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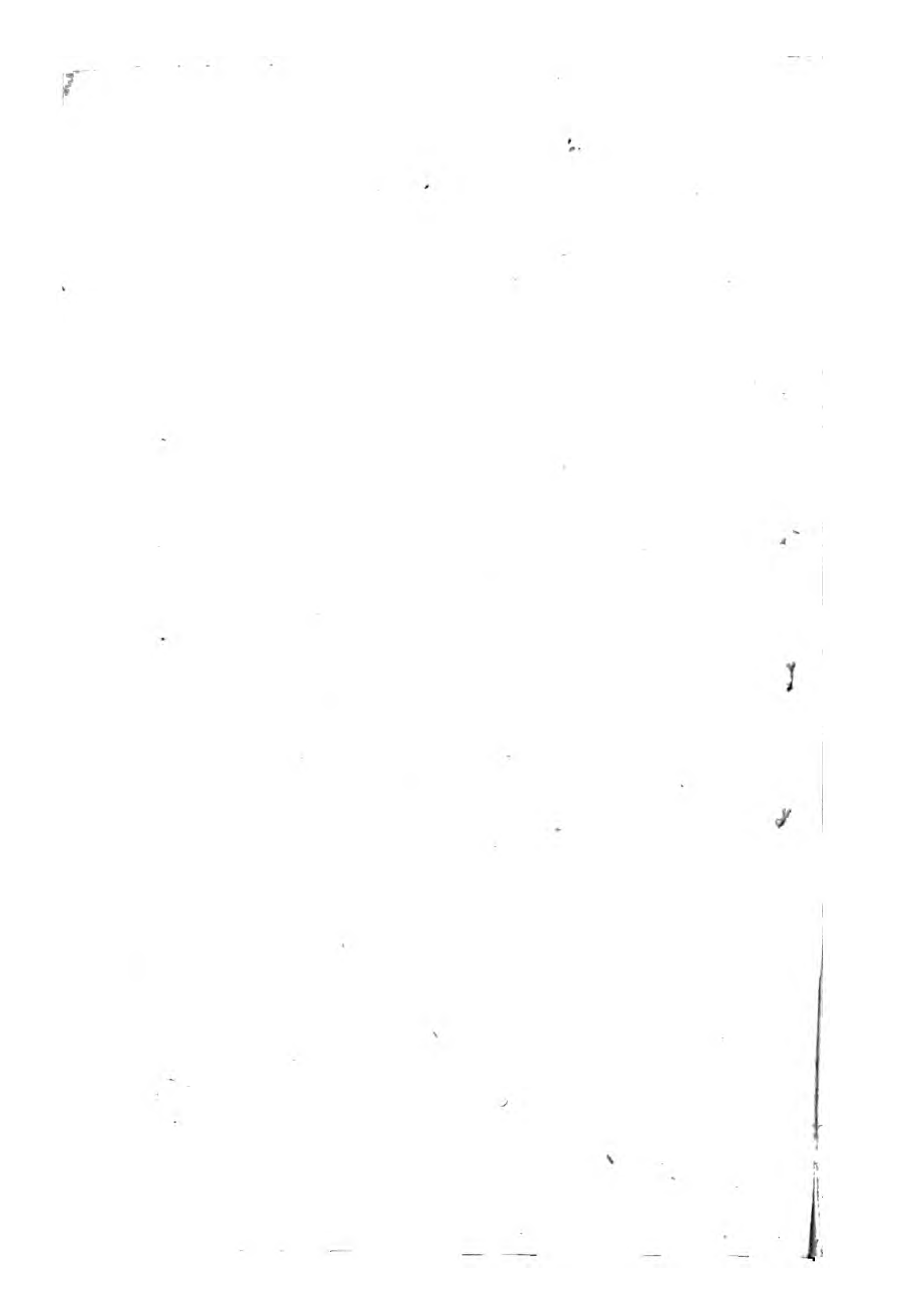
THE

ROYAL INTERVIEW;

FRAGMENT.

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PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.



T H E

ROYAL INTERVIEW:

A

F R A G M E N T.

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THUS SPOKE THE SIRE, AND THUS THE PRINCE REPLY'D.

*Pope's Odyſſy.*

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MDCCLXXXIX.

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## ROYAL INTERVIEW, &c.

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K.

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\* \* \* \* \* TO say the truth, it  
has been my wish and intention not to enter  
into any conversation with your Royal High-  
ness concerning the public conduct of my  
ministers, or those who have acted in oppo-  
sition to them during the affecting interval  
of my government. It was rather an anxious  
desire of my own heart to pass over the chasm  
which the lapse of my understanding occa-  
sioned in the public administration of my  
kingdom. It appeared to me, that there was  
no intermediate event which could afford a  
pleasing topic of discussion between you and  
myself: and as it would ill become me to

B

ac-

accompany the blessing of my recovery with resentment to my son, whatever his conduct might have been, I became extremely solicitous to avoid a retrospect.—It is enough for me, that, on awaking from my delirium, I find my kingdom uninjured by my infirmity, and exulting in my restoration.—But as you seem to apprehend ill impressions, of some kind or other, and declare, that the comfort of your life depends on my hearing from yourself the reasons which governed your conduct during my affliction, I shall comply with your requisition, and listen to you with a paternal patience. It becomes me, however, previously to inform you, that I am well acquainted with every transaction of the late important period, and that my opinion is already formed of the measures that have been adopted, of the opposition that was made to them, and of the persons who have appeared as principal actors on the occasion. It may be also necessary, for a right understanding between us, in the business on which we are about to engage, to observe, that while you possess a full right to plead, I may take the liberty, if I see  
 occa-



occasion, to condemn.—My kindest attention awaits you.

P.

I have every reason to apprehend that some particular leading individuals, among your Majesty's servants, have represented my demeanour during the late unhappy period, as undutiful to yourself, unfeeling to your situation, and hostile to the interests of your kingdom.

K.

What convincing reasons you may possess whereon to build such an hypothesis, I am not anxious to enquire, because they are without foundation. Both the Lord Chancellor and the first minister have, in their communications to me, delivered themselves with the most respectful attention to you ; and if I could suppose it possible for such wise men and faithful servants to step beyond the bounds of decorum in their consultations with me, I should conclude they had done it in the more than earnest manner with which they recommended me to check any,

and every suspicion of my breast with respect to the motives that governed the late conduct of your Royal Highness. Indeed, I cannot but express my concern, that, on the very threshold of the business, you should begin with answering an accusation that has never been made, and charging those men with practising against you all the injustice of misrepresentation, who have, on the contrary, acted with a spirit of magnanimity, which would do honour to yourself. But, not to turn you aside from the mode of apology, which, perhaps, you are prepared to adopt ;—you are at liberty to suppose that I am perfectly well acquainted with your plans of operation during the time when it was doubtful, whether it would please God to restore me to myself and to my people.

P.

I should be truly sorry, Sir, to suspect where suspicion would be unjust ; and your royal word is more than sufficient to remove mine, in the matter before us, from certain of your Majesty's Ministers ; but as I know  
1
them

them to be indisposed towards me, I had something like a right to imagine, that, in representing their own services to your Majesty, they would not fail to misrepresent those who opposed them.

