from it, had he heard in his majeſty's ſpeech ſuch a recommendation as he expected. He was convinced that the adoption of liberal policy with regard to Ireland was the only means of ſtrengthening her union with this country. That policy ought to conſiſt in nothing leſs than admitting her ſubject without diſtinction to a full participation in the advantages of the Britiſh Conſtitution. Nothing leſs he was aſſured, would produce the effect expected from the Union but admitting the Iriſh Catholics without exception to the unreſtrained enjoyment of all the privileges of the people of this country. This was all he meant to ſay. The next ſubject was that which formed part of his majeſty's ſpeech, and had been adverted to by both the hon. gentlemen, namely, the melancholy ſituation in which the country was placed by the events of the war upon the continent, and the probability of our being engaged in a conteſt with all the powers of Europe. Both the hon. gentlemen, adopting the language of his majeſty's ſpeech, had attributed the difference between his Majeſty and the Northern Powers to the unjuſt interference of the Emperor of Ruſſia. His opinion might be wrong, but certainly it differed materially from the one they had expreſſed. He readily admitted that the Emperor had been guilty of an act of great injuſtice in detaining the property and ſhips of his majeſty's ſubjects. It was an inſult for which this country owed it to its own dignity and character to demand ſatisfaction; though it was far from his intention to juſtify ſuch conduct, yet it might be neceſſary to examine a little into the ſubject, and ſee whether in conſequence of treaties entered into between this country and the Emperor of Ruſſia, for the infraction of which that Monarch had a right to complain, there was not ſomething for which his majeſty's miniſter were cenſurable. He could not, for his part, conſider his majeſty's miniſters wholly free from blame, nor could he conceive it at all likely the Emperor of Ruſſia would wantonly have violated his engagements and treaties with this country, had there not been ſome ground of complaint given him by his majeſty's miniſters.

He knew that in the manifeſto of the Emperor of Ruſſia, publiſhed at Peterſburg, an allegation was advanced of his majeſty's miniſters having broken the engagement they had entered into with him, for putting him in poſſeſſion of Malta. Suppoſing this to be the caſe, he was perfectly ready to acquit miniſters of any charge that might be brought againſt them for not carrying ſuch an engagement into execution; but the ſuppoſition of ſuch a fact rendered it neceſſary for the houſe to go into an inquiry upon the ſubject: he could hardly think that any ſuch engagement could have been made on the part of miniſters, without ſtipulating for reciprocal ſervices on the part of the Emperor of Ruſſia; and whoever conſidered the ſort of ſervices which he rendered the cauſe of the allies, and the manner in which he performed them laſt year, would hold his majeſty's miniſters abſolutely freed from any engagement they might have made to deliver him up Malta. The Emperor had not performed thoſe ſtipulations on his part by which he was to have purchaſed that iſland; but, admitting all this, it was neceſſary the houſe ſhould inquire. He muſt ſay, if his majeſty's miniſters were appriſed of the character and diſpoſition of that monarch, and were convinced at the ſame time of the importance of his co-operation, the endeavour to have conciliated him by the ceſſion of an iſland in the Mediterranean would not have been bad policy. It certainly did appear that the immediate cauſe of the defection of that ally was his not obtaining from us Malta, or ſome other iſland in the Mediterranean ſea. True policy might, perhaps, have dictated to miniſters a compliance with his wiſhes. His majeſty's miniſters had talked repeatedly of the neceſſity of preſerving the balance of Europe, yet all his efforts to preſerve that balance had ended in its total ruin and deſtruction. As it was not in their power to prevent the aggrandiſement of France, it was neceſſary to reſort to ſome other means of preſerving the political balance of Europe. It was alone probable that it could be preſerved by the introduction of ſuch a power into the Mediterranean as Ruſſia, in order to act as a counterpoiſe to France. If, therefore, his majeſty's miniſters could have conciliated the mind, and gratified the wiſhes of Ruſſia, by the ceſſion of Malta, they might have acted, perhaps, in obedience to the dictates of ſound policy. He by no means wiſhed to be underſtood as palliating the conduct of the Emperor Paul; he had acted in the moſt unjuſtifiable manner, and he repeated, this country had a right to full ſatisfaction. Having ſtated thus much with regard to the conduct of the Emperor of Ruſſia towards this country, he would next conſider that of this country towards the other powers of the north. He would aſk, however, juſtifiable