

A BOLD, ambitious prince, possessed of great abilities, firmly fixed in his throne by descent, served by ministers like himself, and rendered either venerable or terrible by the glory of his successes, may execute what his predecessors did not dare to attempt. Henry the Fourth tottered in his seat during his whole reign. Henry the Fifth drew the strength of that kingdom into France, to carry on his wars there, and left the commons at home, protesting, "that the people were not bound to serve out of the realm."

It is true, that a strong spirit of liberty subsists at present in Great-Britain, but what reliance is to be placed in the temper of a people, when the prince is possessed of an unconstitutional power, our own history can sufficiently inform us. When Charles the Second had strengthened himself by the return of the garrison of Tangier, "England (says Rapin) saw on a sudden an amazing revolution; saw herself stripped of all her rights and privileges, excepting such as the king should vouchsafe to grant her: And what is more astonishing, the English themselves delivered up these very rights and privileges to Charles the Second, which they had so passionately, and, if I may say it, furiously defended against the designs of Charles the First." This happened only thirty-six years after this last prince had been beheaded.

SOME persons are of opinion, that liberty is not violated, but by such open acts of force; but they seem to be greatly mistaken. I could mention a period within these forty years, when almost as great a change of disposition was produced by the SECRET measures of a long administration, as by Charles's violence. Liberty, perhaps, is never exposed to so much danger, as when the people believe there is the least; for it may be subverted, and yet they not think so.

PUBLIC disgusting acts are seldom practised by the ambitious, at the beginning of their designs. Such conduct silences and discourages the weak, and the wicked, who would otherwise have been their advocates or accomplices. It is of great consequence, to allow those who, upon any account, are inclined to favor them, something specious to say in their defence. Their power may be fully established, tho' it would not be safe for them to do whatever they please. For there are things, which, at some times, even slaves will not bear. Julius Cæsar, and Oliver Cromwell, did not dare to assume the title of king. The Grand Seigneur dares not lay a new tax. The king of France dares not be a protestant. Certain popular points may be left untouched, and yet freedom be extinguished. The commonalty of Venice imagine themselves free, because they are permitted to do what they ought not. But I quit a subject, that would lead me too far from my purpose.

By the late act of parliament, taxes are to be levied upon us, for "defraying the charge of the administration of justice---the support of civil government---and the expences of defending his Majesty's dominions in America."