## K.

I cannot answer for the secret designs or thoughts of my Ministers, any more than for those of my children.—To search into the recesses of the human heart, and to discover what is passing there, belongs to that power alone, before which the monarchs of the world must bend ;—but as I wish to hear your sentiments on something more than vague opinion, I must beg your Royal Highness to confine yourself to yourself; and that you will not do your heart and understanding so great injustice as to look for your justification in the misconduct of others.—But I perceive your embarrassment :—to relieve you, therefore, as far as may be in my power, from your very unpleasant situation, and to save you the trouble, as well as the pain, of stating the supposed charges, which you propose to answer—

swer—I will turn catechist, if you please, and offer such interrogatories as may call forth those replies, which will involve all that you wish to say to me in the very interesting subject of the present conference. I shall therefore suppose, what I trust you feel yourself prepared to prove, that, during the late extraordinary and awful period, you have done every thing which was required, by your duty to me, who am your father—the dignity of your station, which places you next to your Sovereign—and the interests of the Empire, which, if you live, will one day be your own. On this idea I shall conclude, that when you had recovered from the severe shock which must have been felt by your mind, on the unexpected nature and possible consequences of my illness, you immediately called to your councils and consolation, some of the first, the wisest, and the best men in this country: or, if you should have thought it more proper, as it might have been at first, to rest the burthen of your mind on one rather than many, I should hope that the distinguished individual would be most worthy of your  
your

your confidence, and be esteemed as such by the nation, as well as yourself. M y I, therefore, ask, whom did your Royal Highness honour with your earliest communications?—

P.

Mr. *Sheridan*.—

K.

Mr. *Sheridan*!—In the name of reason, common sense, and honour, what could induce you to place such a confidence, in such a man?—

P.

I am ready, Sir, to declare, without reserve—That it did not occur to me to make any application to, or have any communication, either aggregately or individually, with your Majesty's Servants, for, none of them, possessed my esteem; I neither regarded them as private or public men:—it was, therefore, I trust, an honest conduct in me, to make application to those whom I esteemed under both those descriptions.

B 4

K.

## K.

And will your Royal Highness tell me, with a grave countenance, that Mr. *Sheridan*, either as a private or a public man, is worthy such a mark of your regard?—As a private man, what are his virtues?—As a public man, what has he done for his country?—What is his character?—Where is his property?—Describe to me, if you please, the tenor of his life?—To what unaccountable combination of circumstances does he owe his elevation to your favour? Is it because he is an eloquent speaker, and a great wit?—because he has delivered brilliant speeches, and written excellent comedies?—That the Heir apparent of the first empire in the world, in a situation of the greatest public calamity, should make such a man the repository of his secret thoughts, is not to be reconciled to any wise or honourable principles of human conduct. If you felt it to be right, in the first moment, as it were, of my visitation, to adopt the party that had so violently opposed the measures of my government, was there no man of patrician rank,



rank, or personal consequence—no gentleman of public estimation, who had sufficient talents and honour to justify your confidence; but that you must look to the veriest plebeian of the band for a favourite? Of all your infatuations it seems to be the most extraordinary, that, at a time when it was so much your interest, in every sense of the word, to make the nation expect the best from you, your judgement should be so perverted as to adopt the very mode of conduct which made them apprehend the worst.—If you had applied to Mr. *Fox* you would have had, at least, for your counsellor, a man whom no one has, as yet, despised;—he may be feared, and hated,—but I doubt much, if there be any mind, of such a giant-size, as to feel contempt for that man. You well know, in common with the whole kingdom, that he is no favourite of mine;—nevertheless, I do most solemnly declare it to be my serious opinion, that, situated as you were, you would have derived more honour in being the dupe of such a man as Mr. *Fox*, than the director of a troop of such characters as Mr. *Sheridan*.

P.

P.

At this time, permit me to inform your Majesty, that Mr. *Fox* was not in the kingdom, and I waited his return for the prosecution of any political design or arrangement on my part,—in the mean time I wanted an agent for inferior purposes, and I appointed Mr. *Sheridan* to that office. The arrival of Mr. *Fox* in *England* was attended by a severe and incapacitating illness, which kept him at a distance from my councils; Mr. *Sheridan* therefore continued by my side.—

K.

Where I fear he will remain till he becomes a thorn in it.—The situation of your Royal Highness is by no means more uncommon in courts, than in the inferior stations of life.—You wanted a servant, and have provided for yourself a master.—I have the fullest conviction in my own mind that Mr. *Fox* would have thought it right, as the *Duke of Portland* has since done, to oppose your Royal Highness when  
he



he thought you wrong.—But, in taking a man to your bosom, whose fortune hung upon your favour—who was so deeply interested to obtain that favour by every, and any means in his power,—who, instead of possessing sufficient power to resist your wishes, when they were to your dishonour, or an adequate degree of personal consequence to place between you and your follies,—you appear to have been governed by no other motive than to possess some one who would employ the ready versatility of superior talents in flattering your weaknesses, gratifying your passions, and justifying your deviations—not to the world, for the world is not to be duped by such a man, —but to yourself.—Let us, however, quit a subject which degrades our conference, and come to matters of higher import. I shall therefore, without hesitation, ask of your Royal Highness, the predominant reason why, the very instant there appeared to be a probability of your being called to the government of your country, you should manifest an unreserved aversion to the servants whom I had employed, and with whose services

services the country was contented?—Was there any thing conducive to the general prosperity of the nation which you discovered to have been neglected by them?—Were they inactive in their duties, or incapable of performing them?—Had the liberty of the subject been invaded, or the prerogative of the Crown infringed by their measures?—Did trade languish?—were the manufacturers without employ, and was the sail of commerce withheld from the wind, because of their oppressive and impolitic arrangements?—Were the treaties, ratified with Foreign Powers, under their administration, disadvantageous to the interests, or degrading of the honour of *Great Britain*?—Were the revenues decreasing, or the burthens of the people augmenting?—Were the individuals who composed my government men of desperate fortunes, and wicked characters, who stepped from poverty, or the servitude of a gaming-house, to riot in the plunder of a public treasury?—In short, Sir, on looking round the nation, did you find that the people wished you to drive them from the helm, to place your friends and favourites there?

P.

P.

With all possible deference to your Majesty's partiality towards the servants of your own appointment, permit me, Sir, just to observe, without entering into a wide field of argument on the subject—that I have the highest opinion of the very superior public talents and qualifications of the party which opposes the Ministers who are so highly honoured by your Royal favour—It was therefore, not only natural, but necessary, for me to call such men to my councils and the administration of the kingdom, whose public and private qualities I so greatly admired and esteemed. — For, I believe, it will not be denied by any one, that a Government must be very ill administered indeed, where the Sovereign Power and the subordinate executors of it have no confidence in each other :—And the spirit of unreserved communication which ought to preside in this conference, obliges me to declare, that your Majesty's present Ministers would be the last persons in the kingdom with whom I should join in political sentiment,

sentiment, or with whom I could form any political coalition.—I do not approve their general system of public measures:— Besides, I shall not hesitate to acknowledge, that I am by no means insensible to the indignity which I suffered from you, as I must suppose, by their advice, and the haughty reluctance which they manifested, when the public voice called on your Parliament to restore me to the splendor and independence which belongs to your Eldest Son, and the Heir of your Crown.

