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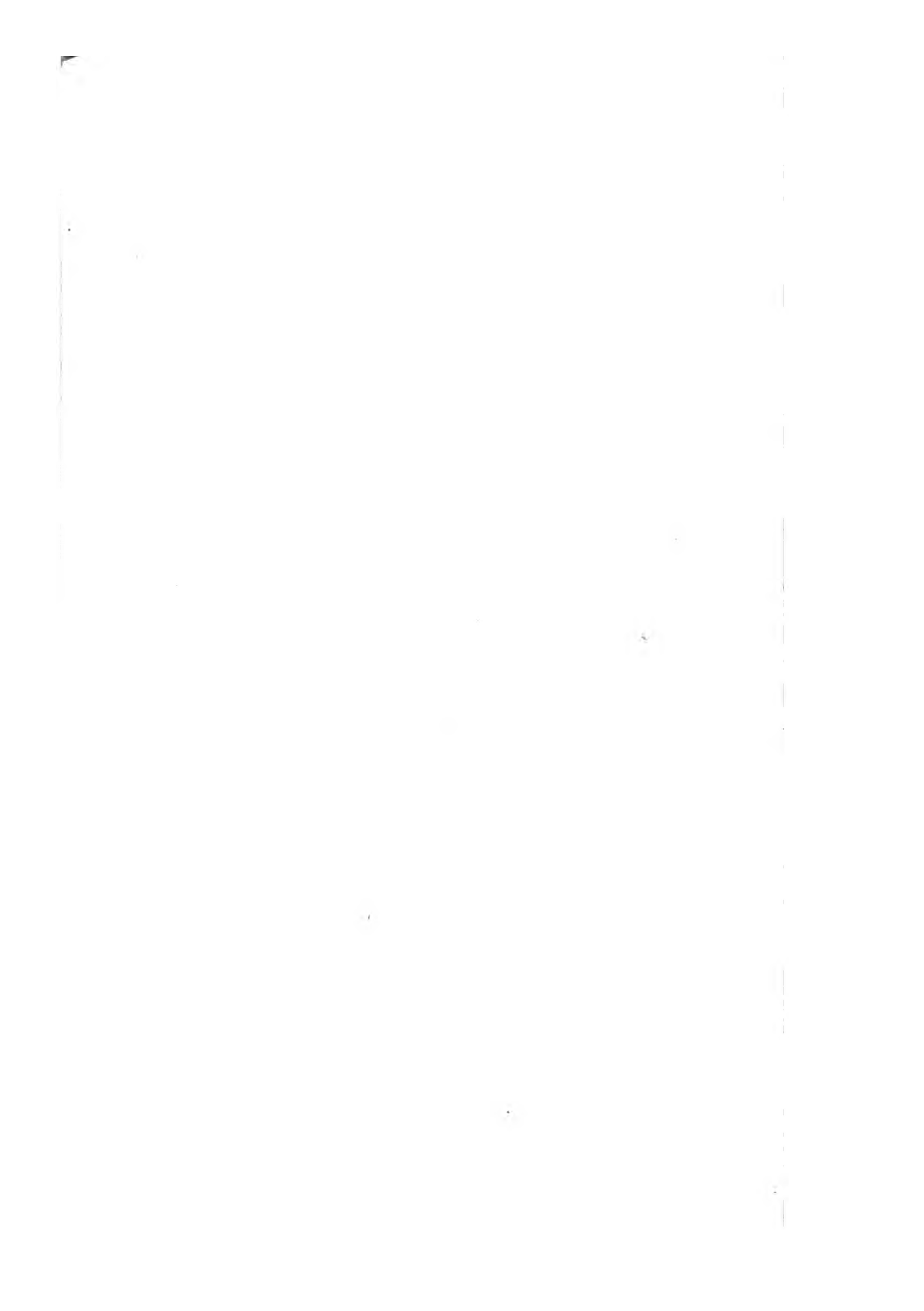


