged, that a declaration to negotiate would be binding us to this or that form of government which prevailed; but if a recognition of the present government is not sufficient to induce negotiation, that argument fell to the ground. With regard to the prerogative of the crown to make war and peace, it was allowed on all hands, and so was the right of Parliament to advise his Majesty, in the prosecution of warlike or pacific measures. It was the constitutional right of the Commons to give such advice; and the prerogative of the King was strengthened when supported by the will of the people. In the American war, he heard those arguments of Ministers, that it would be indiscreet to negotiate, and the like, much urged by a noble Lord (North) for whom he had the highest respect: though he himself had been of his opinion with respect to the terms of negotiation, still these arguments and opinions were overruled. The house knew that war was not to be carried on without the advice of the Commons; and therefore declared against continuing an offensive war in America. They did not think the House were exactly right respecting the peace, he used this as an argument, "ad hominem," to the Right Hon. Gentleman, who was so forward in urging the negotiation, and who prided himself in so doing, as conducing to the salvation of the country. Why did he not negotiate now? He urged bug bears, state secrets, as obstacles. He urged that Parliament were not to interfere. But in proportion as Parliament had not interfered in the measures of Ministers, the good of the country was abandoned.

The Right Hon. Gentleman alluded to a paper published in Hamburgh, and doubted from it the sincerity of the Directory. But whatever the declaration of the Directory might be, it was no reason for rejecting the address which his honourable friend moved. We live, he observed, in times when attention must be paid to the voice of the people. If the French government were enemies to peace, he wished England and France to know it. The Ministers in this country have been obliged to yield to the general sense of the nation; and he trusted if the Directory were sincere in their declarations, the

French Ministers would yield to the French people. Notwithstanding the unprecedented manner in which the Right Hon. Gentleman carried his measures; notwithstanding the irresponsibility attached to his character, he was happy to see that the opinion of the people had some effect upon him, in making him recognize the French government. The declaration called for would even procure relaxed efforts in France, did the government there persevere in hostilities.

Reason had too little to do in governments—this we saw in the case of Poland—repeatedly preyed on every side, at last entirely divided and parcelled by despotic powers. The force of reason we saw, when the sense of this nation was loud against Great-Britain's attacking Russia by sea, and against Vienna attacking it by land. The voice of the nation prevailed, and this armament was relinquished.

In the same way he wished the people of France to stop the designs of their government. If the French government, said he, be losing credit, let us gain credit. Let us shew our moderation and humanity to the human race. He did not lay down terms to Ministers, he merely asked them to negotiate with the French republic. This, as he said before would remove suspicion, and open avenues to peace. This would do away that want of confidence which retarded the peace of Utrecht. He could not help thinking that our conduct to the French emigrants, as well as others, has been ungenerous and insidious. Hopes were excited which never could be gratified; and promises perhaps made that never were intended to be performed.

A noble Lord, for whom he had the highest respect, had been sent on a secret embassy to Louis XVIIIth.—Louis XIVth did not behave to the Pretender in the same manner in which this government behaved to the unfortunate Louis XVIth. Allowing the Right Hon. Gentleman all the confidence which the world is inclined to give him, surely he could not think his measures the worse for being sanctioned by Parliament. The having the consent of the Commons to his measures, was the only thing that could render them constitutional. Did he think the cabinet of Vienna, or the people of France, would fancy him fettered, by a declaration of the House, to his proceedings?

No mode was so proper, so constitutional, or so fit to gain him confidence with his own people; and all Europe, as such Parliamentary sanction. The whole of the Right Hon. Gentleman's idea seemed to be to do the whole of this business without the aid or interference of Parliament. But if he saw some good from the mere hope excited in this country, and France of a disposition in the British government to treat for peace, how much better would be the consequence of an unequivocal avowal to all Europe, by a declaration, such as his honourable friend called for? The sooner this declaration were made the better. He would not say one word on the state of our finances, but merely remark, that even the excess of taxation was one of the greatest arguments for the termination of the war.

He was not apt to despond; but he really saw, that by pursuing the war, we should at last be brought to a precipice from which we could not retire—we might at last be obliged to negotiate with bad terms. Did Ministers want the French to come and how to them till they themselves might dictate terms? Even our resources must at last fail. Here Mr. Fox alluded to the system of taxation recommended by Mr. Francis Blake; and argued, that if the rental of the nation was 25 millions, as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the perpetual taxes 21 millions, the poor rates &c. added, made the national property and taxes tally as much as any two great sums could do. What was the prospect if we continued the war? The country would at last pay her all in taxes. No one would be bold enough to state that the expences of the war did not bring the country to a critical situation; but then the dignity of the country seemed the great argument. He, for his part, considered the national character the nation's dearest and most sacred property: he thought that dignity was preferable to life itself. But in this idea he would vote for the address, because he was aware that the dignity of the nation would be better ascertained.

