

We have for a Century last past, been extremely puzzled, as to the proper Rule of our Behaviour, towards a certain Thing called the Ballance of *Europe*; sometimes risking all for its Service has been esteemed the highest Point of Heroism, at other Times it has been regarded as downright Knight-Errantry; and as the opposite Parties prevailed, Men have been admired and laughed at by turns, for their Attachment to, or Contempt of this Principle. Nay at this very Hour, some are wise Men and Fools, Saints and Devils, Patriots and Traytors, in different Companies, merely as People's Notions vary, about the Importance of this same Ballance of Power. Of late Years indeed our Notions have grown narrower in this, as in most other Respects, and instead of the Ballance of Power in *Europe*, we have chiefly confined our Cares to the Ballance of Power in *Germany*. If this has been preserved, all in the Opinion of our most knowing People, went well, but if ever it tottered, or through our being at so great a Distance, if we but apprehended it to totter, then were we to run one and all to set it strait, to shift the Weights in the several Scales, 'till we thought it stood even, and upon this perhaps some of our Neighbours, who were nearer, thought it awry, and then to tugging went they, which brought us into the Scrape again. Thus we have gone on, and thus we are like to go on, to the no small Sorrow of some, who think we are quite mistaken in our Notions about this Matter, and that if we do not speedily discover our Mistake, we may bring ourselves into such a Condition, as may render all Discoveries too late.

I know the Risk a Man runs of being thought a Tory, a Jacobite, or an Incendiary, for talking at this Rate; but I know that a Man must always
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