## K.

You are still the dupe of a rash judgment of your own, or the insidious misrepresentation of others—In the business to which you allude, and whereof you complain, I am ready to take the whole burthen of the injury and injustice upon myself. The hesitation to relieve you from the consequences of an unmeaning, thoughtless, and disgraceful spirit of extravagance, did not arise from any personal backwardness in myself or others, to overlook the follies of your youth, or to give you an opportunity of convincing the  
the

the world that you had recovered from them—but from the necessities of the state.—To relieve the public burthen—to lessen the national debt, and to restore the country to its former state of importance in the eyes of Europe, Economy became the necessary, the leading, and the patriotic object of Government.—As the nation was forced to retrench—as the Sovereign was obliged to narrow the limits of his expence, it was thought that you might also evince your attention to the public wants and interests, by adopting a becoming portion of the general economy.—I perceive, indeed, what I have always suspected, that there is something personal in your objection to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.—The unaccommodating spirit which he inherits from his father, and is a striking feature in his great public character, may, perhaps, so far blend itself with his private qualities as to incapacitate him (all political considerations apart) for being admitted to the convivialities of *Carlton-house*.—He may not have it in his power, or perhaps he might not even possess the inclination, to render himself so engaging  
to

to your Royal Highness as Mr. *Sheridan* or *George Hanger*;—but as a public character he has deserved well of his country and his Sovereign; and they are both most ready, and willing, to acknowledge it. And now, permit me to enquire into your motives for acting, on the late occasion, in direct opposition to the declared wishes of the people? It has not been possible, I should hope, for any persons in your confidence, to mislead, or rather to annihilate, your understanding in such a manner as to make you believe that the majority, and a very commanding majority of the nation did not possess the wish that the efficient conduct of Government should continue in those hands wherein I had placed it.

## P.

I am by no means disposed to controvert such an opinion. But popularity, as your Majesty well knows, is of a very uncertain nature:—it rises with the gale, and he who was followed yesterday with the loudest acclamations, may be hissed to-morrow.—But, whatever popular prepossession there  
might



might be in favour of the Administration, as it stood, the sentiment was very universal, and the Houses of Parliament enforced it by their vote, that I ought not to be restrained in the appointment of my political servants, had the duration of your Majesty's indisposition compelled me to enter on the Government of the Kingdom ; and, as I have no doubt but the ministers of my choice would have deserved popularity, that charm of public men would have been soon transferred from the servants of your Majesty's appointment to those of my nomination. Besides, I am disposed to believe, that the general sympathy of the nation, with your Majesty's affliction, operated to cause every known partiality of yours to be regarded with peculiar favour by the public, and that the Administration of the day owes much of its popular consideration to such a popular sentiment.

K.

Permit me then to ask your Royal Highness how it happened, that when a nation thus sympathized with its Sovereign,—you

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should

should stand aloof, and be persuaded not to feel a similar sympathy with your father.— But I shall reserve what I have to say, and the history of what I have felt on this subject, for the concluding part of our conversation; and proceed to request that you will inform me as to the grounds of that popularity which you are pleased to believe would have accompanied the first official exercise of your Ministers. In recommending you to change the Administration which I had chosen, and which the people applauded, they must, surely, have pointed out to you some very dangerous defects in the existing system of Government, and recommended to your approbation some general plan of great national advantage, which had been neglected by their predecessors, and was to be immediately completed by them.—Will your Royal Highness, for my satisfaction, as well as instruction, inform me concerning the general system of public measures which were to possess the magic power of assimilating popularity to your very unpopular party.

P.



P.

It was determined to employ the earliest possession of power, in producing the Repeal of the Shop-Tax.

K.

I should really smile at your simplicity, if I did not fear that you were laughing at mine.—But any thing like a sensation of merriment would ill become the solemnity of this conference. What! could the councils of *Carlton-House* produce nothing of more national concern than a business so trifling, when compared with the primary interest of the empire, and which was introduced to the solemnity of your deliberations for no other purpose than to secure, to Mr. *Fox* and his worthy parliamentary colleagues, the honour of representing the city of *Westminster*? Were no schemes of finance proposed by *Sheridan*?—Had *Charles Fox* no new arrangements for the administration of *India*?—Did *Edmund Burke* present no plans from *Utopia*, for the good order and economy of your household?—Were there no projects,

jects, for the prosperity of *Ireland*, transmitted to you by Mr. *Grattan*? Were no ideas thrown out for expediting and humanizing the practice of the Law, by the *Chief Justice* of the *Common Pleas*? From whence then—tell me from whence, my dear Prince, did you expect this popularity to proceed, which was to encircle you and your friends, with the brightest blaze of national approbation?

P.

I do not foresee the possibility of contradiction, when I assert that *any* political body or party of men, if the latter term pleases your Majesty better, who should be honoured with the support of the old Whig families of this country, and to whom public liberty, and the *House of Brunswick* are so very much indebted, have a natural claim to the respect and confidence of your Majesty and the nation. But this is not the only honourable advantage which belongs to those men with whom I acknowledge myself to be politically connected;—in abilities, in property,

property, and in virtue, I challenge the most virulent enemy they have, to point out their equals in the long favoured list of the Royal Calendar.

K.

Among the vulgar errors of modern politics, an opinion seems to have been eagerly adopted, and artfully disseminated, that there are particular families who possess an *hereditary right* to the favours of the Crown, which is founded on their zeal and activity in forwarding the Revolution, and raising the Protestant Family of Hanover to the throne of these kingdoms. — Nothing surely can be more unreasonable than to expect, that a King should govern himself by rules, which they who presume to dictate to him continually violate. Wherefore is the Sovereign to be the only person in his kingdom who is to be thus fast bound by such distant ties? — If the son turns aside from the path of honour in which his father trod, ought he to possess his father's reputation, or has he a right to claim his father's friends? — I may discover a greater degree of tenderness to the errors of a man, on account of

the services performed by his ancestors; but how great soever they may have been, they do not surely bind me to submit, with acquiescence, to personal insults, or to court him who might betray me. Do these politicians, who prescribe such narrow limits for their Sovereign's conduct, realize the system they recommend?—In their political course, do they not continually desert the very friends who have elevated them to honour, and placed them in the career of fortune?—I must own it wounds me, and I consider it as a very saucy effort of Aristocratic insolence, when it is declared, that the Crown is bound to an hereditary confidence in particular families, at the very time when they quit that demeanour which can alone justify their claim upon it. If children degenerate from the principles of their forefathers, they lose the privileges which the latter possessed; and a continuation of them would be considered as the mark of a weak, insensible mind, by the very persons who cast their unreflecting, silly censure, on an opposite conduct.——The *Devonshire* Family, for instance, is respectable, from its

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personal influence, as well as private virtue; and its support must ever be a desirable acquisition to Government. But a Prince would become deservedly contemptible in the eyes of all his people, who practises mean submissions to lessen the power of a party. It is his duty, and real interest, to preserve his dignity; and he must not sink beneath it, to conciliate the political regard and support even of a Duke of *Devonshire*.