any meaſure might be, we had adopted reſpecting Ruſſia, what had Sweden or Denmark done that we ſhould act with hoſtility towards them? He would not include Pruſſia at preſent with the other Northern powers he had mentioned; though he hardly believed miniſters would aſſert they had any doubt of that country's having agreed to the confederacy. He would aſk, what had they done more than ſigned a convention, the object of which was to ſecure themſelves againſt the vexations which, though neutral powers, they were ſubject to in time of war. It was not his intention to give a direct opinion on the ſubject, he only meant to guard the houſe againſt adopting as an act of hoſtility on the part of neutral powers, what was in fact nothing more than an aſſertion of rights founded upon acknowledged principles. He never ſhould be able to perſuade himſelf that this was an act on the part of neutral nations ſufficiently hoſtile to juſtify this country in having immediate recourſe to war. He had not been able to find, either in the works of perſons who had written upon the ſubject, or in the general laws of nations, or in the treatiſes and commentaries upon thoſe laws, or in the practice of any of the civiliſed countries in the world, that ſuch a ſyſtem as that contended for by his majeſty's miniſters, ever was claimed on the one hand, or recognized on the other. He had been told that this was ſo clear and plain a poſition, that till towards the end of the American war, except in one or two inſtances, it never had been diſputed.

In the laſt century, in the year 1740, it was claimed by Pruſſia, and admitted on the part of this country, that free bottoms made free trade. The right of ſearch was reſiſted in 1762 by the Dutch, and given up, although at a period when from the ſuperior ſituation of this country, and the ſtrength of its navy and reſources, it was not likely ſuch reſiſtance could have been effectual, had not the juſtice of it been admitted. At the end of the American war there had been eſtabliſhed by a convention of the northern powers what was denominated an armed neutrality, upon a baſis conſiſtent with the general laws of Europe, and admitted as ſuch, or at leaſt not reſiſted by this country. What he therefore wiſhed was, that before Gentlemen pledged themſelves to the extent of his majeſty's ſpeech, they would act wiſely to pauſe and collect ſome principle to guide them. For himſelf, he would not, in the adoption of any meaſure whatſoever, depart from the principles of immutable juſtice and he conſidered that the maritime privileges claimed by Sweden and Denmark, as neutral powers, were founded on thoſe principles. In order to aſcertain whether they were ſo or not, the beſt way would be to conſider whether the claim on our part of interrupting the freedom of their navigation was founded in juſtice. The longer he had lived, the more he had read and ſtudied the hiſtories of this and other countries, the more he had become convinced that there could be no true policy that was incompatible with the principles of juſtice; it was acting upon that broad rule that conſtituted the difference between a honeſt and enlightened ſtateſman and a mere tricking politician. If he found any meaſure was decided adverſe to the intereſts of other nations, he ſhould think it his duty to abandon it, however advantageous, it might be in a political point of view to his own country. Any poſſible advantage to be derived from a meaſure of ſuch a deſcription could not for a moment be put in competition with the diſadvantages that muſt reſult from the jealouſy and enmity of the other nations affected by it. He ſhould be extremely ſorry that the maritime aſcendency of this country, for the preſervation of which no man was more anxious than himſelf, ſhould be leſſened in the ſlighteſt degree; he was perfectly aware of the importance of that aſcendency, and participated to the full extent in that true Engliſh ſpirit which felt a degree of ſelf-exultation in the maritime ſuperiority of the country. But much as the country prided itſelf upon that ſuperiority, he ſhould be ſorry if its maritime power depended on any thing repugnant to the regulations of other nations, or could not be maintained but by making the country odious to its neighbours. He therefore recommended to the houſe, inſtead of implicitly admitting the right of this country to exerciſe ſuch a ſuperiority as miniſters contended for, to call upon thoſe miniſters to juſtify themſelves. If it were neceſſary for a country to juſtify itſelf to its neighbours, it was equally ſo for miniſters to juſtify themſelves to their fellow ſubjects, whoſe blood and treaſure were to be expended in carrying their principles into effect. He could no better expreſs himſelf upon this occaſion than in the words of an honorable member, whom he had frequently heard ſay, that as a country ſhould never go to war for an unprofitable right, ſo it ſhould never go to war for a profitable wrong. He