
T H E

BRITISH CRITIC,

For JUNE, 1797.

“ Studeamus ergo, nec desidia nostræ prætendamus alienam. Sunt qui audiant, sunt qui legant, nos modo dignum aliquid auribus, dignum chartis elaboremus.”

PLINY.

Let us then study, and not make the idleness of others an excuse for ourselves. There are some to hear, and some to read; let it be our care to provide matter worthy of the ears of the one, and the perusal of the other.

ART. I. *The History of Greece.* By William Mitford, Esq.
Vol. III. 4to. 1l. 1s. Vols. V. and VI. 8vo. 12s.
Cadell and Davies. 1797.

[T is not at the present period in the progress of the work, that it can be necessary to write the panegyric of this author's history of Greece. Already has it been stamped with the approbation of the learned, as combining, with unusual felicity, the powers of good writing, with those of profound and original contemplation. From the materials common to all students in the works of the ancients, Mr. Mitford has contrived to compile a history which has all the graces of novelty: presenting to the reader not only a new and judicious arrangement of the matter, but views and considerations of the

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the market, would produce effects, which, to superficial observation, may look like weakness; an increase of prices on many commodities; and an increase of the interest of money even in peace. The translation of this tract is, in the main, tolerably executed, though it has passages, in which the sense of the original is obscured.

ART. 34. *A general Address to the Representatives of Great-Britain, on important National Subjects, agitating at the present Period. By an Elector, M. A.* 8vo. 70 pp. 1s. 6d. Stockdale. 1797.

It cannot be denied that this addresser gives some proofs of a sound understanding, but he takes up too many topics, and proceeds in too desultory a manner. He begins with the general duties of the House of Commons, and gets through the negotiation for peace, to London Docks, and Crimping,—somehow; but how, cannot easily be said. One observation which occurs in p. 6, seems to deserve an answer. “Is it not strange,” the author asks, “that out of 558 Senators, there are scarce five, whose votes cannot be ascertained on any important question, previous to its discussion? Will an upright magistrate decide upon a cause from *ex parte* evidence? Will an honest juror, &c.” The author, in his zeal for the right, does not recollect that the cases which he puts are not similar. Many of the most important questions in Parliament, arise as parts of a general system; of an intention to pursue a war, or to oppose it, &c. The determination on the general question includes, if the members be consistent, the measures that arise out of it, and hence their determination may honestly be taken beforehand. When a new, and unconnected question arises, the case is different, and the effect is different; for then there are many members in both houses, whose votes cannot be ascertained; and the present Minister has sometimes been in a minority, composed, in part, of his best friends. There are, however, many sound and sensible remarks in this tract.

ART. 35. *Letter from Thomas Paine, to George Washington, President of the United States of America.* 8vo. 77 pp. 1s. 6d. Symonds. 1797.

That Thomas Paine should be dissatisfied with George Washington, can only be matter of regret to those who would wish for the triumph of sedition and anarchy, over virtue, patriotism, and peace. That an obscure individual should have conducted with success the arms of his country, through a long and important conflict; that the same individual should have guided the state with equal judgment, and equal success, through many years of peace; and then have retired with the steady applause of his grateful country, is a phenomenon, which enemies and friends have mutually agreed to admire. To all this admiration Thomas Paine demurs, and in a strain of malignant invective and the coarsest slander, denies him one single good quality, for the cabinet or the field. The reader will the less wonder at this, when he recollects, that the same man can find neither honesty in Moses, nor virtue in the Apostles of Christ.