He did not wish a dishonourable peace; no; he thought the French would not dare to refuse, from their present circumstances, a peace highly honourable to this country. He trusted this peace would not be on that execrable, divided system, practised by Russia and Prussia in Poland. That no such horrid peace—a peace so disgraceful to this country, should ever take place, in the instance of France, he heartily prayed.

He was inclined to think, from the general state of the war, from the face of things all over Europe, that peace would be embraced by all, after the protracted losses and distresses of a lamentable war: this he was well aware of, were there an ingenious disposition manifested on the part of this country.

This was his idea in supporting the motion of his honourable friend, which he considered would operate well in bringing about the blessings of returning Peace.

The house divided,	
For the motion	50
Against it	189
Majority against the motion	139

LONDON, Jan. 18.

Tuesday a meeting of the Whig Club was held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern. It was the most numerous ever witnessed at this season of the year. Mr. Erskine addressed the meeting, exhorting them to persevere in those efforts for the repeal of the late acts, which they had so suspiciously begun.

No publication has been read with more admiration, than the late Speech of General Washington; temperate, bold, moderate and humane—"Look," exclaimed Mr. Erskine, in the conclusion of his eloquent speech, on Tuesday, at the Whig Club, "Look, whilst the blood and treasure of this country are lavishly wasting and exhausting; how that great and immortal Patriot preserves the peace, the harmony, and the dignity of America. Like a great Colossus surrounded by Liberty, Plenty and Peace, he bestrides Europe—observes all the misery by which it is afflicted, and by his wisdom and philanthropy, prevents America from experiencing the ill effects resulting from similar calamities. Good God!—Gentlemen, when I read the speech of that illustrious character to the House of Representatives, I should not be surprised that the people of America adore the great and beneficent Father of the Creation, who gave them such a guardian, and that they should only be prevented by a sense of religious duty, from paying an equal adoration to WASHINGTON himself."

Feb. 10. In our last, we had the pleasure to announce the safety of the crew and troops on board the Aurora transport, one of Rear-Admiral Christian's fleet, which foundered at sea. A letter from Cowes (where they arrived) dated the 7th instant, gives the following further particulars on the subject:

"About three weeks ago, her masts and rudder were carried away by a violent gulf of wind; and from that time she remained a helpless log on the water, kept afloat only by the manual exertions of the people at the pumps. Three vessels bore down to the wreck in this intermediate space, but were unable to offer her any assistance.

"On Tuesday last, being about ten leagues west of the Lizard, Capt. Hodge, of the Ship Sedgely, of Philadelphia, was so fortunate as to fall in with her, and without the least hesitation, determined, at the hazard of his own life and that of his crew, to rescue these miserable people, 165 in number, from that fate which so long threatened them, and which from that time they must have met with in a few hours. It should be recorded to his honour, that his humanity, aided by nautical skill, triumphed over the danger that awaited his exertions in the boat; for he brought the whole of them safe to his own ship, except one man, who was literally drowned in the boat. The troops are Germans, and have behaved with a sensibility that evinces much true gratitude to their deliverer—they have tendered Capt. Hodge 1000 guineas, which he has nobly refused, saying, he finds sufficient remuneration in his own breast for the trouble he has had. One of them being asked if Capt. Hodge treated them well when he had them on board his own vessel, he exclaimed, "Sir, this brave American does honour to his country. He gave us all he had—he is a king of men; and we are bound to kiss his feet as long as we live."

Four of the above unfortunate people died at Cowes, on Friday morning, immediately on their being landed.

It is stated from respectable authority, that the King of Prussia has at this moment an army of 250,000 men, ready to march against Holland at the shortest notice, who will actually take the field early in the ensuing spring, provided Great Britain offers a sufficient pecuniary inducement to his Majesty to engage in the enterprise. A regular return of the above forces has, within these few days been laid before our Ministers, by the Prussian Ambassador Baron-Jacobi, and the negotiation for their services is said to be in a successful train.

From the Rhine there is no particular intelligence, except that the most vigorous preparations continue to be made, both by the French and Austrians, for opening the campaign early in the spring.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Feb. 18.

SLAVE TRADE.

Mr. Wilberforce made his promised motion, for the total abolition of the slave trade, in which he was supported by Mr. Brunton, Mr. Courteney, Mr. W. Smith, Mr. Richard Hill, Mr. Serjeant Adair, Mr. Fox, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; General Tarleton, Sir William Young, Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Dent, and Mr. Earham, spoke against the motion, when the house divided, and there appeared,

For the motion 93.	
Against it	67
Majority	26

Yesterday, Earl Stanhope presented to the King, at the levee at St. James's two petitions, contained in several skins of parchment, making a very large bundle, one from the county of Kent, and the other from the town and port of Margate, in the same county, both with a great number of signatures, beseeching his Majesty to use his utmost endeavours for restoring peace to the nation, by entering into a treaty with the French government; and offering, in case of the executive power of France refusing to negotiate upon fair, equitable, and honourable terms, to support his Majesty's person and government, with their lives and fortunes, at all hazards.