

the Cabinet ; and have more or less directed or counteracted all its measures to the present hour. The establishment of immediate and personal influence has been the leading principle during the whole of the present reign ; to this every view has been directed ; to this every set of men have been sacrificed in their turn, without hesitation or remorse, as soon as they would no longer submit to be dishonoured by its operation, or had become the execration of the public by acquiescing in its destructive measures*. It does not come within the compass of my plan to trace this baleful principle through the long detail of its dark manœuvres for more than twenty years ; and it is fully sufficient for my argument, that nobody denies or doubts its existence.

Since the employment of the immediate and personal influence of the Crown has been more openly avowed, attempts have been made to justify its principle. The

* Lord North continued long in office, because he was pledged for the continuance of the American war, which was a favourite Court measure. For the last year he was in that unhappy predicament, which leaves only the choice of evils—He could neither remain in office with credit or self-approbation, or resign with honour. This was the triumph of secret influence.