

hundred and twenty members are about the usual number *under his influence**; and therefore the patronage of Gibraltar may be conjectured to purchase ten votes in the market of St. Stephen's chapel†.

Though writers have presumed to specify the annual charge of Gibraltar, an exact estimate cannot possibly be obtained. The public accounts are presented to parliament in a state of inextricable confusion. Indeed their immense bulk would alone be sufficient to place them far beyond the reach of any human comprehension. A single circumstance may serve to show the way in which parliamentary business is commonly performed. A statute was passed and printed some years ago, containing three successive references to the *thirty-first* day of November.

For a foreign contest, our government is most wretchedly adapted. In the war of 1756, Frederick, that Shakespeare of kings, fought and conquered five different nations. In the course of his miraculous campaigns, he neither added a single impost, nor attempted to borrow a single shilling. At the same time our boasted Earl of Chatham was overwhelming this country with taxes, and contracting an annual debt of fifteen or twenty millions Sterling. With a more destructive minister, no nation was ever cursed. Yet this man we prefer to Sir Robert Walpole, a statesman, whose maxim it was to keep us, if possible, at peace with all the world.

* When the whole strength of each party is called forth, a minority are commonly within an hundred voices of the minister, which corresponds with tolerable accuracy to the computation in the text. In the regency question, Mr. Pitt, with the whole nation at his back, mustered only two hundred and sixty-nine members.

† In the Spanish negotiation in 1757, the Earl of Chatham (then Mr. Pitt) proposed to cede Gibraltar to Spain, and again, in 1761, he offered it as the *price of the Family Compact*. Vide *His Life*, in two large volumes just published. This proposal evinces, that the fortress was not, in Mr. Pitt's opinion, of much importance to Britain.