ſhould have been glad if it had been ſhewn in what the utility of this privilege, claimed by this country conſiſted. He admitted the neceſſity of maintaining the maritime aſcendancy of this country, but as it was to be maintained at the price of the blood of the people, it was neceſſary they ſhould be convinced of the juſtice of our pretenſions, before they did pay ſuch a price for it. Upon theſe grounds he ſhould have thought it proper for the houſe to have pauſed, before it pledged itſelf to that, which perhaps, upon enquiry, would be found to be an injuſtice, and by no means an advantage that would juſtify their conſenting to plunge the country into a war againſt all Europe; but theſe were not the only grounds upon which he deſired the houſe to pauſe. It was poſſible that a claim might be founded in juſtice, and highly advantageous to a country to contend for, and yet that certain peculiar circumſtances might exiſt, which might render it neceſſary and adviſeable in ſome degree to relax the claim, or in which ſome temporary departure from it might be conſiſtent with the trueſt maxims of policy; or where the danger of aſſerting it was greater than the diſadvantage of waving it. He had no difficulty at the preſent moment in ſaying, if, by refraining from the aſſertion of ſuch a claim, this country could avoid a war, every principle of wiſe policy would dictate ſuch a ſacrifice. He was aware of the anſwer his majeſty's miniſters would make.—They would ſay the claim could not be given up at ſuch a time as this, becauſe it would thereby enable thoſe powers to whom it was acceded, to convey to France materials for their navy. The danger of relaxation, even in this point of view, he could not conſider equal to that of involving the country in a general war againſt the powers of Europe. Whoever conſidered the ſituation of the French navy at this moment, how deficient it was in every principle of organiſation, muſt be ſenſible that France, even with ſuch reſources as it might receive through the medium of neutral ſhips allowed a free trade, could not be able, for a conſiderable time at leaſt, to render the navy effectual againſt this country. When he reflected upon the ſtate of their navy at preſent cloſely blockaded up in their ports, in conſequence of that active ſyſtem of maritime operations for which thoſe at the head of the naval department deſerved the higheſt credit; when he conſidered this, he could not ſuppoſe that granting the privilege of unreſtrained trade could be materially available by the French. Even ſuppoſing the navy of this country, inſtead of holding that pre-eminent rank it did was palſied and unable to keep the French ports in a conſtant ſtate of blockade, what then? Permitting the ſhips of neutrals to enter them, without ſearch, would not give them ſeamen with which to man their ſhips, though it might give them what was called naval and warlike ſtores. The raiſing a navy to a condition to be dreaded, from the ruined ſituation of that of France, was not the work of one, two or three years, but it muſt be the reſult of patience and long experience on the part of the ſeamen. What on the contrary, was the conſequence of entering into the war with the powers of the north? By that means we ſhould be giving ſhips to France ready manned, and fit for immediate ſervice, by coaleſcing with that country powers ſuch as Ruſſia, Sweden, and Denmark. By ſuch miſtaken policy on our part, we ſhould be enabling France (to uſe a military term), to outflank us on both extremities of the empire of the Mediterranean, from Archangel to the Tagus, from the Tagus to the Gulph of Venice. In no part whatever of the Mediterranean ſea would there be a ſingle ſpot where a Britiſh fleet in caſe of accident could put in; he would not even except Naples, Portugal, or Turkey, for he was perſuaded that in a few years thoſe places would be at the diſpoſal of the enemy. It was evident, therefore, how far the diſadvantages in one caſe overbalanced the advantages in the other. Would it be poſſible for our navy, powerful as it was to guard our trade over ſuch an immenſe extent of coaſt? When he recollected how extremely difficult it had been to guard Ireland from the invaſion of the enemy, he could not but be ſenſible how neceſſary it would be to hold ourſelves ſtill more upon our guard againſt a ſurpriſe, to which that country was now expoſed from North to South. The diſadvantages in a military and naval point of view, he had ſhewn to be great, then how did it ſtand with regard to trade? When it was conſidered what an immenſe trade this country had to keep up, it could not but be admitted that any thing that threatened it muſt be attended with the worſt conſequences. When it was conſidered that the powers againſt whom we were ruſhing into a war could ſhut us out from the markets of Europe, it muſt be evident that however we might be able to diſtreſs the trade of the enemy ours would ſuffer in a ſtill greater degree.