The abilities of Mr. *Fox*, (for as to *Burke* and *Sheridan*, I leave them out of the question,) they are of a very transcendant nature. The mild virtues of the *Cavendishes* are most willingly acknowledged by me; and if both the one and the other could be blended in the same person, they would form one of the best men, as well as the greatest ministers, who had ever raised the glory of a nation, or elevated the dignity of human nature. But, in their present state of separation, how do these pre-eminent talents and superior virtues operate? The answer, I fear, is too obvious:—to make the best subservient to the worst, and to employ the



good in the wretched business of giving a colour to the bad. The abilities of Mr. *Fox*—the character of the House of *Cavendish*—the name of *Russel*—and the immense property of these great families, have long formed, and still continue to compose, the current cant of your party praters. But the nation is not deceived: the people discover neither beauty nor proportion in this mighty Colossus, which, under your protection, would bestride the empire; but consider it rather as an heterogeneous composition of various shapes, that must produce displeasure to the eye, and apprehension in the mind of every one, whom prejudice, necessity, or something worse, have not led to the feet of this mishapen idol. The property of particular individuals among your friends is very great; but I shall venture to assert, that the aggregate wealth of those persons who support the measures of Government, is far superior to that of the opposite party. But, after all, what is the mere solitary possession of extensive property;—and whence does it derive the powerful claim you seem to think that it has a right to make on the public

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confidence?—Will your Royal Highness inform me concerning the splendid and patriot munificence of those men, whose vast incomes, according to your doctrine, ought, in the very recital, to bribe the public into a submissive veneration for their possessors?—Can you tell me of science protected,—of arts encouraged—of merit supported—of indigence relieved—of wretchedness made happy by your wealthy adherents? Or is their generosity to be traced only in the sleek appearance of the barking hounds of faction, the eleemosynary supplies to party retainers, or the subscriptions for supporting a *Westminster Election*? When you hint at the popularity that your friends would have possessed, had they been elevated to power, communicate to me the means by which they would have deserved to be popular? When you make a boast of your Whig families, convince me, I beseech you, of their Whig principles; and confirm the operative weight of their great property, by examples of that noble, patriotic, and amiable employment of it, which can alone make it the source of honourable power.—In the ar-  
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rangements of your expected and expecting Administration, did you propose to make a Whig Chancellor, a Whig Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, or a Whig Attorney-General?—And when the Duke of *Portland*, on the first appearance of my amendment, expressed a determination to proceed no further in your service, did you intend to supply his place with a Whig first Lord of the Treasury?—The persons appropriated to these offices, might, every one of them, be zealous Whigs, but they were every one of them *notorious Scotchmen*; and, for that sole reason, had they been employed by me, Mr. *Fox* would not have hesitated a moment to set them down as inveterate Tories. Poor *Queensbury* and *Lothian* were never, I believe, considered by any of you as possessing either common sense or common principle, 'till they became proselytes to your politics; and they now add two more noble families to the *distinguished Whigs* of this country. I am, indeed, extremely concerned to observe with what zeal you adopt the jargon of those unmeaning distinctions, which are only revived by the  
emis-



emissaries, and for the purposes, of party and faction. Loyalty and Patriotism want no other name or title than their own; and when they are clothed in furtive appellations, you may be assured it is for some low, lurking view of interest or dishonour. I must, however, beg of you not to conclude, that I am insensible to the merit of some among your Whig connections: it really appears to me, that the small comparative portion of decency and good sense that is observable in the conduct of your party, during my calamity, was infused into it, by the honour, the dignity, the good understanding, and determined resolution of the *Duke of Portland*.

P.

I am equally sensible with your Majesty, of the steady virtue, dignified conduct, and general estimation of that Nobleman; and, as an ostensible head of a political association, he must be considered with no common degree of respect; but as a practical engine of Government, in council or in action, I am disposed to look upon his Grace rather as an inferior character.

K.

K.

I most sincerely believe it. The noble Duke has something of a sturdy virtue about him, which is not always to be overreached; and in the late arrangements of your party, his inflexible honour gave you offence, by opposing itself to some of the most rash and impolitic projects that wicked men could advise, or weak men be persuaded to adopt.

P.

Your Majesty is pleased to express an opinion of very pointed severity; though I trust it may be in my power to procure a relaxation of it, if you will graciously condescend to explain the circumstances which have communicated such an unfavourable sentiment to your royal breast?

K.

When you proposed, on the expectation of a Regency, to make Mr. *Sheridan* a Cabinet Minister, did not the Duke of *Portland* refuse, in the most positive manner, to comply with your desire, as a measure which  
would

would be disgraceful to your government? But this is not all: I need not inform your Royal Highness, that although your debts have been so lately discharged, an application was intended to be made to Parliament, on your assuming the Regency, to discharge the enormous incumbrances of a later contraction; and, as if it were thought that your own deficiencies, to the amount of two or three hundred thousand pounds, were not sufficient, I am disposed to believe that you were persuaded to give your consent to the addition of a fictitious item to the account, which involved the debts of several of your *ruined* adherents—if that epithet may, with propriety, be applied to men who never possessed any other fortune than the strange credulity of those who have trusted them. The Duke of *Portland* did not, as he could not reasonably, object to the opening an unincumbered entrance for you, to the government of your country; which, thanks to the Ministers whom you were about to dismiss from its service, was in a condition freely to afford you the necessary relief;—but his Grace acted like an

honest man, a steady patriot, and your most sincere friend, by opposing a measure which none but the miscreants who were to profit by it could advise, and must have disgraced you, beyond all expression, in the opinion of the empire. Need I tell you, what, I presume, the Duke himself must have felt on the occasion, that a similar act in a private man would have been liable to all the opprobrium of a swindling transaction. To have commenced your Regency with such an attempt would have been inauspicious indeed ! For my own part, I cannot conceive that Parliament would have submitted to such an insult, or that the representative understanding of *Great-Britain* could have been perverted into a consent to vote away the public money to discharge, under any form whatever, the debts of certain sorry persons, which had been contracted in the worst manner, for no other reason than that your unreflecting and prodigal good nature, to say no worse, had thought proper to rank them with your own. In several other instances that I could name, did the Duke of *Portland* act very much to his own honour, to your ad-

advantage, as well as to the general satisfaction; and though it is not a matter of surprise, it is of real concern to me, that he should not be the most respected person who was summoned to the *Councils of Carlton House*. You had but one popular man in the whole tribe of your adherents, and the prudent measures of his cautious suggestion are precisely those which you adopted with the greatest reluctance. One might almost imagine, that some Dæmon, a foe to human excellence, had been permitted to exercise the spirit of perversion upon you, and to suggest that subserviency to others, which has disgraced yourself. Policy and nature both made their rightful claims on your understanding and your heart; and you appear to have treated both the one and the other with a most unjustifiable neglect. The former urged you to acquire the esteem of the people, and the latter invited you to act with all possible delicacy and tenderness towards your afflicted father. Permit me to ask you, in what manner you obeyed the dictates of either?

P.

