

meaning? Unable to conquer America before she was assisted—scarce able to keep France at bay—are we a match for both, and Spain too?—What can be our view? nay, what can be our expectation? I sometimes think we reckon it will be more creditable to be forced by France and Spain to give up America, than to have the merit with the latter of doing it with grace.—But, as Cato says,

I am weary of conjectures—This must end them;¹⁴

that is, the sword:—and never, I believe, did a country plunge itself into such difficulties step by step, and for six years together, without once recollecting that each foreign war rendered the object of the civil war more unattainable; and that in both the foreign wars we have not an object in prospect. Unable to recruit our remnant of an army in America, are we to make conquests on France and Spain? They may choose their attacks: we can scarce choose what we will defend.

Ireland, they say, is more temperate than was expected. That is some consolation—yet many fear the Irish will be tempted to unite with America, which would throw all that trade into their convenient harbours: and I own I have apprehensions that the Parliament's rising without taking a step in their favour, may offend them. Surely at least we have courageous ministers. I thought my father a stout man:—he had not a tithe of their spirit.

The town has wound up the season perfectly in character by a fête at the Pantheon by subscription.¹⁵ Le Texier managed it; but it turned out sadly. The company was first shut into the galleries to look down on the supper, then let to descend to it.¹⁶ Afterwards they were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould, and planted with trees, and crammed with nosegays:¹⁷ but the fresh earth, and the dead leaves, and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture, that they were suffocated; and when they remounted, the legs and wings of chickens and remnants of ham (for the supper was not removed) poisoned them more. A druid in an arbour distributed verses to the ladies; then the Baccelli¹⁸ and

14. Addison's *Cato*, V. i.

15. Held Monday evening, 14 June, and described in the *Public Adv.* 17 June.

16. 'The great room, in which the tables were laid, was kept locked; by this means the tables were seen from the galleries to great advantage. . . . At eleven the great room was opened' (*ibid.*).

17. 'When the company, which consisted of between five and six hundred, had supped, they were led down to the Tea Room, which was hung with bows representing a thick wood' (*ibid.*).

18. Giovanna (or Gianetta) Baccelli (d. 1801), principal dancer at the Opera (*MORE* 268, n. 8; see also *London Stage*