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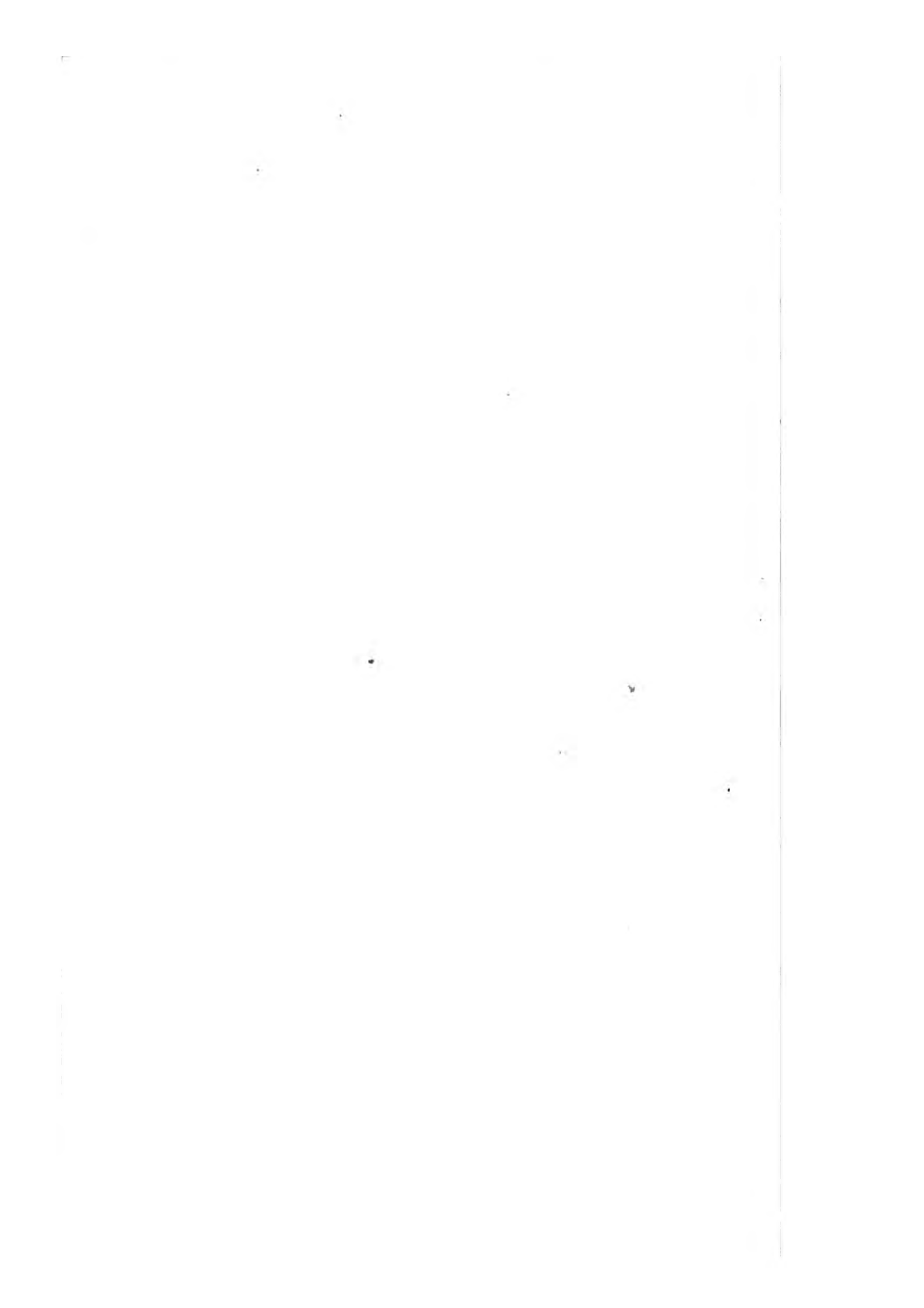
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HARD MEASURE,
OR
A REAL STATEMENT OF FACTS,
IN A
LETTER
TO THE
BURGESSES, AND FREEMEN BURGESSES,
OF THE
TOWN OF SHREWSBURY.

WITH A FEW EXPOSTULATIONS AND REMARKS

Addressed to the new Candidate
The Honourable WILLIAM HILL.



Occasioned by the very peculiar and unwarrantable manner, in which he has repeatedly introduced the name of Sir RICHARD HILL, into his late printed Addresses.