I stood in a situation unparalleled in the annals of Royalty. Your Majesty's illness had made a chasm in the constitution of your country; and the mode invented by your Ministers for filling up the breach, was not only in direct opposition to my own sentiments, but to the deliberative opinion of those men whom I consider as the best qualified to advise me on any and every occasion.

K.

It is a common error, in unreflecting men, to mistake inclination for opinion; and this, perhaps, may have been your case on the occasion, which is now before us. As for your counsellors, they were ready, I doubt not, to give you an opinion of *their* construction, if you were not already provided with one of your own: or, should you have determined for yourself in the business, which, however, I do not much suspect, their ready complaisance would have shaped their  
their



their plastic sentiments according to the model they had found in your inclination. The measures proposed by my Ministers to supply the affecting absence of the Executive power, were approved by the general voice of the people: The House of Commons, by a very considerable majority, confirmed the national sentiment: The House of Peers coincided with, and aided the work of the Commons. All that is, and all that will be, great in the Law, added a very powerful sanction to the ministerial arrangements. These positions cannot, with any colour of truth, be denied by you; and I wish it could be disbelieved by me, that you, with your political cohort, opposed yourselves, in settling the constitution, to the opinion of the Law, the votes of both Houses of Parliament—and the nation.—Nay, it is impossible for me not to observe that the *Genius* of your party was foiled in the bold efforts made to give you rights to which no claim could be discovered, but in the volume of his ambition. He was told that the new-fangled doctrine advanced, on the occasion, was High Treason to the Constitution; and,

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the following day, he thought it expedient to retract his unconstitutional opinion by a skilful explanation of the words which he had employed to convey it.

P.

Your Majesty is pleased to tell me, that I have acted in direct opposition to sound policy,—and that I have resisted nature in her dictates of filial duty. Such opinions, though they may proceed from a misconception of your mind, affect me with a very painful concern; nevertheless, a superior mortification waits on the idea, that I am nothing better than the dupe of artful, wicked, and insidious men; a spring to supply their wants,—the ladder of their ambition, and, in short, the mere Automaton of a party.

K.

To be considered as a dupe, in any station of life, is a very mortifying circumstance to a sensible mind: but, with respect to yourself, there is no alternative. I must either look upon your Royal Highness as the



*Head* or the *Engine* of your party; and, when I consider the men of which it is composed, the nature of its conduct, and the objects to which it directs all its endeavours, I name you to the better office, in describing you as the Executor, rather than the Director of their measures.

P.

In the late very singular position of the nation and myself, I advised with those men, of whose wisdom, integrity, and experience I possessed the most decided opinion; and, in forming those arrangements which they proposed, and I myself approved,—permit me to say, that I was no more a dupe to them, than your Majesty has ever been to your own Cabinet Council, whenever you have given your assent to their resolutions.

K

I shall not stay to argue upon the distinction between a body of men in high office, bound by oath, and accountable to their country,—and a private, select meeting of your partizans, called together for

your purposes, and accountable to no one:—but shall proceed to offer my sentiments on a certain act of your privy counsellors, which they persuaded you to adopt as your own: I mean, the letter written in your name, and with your consent; but I am inclined to believe, without any further interference on your part, to Mr. *Pitt*. Such is the nature, tendency, and object, of this artful epistle, that I would rather hear you acknowledge an unreflecting adoption of it, than the mature approbation of its principles and intentions. The dupes of bad men may, from various reasons, be objects of pity; but he who possesses a knowledge of their designs, and avowedly aids their progress to maturity, is involved in their guilt, and merits a share of the punishment due to it. This important letter of your embryo Ministers, while it insults the Parliament, the people, the Queen, and myself, is a most insidious contrivance to impose upon you. It mentions Parliament as subservient to a Minister—it considers the measures framed by the Privy Council as injurious to the people, who were so very ignorant of their

tru

true interest, as to be perfectly satisfied with them. The severity, with which the design of investing the Queen with the care of my afflicted State and the management of my Household is treated, implies a very unjust and unfeeling accusation of your Mother—but this is not all—the consulting framers of this letter, in direct opposition to their own private opinion, took upon them to assert, that the measures pursued by my Ministers were such as would, on the recovery of my understanding, be followed with my vindictive disapprobation.—They well knew when they were contriving a period to that purpose, that they were forging a falsehood: and I am now in a state, thank Heaven! to prove the effrontery of their conduct, by declaring the most unreserved and grateful approbation of all my Ministers have done for me and my people. But this letter was not written to form any part of a secret correspondence between your Royal Highness and Mr. *Pitt*; it was composed with a view to future publication; and it was published for three important purposes—First, It contained the language of com-

plaint from the Heir apparent of the Empire; and your friends expected that a generous people would be affected by it, and manifest some public disposition in your favour. Secondly, It was thought to contain a power of producing an attractive effect on certain wavering Members of Parliament—and, Thirdly, by making your condemnation of Mr. *Pitt* and his measures so notorious, you were fixed in a political dependance on the opposite party:—thus you announced yourself the princely engine of their arts, of their ambition, and their resentment; and while they persuaded you that they were exerting themselves for your honour, and the principles of the Constitution, their only views were to the emoluments and plunder of those offices, which they hoped and expected you would soon be in a capacity to bestow upon them. But this letter did your friends no service, and yourself no honour: it did not dupe the people—it did not influence Parliament—but it imposed a binding obligation upon you. This was a moment, Sir, of all others, when you should have been broad awake

awake to the circumstances around you ;— and it was at this moment that you appear to have flumbered over your best interests, and to be vigilant only in the degrading efforts of party zeal and resentment. The idle, ridiculous inconsistency of representing Mr. *Pitt* as your competitor for power, was adopted and fostered by you ; and your *Brother of York* was taught to enliven the prattle of his Parliamentary dinners with describing the struggle between your friends and the Constitution, as a personal contest between your Royal Highness and Mr. *Pitt*. In short, it appears to me, that your own conduct was *personally* wrong, and that of your adherents *politically* wrong in every instance that has come to my knowledge.

P.

If it were possible that there could be a judge, an impartial judge, between your Majesty and myself, he would not, I believe, hesitate to pronounce, that your political attachments and prejudices were as warm and as zealous as mine :—but surely, Sir, you do not consider your Minister to

be so infallible, as to make his political conduct the sole standard of what is politically right ; nor can you, I should presume, be so unjust, as to throw into one mass of condemnation the numbers who are bold enough to differ from him. If that should be your royal disposition, I shall add another article to the chapter of my disgrace, by declaring, that I hold myself hostile to his political principles—that I neither approve of him as a Minister, or esteem him as a man, and that I shall continue to give my poor unavailing support to those men who oppose him. If your Majesty's gracious protection, strengthened by the circumstances of the times, makes him omnipotent, I and my friends must content ourselves with submitting to his superior fortune ; but permit me, Sir, to declare, that we shall watch him in his progress ; and I trust that your Majesty will live to see this towering eagle, who aims to breast the sun, brought down to the earth.

K.