There was another circumſtances entitled to the moſt ſerious conſideration. Parliament had ſat laſt ſeſſions, and of courſe would ſit this, for the purpoſe of relieving the ſcarcity under which the country laboured from the high price of bread. One of the meaſures adopted, though not with ſuch effect as had been expected, was that of importation of corn from foreign parts. When it was recollected what a quantity came from the Baltic, and that by entering into a war, that ſource would be dried up, ſurely it was not too much to aſk the Houſe not to ſanction ſuch war, without previous enquiry, or conſent raſhly to throw away that, which they had held out as one of the moſt effectual modes of affording relief to the country. However great the danger may be, yet, it may be ſaid, if the country is attacked in that which conſtitutes its national pride, it is neceſſary to reſent it. This led him, in the next place, to conſider whether it could have been avoided. If he were not miſinformed, it was to be attributed in a great meaſure, to the memorable note ſent to Mr. Hales, and, if his information were right, that violent conduct on the part of Miniſters, had been followed up by thoſe more violent acts which had produced that criſis now ſo much lamented. The diſcuſſion of the queſtion of the right of ſearching neutral ſhips at this time might have been avoided altogether, by ſending inſtructions to our cruiſers. True policy required that Miniſters ſhould have avoided the claim of that privilege, which even our own commanders of ſhips doubted whether they had a right to exerciſe. He believed that Commodore Lawford, in the caſe of the Swediſh convoy, knew ſo little how to act, that he waited for ſpecial inſtructions. Inſtead of provoking the diſcuſſion, it ſhould have been the policy of Miniſters to have by all means avoided it: in ſupport of this argument he read a report of a ſpeech of the late Lord Chatham's by Earl Camden, in which that Stateſman obſerved, that however neceſſary it was to cut off all ſupplies from enemies, yet that all cauſe of complaint on the part of neutrals ought to be avoided; ſuch was the doctrine of Lord Chatham; but in the preſent caſe it was ſaid there was no poſſibility of avoiding the diſpute. To try the truth of that aſſertion, the Houſe ſhould ſee what the Convention entered into was. All they were told was, that it was ſigned upon the principles of the one in the year 1780; and yet, in conſequence of it, orders were given to detain the ſhips of the Danes and Swedes, and ſeize them alſo upon the high ſeas; in ſhort, to commit an open act of war. He wiſhed to know whether this convention was ſufficient to juſtify a declaration of war? In 1780, the ſame kind of declaration had been made, and yet it had not produced a war. It was at a period when the Right hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer had firſt come into Parliament, animated with youth and patriotiſm, yet he never heard that he had made it a ground of objection to Lord North that he did not go to war on account of that convention. During the Rockingham Adminiſtration a propoſition was made to Holland not to make peace, but to conſent to the armed neutrality. Another adminiſtration ſucceeded, and never thought of cenſuring the previous adminiſtration. On the contrary, at the concluſion of peace, all mention of the armed neutrality was omitted. It was not oppoſed by us, but the claim was ſuſpended. Soon after the peace, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had ſucceeded to the power he had held ever ſince. One of the greateſt acts of his adminiſtration was the commercial treaty with France, and the principles of the armed neutrality were carried into effect by it. It was therefore to be wiſhed, that after a principle had been eſtabliſhed and not oppoſed, ſome enquiry ſhould take place before the aſſumption of it ſhould be ſtated as the pretence for a declaration of war. In the treaty with