

state ; yet I cannot but see that our naval departments are degenerating into political engines, and the smallest possible number of professional men permitted to take part in their deliberations.

Let me only contrast this system with that pursued in our military offices. At the Horse Guards the commander-in-chief is a general officer : all his staff, adjutant and quarter-master-general, and their deputies, military secretary, &c. are exclusively military. The secretary-at-war is a colonel in the army ; the whole of the Board of Ordnance, master-general, lieutenant-general, surveyor-general, &c. &c. are all military men ; not a single naval officer is admitted, although all the alterations and experiments on *naval ordnance* are tried at Woolwich, and (as I have heard) very great unnecessary expense often incurred from the want of that information which professional experience can alone afford ; all the minor branches, comptrollers of army accounts, &c. are equally filled by valuable officers, whose previous habits peculiarly qualify them for the duties of their station ; but when we turn our eyes towards our naval departments, what an extraordinary contrast do they present ? Our first Lord of the Admiralty, two out of the four junior lords, and the two secretaries, can lay claim to no professional knowledge or experience whatever—thus forming a majority of five to two in the great council, where all naval affairs are decided. If we turn to the navy-office, a