I have nothing to do at present, with what may happen in future. If the Minister  
turns



turns aside from the path of honourable ambition—if he grows careless of preserving the character he has acquired—if he should be so perverted, as to change the gratitude for the vengeance of his country, I shall not, believe me, throw the royal mantle around him for his protection. But, Sir, in the opinion of his King, of his Country, and of Europe, he has hitherto been, and at present is, a great and good Minister; and the injustice of my anticipating a lapse of his public character, could be equalled only by the folly of expecting, that, when he lost his virtue, *your friends would find it*. I am sorry to observe, that the esteem of the people does not appear to be an object of serious consideration to you; and it can arise only from your own inattention to popular regard, that you seem to think it adds no dignity to those who possess it. You have certainly laughed at appearances from your first entrance into public life; and you are habituated to the game. It is not an easy thing for the Heir apparent of the British Crown to make himself unpopular among the British people; but this is a difficulty which

which you have effectually surmounted;— and the nation is not more rejoiced at my recovery, from affection to my person, than the being freed, by that event, from the apprehension of such a Ministry as you had prepared to govern them.

P.

But let me intreat your Majesty, whatever your opinion may be of the men whom I should have named as my political servants, to suppose that they had, at least, understanding sufficient to pursue their own interests, which they could not have done, if they acted in opposition to the general interest of the nation.

K.

How happened it then, that, in the very outset of your new career, the Duke of *Portland* thought your attentions to the interests of some of your favourites carried so far, that he felt it his duty to oppose them? —And if they could persuade you to enter into such arrangements for their advantage, while hesitation hovered over the proceedings  
of



of the nation, what would they not have provided for themselves, when the whole patronage of the Government had been in the possession of their easy protector?—Your Royal Highness had an opportunity of doing every thing you ought, without yielding up any thing that you might wish. It was in your power to have established yourself in the hearts of the people—to have called forth the applause of surrounding nations—to have preserved the country from confusion—to have gratified your own private wishes, in gratifying those of your party—and to have prevented such a conference as this, from wearing, on my part, the colour of reproach. All these advantages were in your power, and you rejected them all; nor can I trace your infatuation to any other cause, but the eager ambition and hungry necessities of your favourites, which had inspired them with the power to turn your mind from any view of your real honour, in order to come at once to their gratifications.

P.

I really cannot deny, Sir, that if all this could have been done, I must have been blind indeed:—such a picture as your Majesty has just described was never visible to my mind—

K.

I will explain myself. When I was deprived by Heaven of the capacity to govern my kingdom, and the nation looked to a Regency, which was to be vested in you, your Royal Highness would have done well to have summoned the leading persons of your political party to your presence, and addressed them to the following purport—

“ I possess a very confidential regard for  
“ you all; and I acknowledge personal  
“ obligations to many of you. As a proof  
“ of my sincerity and my gratitude, I have  
“ requested your attendance, in order to  
“ unfold my mind to you, on the present  
“ very extraordinary and affecting crisis;  
“ and to explain to you the conduct I mean  
“ to pursue, as well as the manner in which  
“ I propose to suit myself to the awful cir-  
“ cumstances

“ circumstances of the moment. From the  
“ confirmed habits of friendly communica-  
“ tion between us—the attachment you  
“ have ever shewn to me—my known opi-  
“ nion of your talents and principles, as  
“ well as the solemn pledge I have given of  
“ elevating you to the Administration of  
“ this kingdom, whenever I should possess  
“ the Crown—I say, from these circum-  
“ stances you might be induced, perhaps, to  
“ expect, that I shall employ the first mo-  
“ ments of the regent power in calling you  
“ to my Councils: but, I flatter myself,  
“ when you have heard my reasons, there  
“ will not be one of you disposed to con-  
“ demn my purpose of delaying a measure,  
“ which it will be my happiness to seize  
“ the first proper and suitable opportunity  
“ of completing. I feel myself in a very  
“ serious predicament. Our Sovereign is  
“ at present deprived of the capacity to  
“ govern his kingdoms: how long the ca-  
“ lamity may last, Heaven only knows:—  
“ we are, however, informed, by the first  
“ medical professors—that his Majesty is in  
“ a recoverable state: while, therefore, re-  
“ covery

“ covery is possible, I shall make no change  
“ in the government of the country. I  
“ propose to communicate my intention to  
“ both Houses of Parliament, to receive  
“ with all readiness the regent power from  
“ their constitutional hands, as they shall,  
“ in their wisdom, shape and controul it;  
“ and I intend to exercise it as the mere  
“ vice-gerent of the afflicted monarch. I  
“ shall continue his servants as he left them,  
“ and pursue the general plan of govern-  
“ ment, to which he had set the seal of his  
“ approbation, while he possessed the fa-  
“ culty to approve. Such a mode of pro-  
“ ceeding is, I think, conformable to the  
“ delicacy which I, in a very particular  
“ manner, am bound to shew to the afflicted  
“ state of my father: such a resolution will,  
“ I believe, meet with the applause of the  
“ nation; and I doubt not will receive the  
“ warmest approbation of the King, when  
“ his restored reason shall qualify him to  
“ judge of my conduct. But if it should  
“ please Heaven to give a deadly wound to  
“ the understanding of the Sovereign, I  
“ shall not think myself bound any longer  
“ to

“ to pursue the present system of govern-  
“ ment. When his body is become the  
“ tomb of his mind, I shall act as if the  
“ King himself reposed in the royal sepul-  
“ chre. Having thus, in all things, per-  
“ formed my duty to my father, and satis-  
“ fied the affections of the people, I shall  
“ do justice to myself, by fulfilling my en-  
“ gagements to you. In the mean time,  
“ my friends, I intreat you to exercise mo-  
“ deration in every thing—to strengthen,  
“ rather than interrupt, the proceedings of  
“ Government, and to promote, as much  
“ as possible, a general unanimity, during  
“ the awful suspense of the nation. I well  
“ know, that the prodigality and dissipations  
“ of my life have lessened me in the esteem  
“ of the people; but, I trust, that the con-  
“ duct I have just declared it to be my in-  
“ tention to pursue, will conciliate such a  
“ degree of popular favour, as will enable  
“ me, when the proper period arrives, to  
“ execute all my intentions with ease to  
“ myself, without complaint from the pub-  
“ lic, and with advantage to you. Con-  
“ sider, my friends, if I should call you to  
“ the

“ the helm at this moment, what hazard  
 “ and disadvantage we should have to en-  
 “ counter.—From the present temper of  
 “ Parliament and the people, I doubt very  
 “ much, whether the utmost exertions of  
 “ my power would be able to maintain you  
 “ in your situations. At all events, if the  
 “ King should recover, and the Royal Phy-  
 “ sicians have by no means discouraged the  
 “ expectation, you would be instantly dis-  
 “ missed from office—the national outcry  
 “ would be against us all, for the wanton  
 “ expence of an unnecessary, ill-timed  
 “ change of Administration—the public  
 “ mockery would follow us—and the po-  
 “ pular party would return to power, under  
 “ such a strong protection of the Sovereign  
 “ and the people, as would leave your hopes  
 “ no other foundation than an event, which  
 “ it does not become me to mention. I  
 “ shall act as nature and policy dictate;  
 “ and I trust that you will co-operate with  
 “ me. Such are the communications I re-  
 “ quested your attendance to receive; and  
 “ I have too high an opinion of your un-  
 “ derstanding, too firm a confidence in  
 “ your



“ your public zeal, and too sincere a persuasion of your regard for me to doubt of your approbation.”