Et Tu Brute!!!

“It is not an open Enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have borne it; but it was even thou my Companion, and my own Familiar Friend.”

Book of Psalms.

By Sir RICHARD HILL, Bart.

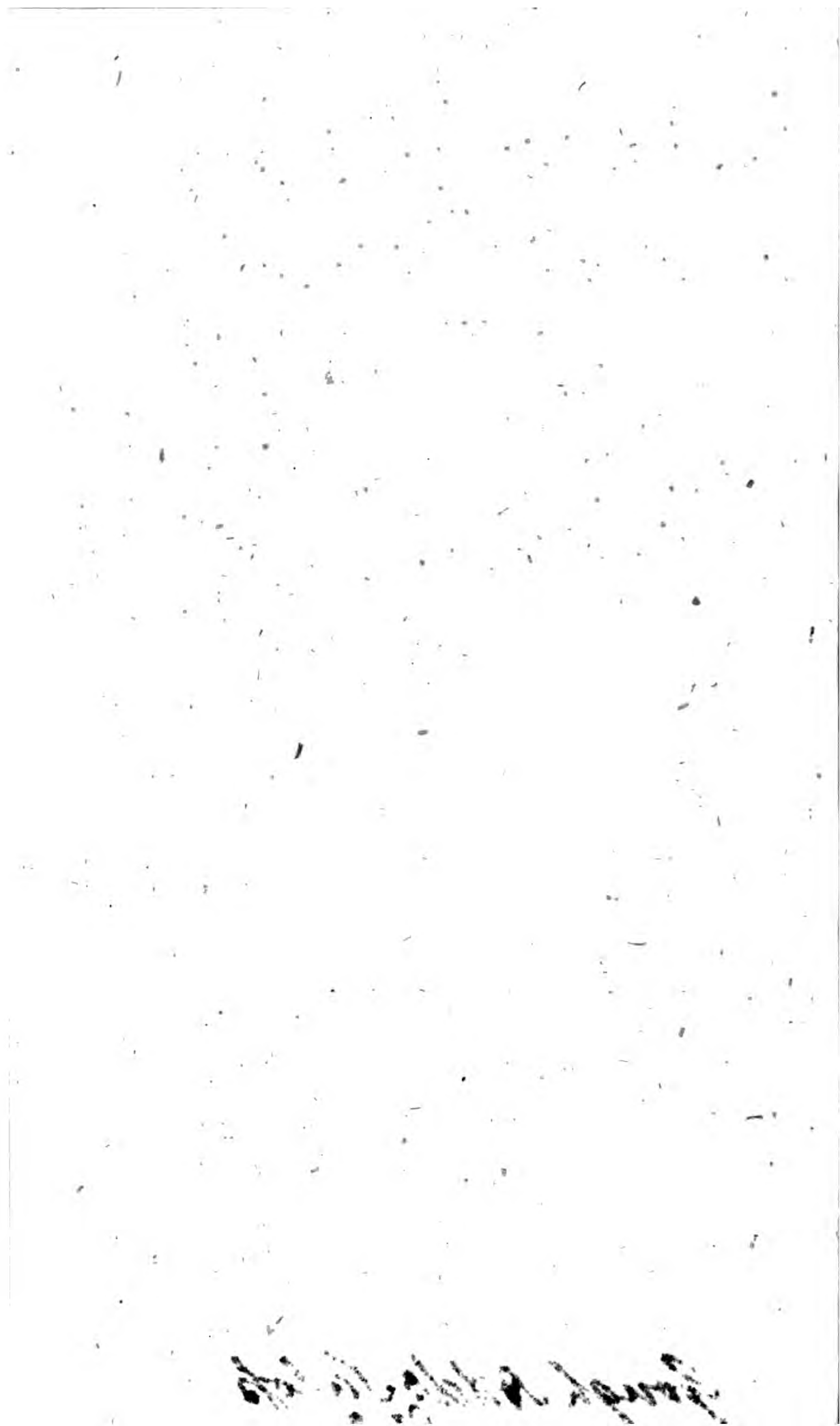
The Second Edition with Alterations and large Additions.

