

Aristarchus

Jan. 26 1781

4086

On your Majesty's ordering Letters of Reprisal against the Dutch a Cabinet-Council was holden at Versailles, at which it was strenuously urged by the party which is supposed to be inimical to the Views of Mr. Necker, "that if the Court of Great Britain should propose to the Emperor a total Withdrawing of the British Commerce from Amsterdam in order to establish it in Antwerp, it might possibly become the Means of detaching his Imperial Majesty from the House of Bourbon."

On debating this very weighty Affair, a Question was started whether it would not be advisable to be before-hand with the British Court, and secure the Emperor in the Interest of France by ceding the Island of Corsica or some other convenient Territory to the House of Austria, on condition of his Imperial Majesty's not admitting either British Shipping or British Commerce into any Port or Part of his Dominions within a stipulated Term of years.

To this proposition it was answered, that, in the first place, the Removal of the British Commerce from the Dutch Ports & Towns to those belonging to the House of Austria, was a Matter merely of Trade, & as such, it was highly probable the Cabinet of Vienna would not look upon it as an object of any great moment to the Emperor, seeing his ruling passion is entirely of a military Nature.

In the second place, it would be time enough to talk of Territorial Cessions, when it should be known, that the British Court was actually in Treaty with that of Vienna for making the Town of Antwerp the Grand Continental Emporium of the Western World.

This Intelligence was deemed by the Correspondent of Aristarchus (at Paris) to be of such extensive importance to the British Court, that he sent a Special Express, with it from Ostend by a Smuggling Vessel which landed on the Lincolnshire Coast, from the Capital of which County this Letter is dated by the Amanuensis of

Lincoln Jan^{ry}. 26.
1781.

Aristarchus.

N.º 50.