Such a conduct as this would have elevated you to an height which, I fear, your passions and your friends will never suffer you to attain:—It would have wiped off, at once, all reproach from your name;—it would have made you the idol of the British people, and the admiration of Europe;—it would have softened the sorrows of your mother, and consoled the nation for the affliction of their king.—But wherefore, alas!—am I forced to quit this bright picture of imagination, for the dreary scene of fact and reality?—Why, my son, have you compelled me to represent the striking reverse of so much virtue?—In a very early stage of my disorder you encouraged the party in opposition to my government, to expect every thing from you;—and, no sooner was the signal given, than all their arts were let loose upon the nation.—Their first attack was against the constitution itself; but the watchmen of the state were vigilant,



lant, and frustrated the enterprize.—Other devices were then to be employed;—and every miserable practice of an election-canvas was set in motion.—You were made to display all the decoration of your persuasive manners, and to give superb entertainments at *Carlton-House* to the leaders of your party, while its inferior personages were consigned to his Highness of *York*, who forgot his losses at the Tennis-court, in promoting the bribery of good dinners and convivial intemperance.—But these endeavours did not find the expected success, and other means were employed to obtain it.—The Ministers were accused of a most daring ambition,—their measures were represented as hostile to the constitution,—and a mockery was made of their loyal sorrows.—But the worst is yet to come.—In a daily Newspaper, which is known to be devoted to your party, and under the immediate influence of your favourite adherents, an attack, to which I cannot give a name, was made upon the *Queen* your Mother, which I have read with tears of agony and astonishment.—As to myself, I was declared by your  
familia

familiar friends, in terms of merriment, and jovial expectation, to be in a state of which there were no hopes. The Physicians who doubted most of my recovery were most caressed by your party,—while *Doctor Willis*, whose care, skill and experience, have been so conducive to my cure, was examined, by certain persons of your Committee, with an apparent view to betray him ; and, when his integrity surmounted every effort to perplex his mind, he was denominated, by one of your own orators, an Empiric, and a Mountebank—and threatened with vengeance.

P.

Before the warmth of your Majesty's temper rises to an height which might debar me from replying to you, permit me to observe, that I do not hold myself answerable for the unreflecting violence, and erring zeal, of party-men. — The Press is become very licentious,—I have, myself, been the continual object of its severity, and the means of restraining it, are not possessed by me.

E 2

K.

K.

And will your Royal Highness condescend to practise an evasion so degrading to you?—Will you seriously tell me that you could not have curbed, if it had so pleased you, the impetuous conduct of your friends?—Whatever they have done was from a desire to correspond with your wishes, and to aid the general plan, which it was the ambition of your party to complete.—You well know that your Royal Highness was, at least, the ostensible Polar-star by which your adherents directed their unpropitious course.—Will you, Sir, venture to assert your belief that the Morning Herald could have been influenced to traduce the Queen, if it had not been with a view to some political regulation, which it had been your wish either to support or prevent.—I will not say that you were originally privy to this effrontery of your confidential people,—but I do not know that you requested Mr. *Sheridan* to check the literary zeal of his myrmedons, or that they received a frown of disapprobation from you, for having committed

mitted such unparalleled insolence. Nay, Sir, permit me to ask you, whether it was not by your consent, if not by your command, that a *menial officer* of your *kitchen* became the proprietor of a newspaper, which has since been devoted to the miserable purposes of faction: and, at this moment, when my recovery has been declared in Parliament, and is known to yourself, is not that paper encouraged to express its doubts of the event, and to disseminate its pretended incredulity through every part of the kingdom.

*Qui facit per alterum, facit per se.*

And I shall not hesitate to lay all the reproach of the *confidential Weltjee's* conduct at his door from whom it originates—That you have acted in opposition to every principle of good policy,—and sinned against the best feelings of natural affection, is in proof before you. It is too apparent that you have failed in your duty, as a subject, to your Sovereign, and of a child to his parent.—If you possessed the common sensibility of a good heart, the calamity that befell me would have brought you to that compo-

fure of mind, and sobriety of demeanour which affliction never fails to produce in well disposed and virtuous characters.—If your understanding had not been influenced by the subtle spells of the bad men about you, it could not have been possible for you to have displayed a public inattention to my unhappy situation.—If your Royal Highness had not been thus perverted, you would not, during my illness, have been seen intoxicated at an Opera,—or reeling into a Gaming-house, — or presiding at petty clubs and convivial associations, where your appearance, at any time, would have been folly, and, at this time, was a crime. I may, perhaps, intrude upon your *serious* thoughts, by hinting at the claims which *Religion* has upon you, as a source of private benefit and public example:—But surely, my dear Prince, it would have been no imputation to your understanding, or your heart,—if, when the whole kingdom was engaged in addressing heaven for my recovery, you had appeared at some place of public worship, and joined in the national supplication.—Your *good brother of York* might  
 might

might also make amends for his follies of the week, by a right employment of the Sabbath, instead of scandalising the inhabitants of *London*, by a Sunday review of his regiment in *Hyde-Park*. I do not charge either of you with personal harshness to the Queen; nevertheless, from the very earnest and anxious manner in which she speaks of your respectful attention to her, and some other suspicious circumstances, I apprehend that, in her deepest affliction, she received little consolation from her sons. As for your supposed marriage, and the means you employed, whatever they might be, to satisfy the conscience of a vain and silly woman, I shall say but little: she alone can be the victim of your deception; for the country is alarmed on the occasion, and will not be deceived: the jealousy of the national church is also awakened, and forms a barrier of statutes, which the most desperate of your friends will not advise you to attack.—

As for myself, it becomes me to submit to the power which knows when to give, and when to take away; and to that power my most grateful thanks are due. On awaking



from my delirium, I find myself the object of inexpressible loyalty from my people ; I perceive that my rights, while I was insensible to them, were supported with firmness, dignity, and affection, by the two remaining parts of the Constitution. It does not appear, that any material inconvenience has arisen to the country from my absence ; and on my return, I find it in prosperity and exultation, and its affairs under the guidance of able men and an *uncorrupt Parliament* : for no one will persuade me that the Parliament was corrupt, which supported a *fallen King and a falling Minister*, against the rising sun of the Empire. It is not, however, to be expected, that my joy on this happy occasion should be free from alloy. I have my sorrow ; but it is not for myself—it is for my people—it is not that I have been deserted in my utmost need by those my former bounty fed : in short, I shall leave your Royal Highness to conjecture from whence proceeds the only anxiety of my breast.

P.

Whatever, Sir, may have been my errors  
—whatever they, at this moment, may be  
—what -



—whatever difference of political opinion may subsist between your Majesty and me—there is not a subject in your Empire who felt a more ardent and sincere joy than myself, on the propitious event of your recovery.

K.

To deal plainly with you—though I do not deny your satisfaction, I have some doubts as to the real cause of it. In short, it is not perfectly clear to my mind, whether your joy proceeds from filial love, patriot duty, or the having escaped from a situation, which was surrounded with dilemmas and difficulties, and from whence you have good reason to apprehend that you would not have been extricated, without dishonour to yourself, and, perhaps, confusion to the country.

