

lated and ruined the Provinces committed to his care; that he had violated Treaties, oppressed and plundered the natives, wantonly wasted the public money, and disobeyed the orders of his superiors.

Mr. Hastings said, it was a great comfort and happiness to him, that he could in a few words refute all these general Charges upon the authority of the House of Commons, his prosecutors; for it was in proof before them, that he had raised the resources of the government from three millions to five; that to procure this increase, he had neither desolated nor ruined the country, for it had still further increased since his departure. The Princes with whom he was said to have broken the public faith, all joined in bearing testimony in his favour, and to this hour professed the sincerest personal regard for him. The natives, of all ranks, countries, and sects in India, had joined as one man, in refuting so foul a charge. It was in proof before the House of Commons, that in peace and in war, his government was more economical than that fixed by the Board of Control for India; therefore all these general Charges must fall to the ground in the judgment of every man who would be at the pains to enquire. But if he had done a thousand meritorious actions, and he had understood some of those who had voted for his impeachment gave him the credit of preserving India to Great Britain, he was perfectly ready to allow, that it was incumbent upon him to answer specifically to the four Articles on which the Managers depended for his conviction.

Mr. Hastings then said, that he was confident he might trust his cause to their own evidence, mutilated and garbled as it had been, notwithstanding the laudable and most unceasing attention of his Counsel to prevent such mutilations in every practicable instance.

Mr. Hastings complained of the injury he sustained by an act, of which he approved as much as any man, the publicity of their Lordships proceedings; but in a case where a trial had lasted such a time, and where the audience naturally came merely for the entertainment they expected, it had so happened, that in three years persons from every part of Great Britain had attended the trial, and had heard the speeches of the Managers of the House of Commons—it could not occur to them to suppose, that men in the name of so great a body would venture to hazard asserting what they had not a tittle of evidence to prove; and thus his character had been blasted, as far as the Managers could effect

it, throughout the country. Those who attended to the evidence, as their Lordships did, knew all this to be merely idle unsupported declamation.

Mr. Hastings then went through the principal allegations in the four Articles which the Commons abide by, and observed upon the material points in each.

Having done this, Mr. Hastings came to a very curious and interesting part of his speech. He said he never should plead necessity for what he had done; but he would shew the necessity in a manner that would flash conviction on every candid mind.

He then went through the astonishing difficulties he had to struggle with in the late war, and added, that when this Trial began, he did not think it WITHIN POSSIBILITY that their Lordships would be so well able to judge of his situation by a comparison of it with the difficulties with which Earl Cornwallis had now to contend: with this difference, that against him (Mr. Hastings) all India and half Europe were united, while Lord Cornwallis, with two great powers, the Mahrattas and the Nizam, acting in concert with his Lordship, had only to maintain a war against one power, unaided by a single ally.

Their Lordships, he said, had seen that the revenues and resources of Bengal, amounting to about five millions, four hundred thousand pounds, which he took credit to himself for having created, were not, with the addition of the revenue of the Carnatic and Bombay, sufficient to support a war in India against a single power; for a very large sum in specie had been sent from England; money had been borrowed at Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, at a high interest, to the utmost extent of their credit; and Hyder Beg Khan, of whom their Lordships had heard so much, had advanced twenty two lacks of rupees to Earl Cornwallis.

It was not in my power, said Mr. Hastings, nor will it be in the power of Earl Cornwallis, to do, WHAT EVERY MINISTER IN ENGLAND HAS DONE SINCE THE REVOLUTION. I could not, nor can he, borrow to the utmost extent of his wants, during war, and tax posterity to pay the interest of those loans. The possibility of borrowing upon bonds, ceased early in my government, and will cease much earlier in Lord Cornwallis's; not from any distrust in that noble Lord, but because the people of Bengal had seen the surplus revenues, since the last peace, directed to other purposes than the liquida-

tion of the debt of Bengal. No man, said Mr. Hastings, thought of remitting money to me from England during the late war, and I was prohibited from drawing bills, except for the investment. I had every species of counteraction to contend with, that an hostile Administration could throw in my way; yet, in spite of these obstructions, and against so many enemies, I preserved entire what the India Minister, who voted for my impeachment, has repeatedly termed the brightest jewel in the British crown.

Mr. Hastings next made a Complaint, in such language as very seldom, if ever, has been applied to the House of Commons.—He declared, that he had sustained the most unparalleled injustice from them, and from the King's Ministers: that the Articles on which they now depended were four: the remaining sixteen were given up, or, in other words, abandoned. But he stood in a situation in which no Englishman, nor any other native of any country, had ever stood before him. He had been compelled to defend, at a most intolerable expence, the wisdom and propriety of plans, which the King's Ministers as Members of Parliament, had voted to be criminal; yet the same Ministers, in their public capacity, had expressed their approbation of those plans in four several letters to Bengal, and had ordered that THEY SHOULD BE INVARIABLELY ADHERED TO, and the House of Commons, in four successive years had virtually approved the arrangements, by voting the resolutions moved by the India Minister.

I have been arraigned, said Mr. Hastings, for accepting an illegal delegation to Oude, and am brought here as a criminal for concluding an arrangement with the Nabob of Oude, by which every rupee of his debt was paid off, and the subsidy has since been paid with the regularity of a bank dividend. Yet the arrangement has been fully confirmed by the King's Ministers, in the strongest terms of approbation. I am accused, in another Article, of bringing oppression, ruin, and destruction on the natives of Bengal, although the falsehood of this charge must be apparent to every man, unless it can be proved that the India Minister has, for the four last years, presented false accounts to the House of Commons.

In the course of this strong and pointed attack upon Ministers, and the House of Commons, Mr. Fox applied to the Court. He said, he had no wish to interrupt Mr. Hastings, but their Lordships knew it was irregular to state how a Member of the