

to him : on these medals were the head of the Pretender, and something very seditious on the other side—and of making speeches recommending the cause of the Pretender. It was extraordinary that this circumstance had escaped the historical vigilance of the learned Lord. He took notice also of the charge against Mr. Muir for distributing books, the works of others, and of transporting him for fourteen years for it, as a thing perfectly new. Had the Learned Lord had never heard of such a crime as calling on the people to ask for a Parliamentary Reform? Perhaps the Noble Lord had never heard of such a thing as a resolution signed William Pitt, Duke of Richmond, and others, calling on the people to do that very thing. [Here he read the resolution of the Thatched-house Tavern, entered into by Mr. Pitt and his party in 1781.] Perhaps the Noble Lord had not known any thing of the late publications of Mr. Burke against Popular Rights, which however agreed pretty well with the speeches of the Noble Lord at these Trials, for every sentence and almost every word seemed as if borrowed from that admired performance. But the public would see through all this; they would see that there was something so implacable, so rancorous in the character of an apostate, that he can never forgive others for adopting what he has found convenient to abandon : hence all the persecutions against all those who dare to follow the plan of a Parliamentary Reform. He then took notice of the case of Bailey, and maintained that the Privy Council exceeded their power to a shameful degree in that case. He maintained that the Lord Advocate had misconstrued the whole of the opinion of Sir George Mackenzie on the subject of sedition; and he observed that the question now for the House to ask itself, was whether they would, in order to clear a point that was at least extremely doubtful, agree to the motion? He warned the House against the public danger of laying down a precedent which would go to the length of telling the people of this kingdom that the House of Commons will never institute an inquiry into the conduct of justice upon any thing short of illegality.

Mr. WHITBREAD informed the House that he had the honour (for an honour in the true sense of the word he deemed it,) to be acquainted with Mr. Palmer, to whom he paid the most handsome compliments for understanding and virtue. He then took notice of the subject of debate before the House, and declared he thought these severe sentences were dangerous to the public welfare and tranquillity of the realm. These were points on which posterity would impartially judge.—Every day Ministers were pushing points too far: a day would arrive when these things should be seen impartially.

Mr. WYNDHAM defended the legality of the trials, on the precedents which appeared to him to have been quoted. He was of opinion that the Law of England might be altered and assimilated to the Law of Scotland, if it was found adequate to the purposes of suppressing sedition.

Mr. Fox said, he considered the question to be of a nature so alarmingly important, that he could not sit silent after hearing the