P.

Then, Sir, this miserable alternative only remains between us:—you are unjust, or I am the most depraved of mankind.

K.

## K.

I feel it a very painful task to justify myself against your charge of injustice, to which, in this instance, I should rejoice to plead guilty;—but so it is.—Your Royal Highness lives not in a closet; you mingle as much with the world as any other man, and are acquainted with all that is passing in it. You must know, that the very men who are your favourite friends, are my personal enemies; and that my understanding, my amusements, my defects—the every part of my private, as well as public life, form, more or less, a theme for their wit, their ridicule, their satire, and their contempt. Do not their Newspaper Editors—their scribblers and their poets tell you this?—Alas! you know it all;—yet these are the men you take to your bosom.—If it were to be asked, in any public assembly whatever, who is the person, in *Great Britain*, the most afflicted at my recovery?—would not the universal voice return the name of *Sheridan*?—and he is the man to whose breast you trust your secret thoughts, whom  
you

you elevate to the most familiar society, and to whose benignant care, if it were in your power, you would consign the government of the Empire. In short, Sir, have you not found your favourites and Ministers, where *Nero* would have looked for buffoons, and *Catiline* for conspirators?—Alas! are not these things so?—and, if they are, what injustice is there in the suspicions I entertain of your understanding or your heart?—even if I were to add, that the one is perverted, and the other depraved, who will tell me that I sin against the truth?—

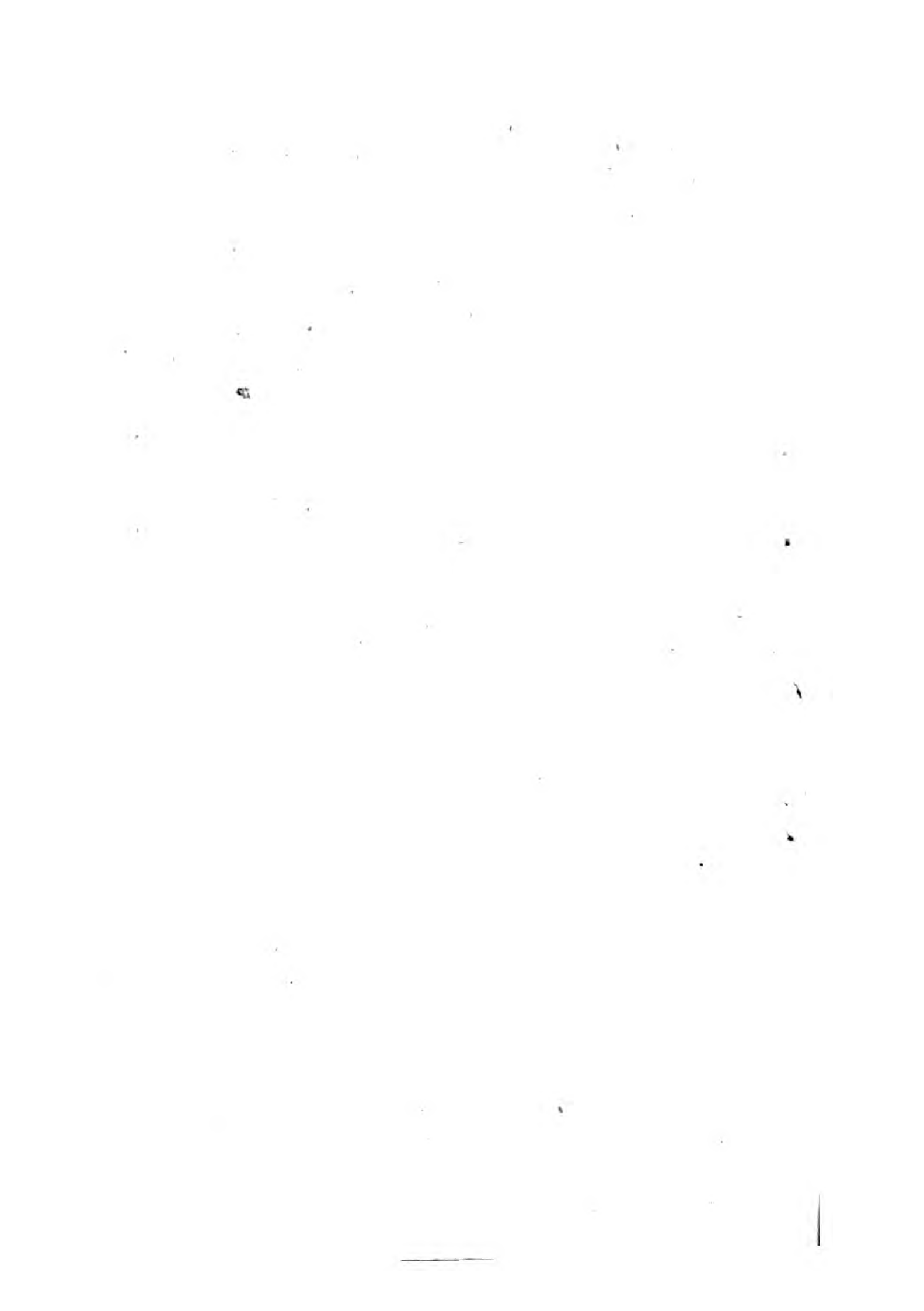
There remains but little more for me to say. I have conversed with you as a Sovereign—I have reasoned with you as a Father—I shall now conclude this conference with advising you as a Friend. The present moment offers a very fair opportunity of redeeming your life: you are yet young enough to recover from your past errors; and your understanding is more than equal to the right conduct of yourself, if you will but let it go alone, and emancipate it from the nursing hands of those, whose interest it is to keep it in swaddling-clothes of their own contriving.

If

If you believe that your party are your personal friends—that their apparent zeal for what they call your interests, arises from any other motives but to promote their own ;— if you think that they do not shake their heads in private at your conduct and character, you are in a very grievous error. How can you suppose, for a moment, that men who have been ungrateful to me, if it shall answer their purpose, will not be ungrateful to you ?—or that they will govern themselves by a principle of rectitude in their conduct towards you, which they disdain in all their transactions with mankind. By what infatuation is it that you look for faithful service and affectionate zeal from men, whom the gaming table supports with luxuries, and no tradesman will trust with the necessaries of life. Let me exhort you to turn your back on *Circe* and her crew, and join the votaries of virtue. Give dignity to your character, œconomy to your affairs, and splendor to your life. Return to the bosom of your family—add your portion to the domestic felicity of those who call you their son. Throw your frowns at  
faction—

faction—strengthen, by your co-operation, the measures of Government, and no longer disdain the affection of the people. Check the ardour, and change the nature of your pleasures : call the wisest and best men of the kingdom about you. Encourage art, be the patron of science, and beckon virtue to your protection. Let every part of your conduct compose an assured omen of all that is great and good in the character of a Monarch : so that the rising generation may exult in the hope that they shall enjoy the glories of your reign, and the aged patriot express his sole regret that he shall not live to behold them.—In short, so conform *your* life to honour, that I may end *mine* in peace.\* \* \* \* \*

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