

of supposed defects, in the constitution? Their opposition to the Executive, whether right or wrong may be dictated by the honest conviction, that its policy is contrary to the principles of the constitution—derogatory to the dignity and prerogatives of the Crown, or inimical to the best interests of the people. Or does it follow, in the next place, that such men are to be arbitrarily dismissed from the Magistracy on the *fiat* of a Minister of the Crown, because on such grounds, they have dared to impugn his infallibility, or to have opposed his measures? None but an obsequious dependent would maintain the affirmative of either of these interrogatories.—If they are to be maintained, the civil peace of society is not only endangered, by the given popular discontent such arbitrary acts are likely to produce—but is likewise compromised by the unwarrantable dismissal of so many useful and meritorious Magistrates. Thus, suppose that one half or one fourth of the Justices of peace of any given county in England were opposed to the existing administration, (and this is no imaginary calculation,) and that the minister in consequence erased their names from the commission of the peace. The result is, that for the gratification of his own personal resentment, he rouses the discontent of the people by an unconstitutional act, and also wilfully narrows the boundaries of that depositary of wealth—talents—integrity and intelligence, from which the supply of these indispensable public functionaries are selected. No British Minister dares, and none, it may well be presumed, have the inclination, in these days, to have recourse to a measure equally impolitic and oppressive. Such an act would be tantamount to the acknowledgment, that political enmities were to be gratified at the expense of public good; and would imply the avowal of the principle, denied even in the worst periods of English history, that Government was constituted for the benefit of rulers, and not of the people. Such an abominable doctrine has been uniformly disavowed, although in these latter days, there appears two exceptions to the general disclaimer; the dismissal of the Duke of Norfolk from a Lord Lieutenancy in 1798 or 9, and that of Lord Fitzwilliam from the same office in 1819. Two of the wealthiest and most independent of English Noblemen, high in character, and unimpeachable in integrity, were so treated at seasons of pub-