

scarcely a trace of the original scheme remains ! Thus, between the resistance of power, and the unsystematical process of popularity, the undertaker and the undertaking are both exposed, and the poor reformer is hissed off the stage, both by friends and foes.

Observe, Sir, that the apology for my undertaking (an apology which, though long, is no longer than necessary) is not grounded on my want of the fullest sense of the difficult and invidious nature of the task I undertake. I risk odium if I succeed, and contempt if I fail. My excuse must rest in mine and your conviction of the absolute, urgent *necessity* there is, that something of the kind should be done. If there is any sacrifice to be made, either of estimation or of fortune, the smallest is the best. Commanders in chief are not to be put upon the forlorn hope. But indeed it is necessary that the attempt should be made. It is necessary from our own political circumstances ; it is necessary from the operations of the enemy ; it is necessary from the demands of the people ; whose desires, when they do not militate with the stable and eternal rules of justice and reason (rules which are above us, and above them) ought to be as a law to a House of Commons.

As to our circumstances ; I do not mean to aggravate the difficulties of them, by the strength of any colouring whatsoever. On the contrary, I observe, and observe with pleasure, that our affairs rather wear a more promising aspect than they did on the opening of this session. We have had some leading successes. But those who rate them at the highest (higher a great deal than I dare to do) are of opinion, that, upon the ground of such advantages, we cannot at this time hope to make any treaty of peace, which