

## 304 THE WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

Directory, by the spoils of Venice, the King of Prussia would dart out his talons in some other quarter.

### NORTH of EUROPE.

Is it possible that the northern powers can longer refrain from taking some measures for coercing, within some reasonable bounds, the new and great republic? There is a difference between this and interference in their internal affairs.

### G R E A T B R I T A I N.

The safe arrival of a large fleet from the West Indies is a fortunate event. A fleet, too, is expected about this time from India. We have only to protect our trade, to guard our coasts, to avoid profusion, to cultivate our soil; not to oppress, but to protect and cherish the labouring poor; to simplify, if possible, the collection of taxes, and to be united in patriotic wisdom and virtue.

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### On SOLITARY IMPRISONMENT.

**T**HE Earl of Mansfield in his moral character was irreproachable, instructive, and exemplary. Whoever examines this serene part of his character with an impartial, discerning eye, with a view to profit by the various admonitory hints, which he took every fair occasion to inculcate, even in his judicial capacity, cannot fail to view this illustrious character in a very pleasing light.

To manifest his opinion of the salutary effects of the new gaols in Sussex, Gloucester, Oxford, Stafford, and other counties, where useful reform has been promoted by solitary confinement, he was accustomed to relate the following anecdote or little dialogue between himself and the governor of Horsham new gaol in Sussex.

Lord Mansfield.—“A few hours only have flitted or passed away, since, in the discharge of my duty as a Judge, I delivered your new gaol. I was very much pleased at the sight of a calendar where the number of prisoners, which formerly have fallen to my lot to try for offences at Horsham, was reduced more than one half; I am now very much astonished to find, that the few prisoners I have tried at this period would not occupy one fourth part of the new gaol. How can your Lord-Lieutenant satisfy the county of Sussex, that there has not been prodigality and waste of the county-money, in raising  
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ing so large and stately an edifice, three fourths of which appear to be untenanted ?”

The answer was : “ My Lord, I must leave his Grace of Richmond to answer for himself : I have very little doubt of our Lord-Lieutenant acquitting himself of your Lordship’s heavy charge of prodigality. This, my Lord, I can truly say, that I was twelve years keeper of the old gaol, and have been near twelve years governor or keeper of the present county-prison. I can say farther, that the new gaol was built upon a plan to contain the average number of criminals and debtors which the old prison was accustomed to hold in durance vile. But, my Lord, although in days of yore my visitors were very troublesome, and very frequent in their visits to me, discharged at one assizes, and in prison again within the old walls long before the next ; yet such, my Lord, is the effect of our solitary confinement, and of making a rogue think a little, and become acquainted with himself, that, in the course of the last twelve years, I can solemnly declare before your Lordship, that only one single prisoner has been twice within these walls !”

“ Good God !” replied the noble Earl, “ this language of experience is very forcible, and the fact ought to be more generally known.”

We can with pleasure add, that, on the relation of this plain fact at a county-meeting, when the consideration of the plan for a new gaol and moderate solitary confinement were the subjects to be discussed, the Lord Lieutenant of the county of Stafford was pleased to express his entire approbation of Mr. Howard’s plan of prisons, and particularly of separate or solitary confinement, and to request that any magistrate then present, who had any objections to make thereto, would make them.

An interval of silence prevailed ; no objector rose to attempt a refutation, or to militate against the proposition for a new gaol, principally founded on the model of Gloucester gaol. The work was begun in 1789 ; in 1792 it was completed. In the year 1793, it was inhabited very thinly indeed ; the number of prisoners in the calendar of this year being reduced nearly one half below that of the year 1791.

Thus one more suffrage is added to the system of useful reformation, which, as experience has evinced, may be wisely promoted by well-timed and moderate solitary confinement.

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