

made on this occasion from the Throne, acquainting them with the measures that had been taken in consequence of the disturbances, and assuring them of the utmost readiness to concur in whatever could contribute to the safety and maintenance of the laws and liberties of the people.

The speech was highly approved, as proper and constitutional in every respect; but the conduct of administration was severely censured, and charged with unpardonable neglect for not calling forth the civil power, and employing the military in due time to obviate the mischiefs that had been committed. Ministry excused itself, from the want of sufficient strength to answer all the demands of assistance that were made during the riots, and the absolute impossibility of suppressing them till the arrival of troops from the country.

The various petitions were now taken into consideration that had been presented for the repeal of the act which had occasioned the riots; but the House continued in the same mind. It did not chuse to compromise the honour of the nation for the sake of gratifying the weak and groundless request of an ignorant and deluded multitude, influenced by enthusiasm, and the absurd apprehension of dangers that were imaginary, and founded on misinformation.

Such was the general purport of the discourses made upon this occasion. The best speakers in the House were those who principally distinguished themselves on this critical emergency:—They avowed and supported the principles of religious freedom and toleration with the most striking energy, and instead of relaxing from their former sentiments on this subject, they confirmed and strengthened them by a number of additional arguments, which however they might prejudice them among the fanatic party, raised their character high
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