Printed for J. STOCKDALE, and to be had of all the Booksellers in Shrewsbury.

PRICE SIX-PENCE.

Any Elector for the Borough of Shrewsbury, will oblige Sir Richard Hill, by calling for, and accepting one of these letters; and whatever profits may afterwards arise from the Sale of them, will be given in Meat and Bread, to the Prisoners in the County Gaol.

Gough Add. Salop



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE predicament in which I stand with regard to my brother, makes it very difficult for me to know how to express myself in many instances. I have, however, in general, endeavoured to write as a third person no ways related; and if I have occasionally used the words "my brother," it is chiefly to avoid repetition, and to prevent the name of Hill so often occurring, as well as to keep clear of so many egotisms, which are never very agreeable; and though I have not the honor of being a Burges's myself, I sometimes speak as one of that respectable body, looking upon our cause as a common one: Besides replying to the personal attack upon me by Mr. W. Hill (for when I consider the reasons for which my name is introduced, I can consider it in no other light), I have still other, and I trust more disinterested views in this publication than the vindication of myself, and the defence of my brother. These views are to give a *real statement of facts*; to shew at whose door all the confusion and discord, in which the borough of Shrewsbury is involved, lies; and to preterve if possible, the freedom and independence of that borough, against and under any attacks or encroachments which

which may be made upon them, come they from what quarter they may. The service I have undertaken I am aware will be unwelcome to some, but I am persuaded it will be acceptable to many; and I think that both love and gratitude to the town, as well as respect and justice to the present members, require this small tribute at my hands. Indeed, repeatedly called upon as I am by Mr. W. Hill, I think some reply from me was almost unavoidable, though when I began it, I little thought of extending it to the present length, but only to have answered what related to myself in Mr. W. Hill's advertisement; however, one observation brought on others, and so on, till I resolved to digest the whole in the form of a pamphlet; and if I were to lose the friendship of thousands by so doing, of which however I have no fear, whilst I have justice on my side, and candor on that of my readers, I will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing (designedly) but the truth; to which I add—SO HELP ME GOD.

Dec. 15, 1795.

RICHARD HILL.

A LET.

L E T T E R, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

EVERY attempt to preserve the peace of Shrewsbury and its neighbourhood, by those who are the true friends of both, having been rendered entirely abortive, and that restless spirit of ambition or envy, or both united, after having been long undermining and working underground, forming secret combinations and alliances, yet hardly daring to stalk abroad, except by night, as if ashamed that the sun should be witness to its transactions, having now thrown off all disguise and restraint, appears under a thousand hideous forms, has attacked our ancient bulwarks, and entered within our venerable walls.

The contest is begun. The battle waxes warm. But what contest is this? What battle do we speak of? In few words, it is a battle for our rights and liberties; a contest whether or no this borough shall or shall not have the privilege of electing its own members. Whether aristocratic influence shall prevail and break down all before it, leading both burgeses and freemen linked together in chains, or whether the inde-

pendence of Shrewsbury shall resist and triumph over every machination secret or open to enslave it.

That this is no wrong statement of the case, will appear most evident if we consider who are our present members.

SIR WILLIAM PULTENEY, Bart. and
JOHN HILL, Esq.

The former has had the honor of representing you in Parliament for several sessions; was the great instrument of restoring to the freemen the right of suffrage, and ever since he first took his seat, wisdom, uprightnes, and strict attendance, have regulated his conduct and distinguished his character.

But the new candidate has positively declared, that it is not against Sir William Pulteney that he levels the dart; it must therefore be against your other very respectable member (for so I hope an own brother, who ought to know him best, may call him) Mr. John Hill.

But why so? Are the worthy electors of the town of Shrewsbury now on a sudden dissatisfied with Mr. J. Hill's parliamentary conduct, after it has stood the test, and had the approbation of near twelve years experience? If there are any complaints against him, from whence do they originate? Is he suspected of want of loyalty to the King? Is his attachment to the constitution called in question? and if so, by whom? Has he not in every instance in his power, shewn his affection and gratitude to the town of Shrewsbury? Has he ever been inattentive to the wishes of any one individual of that place, whenever he was able to serve them? or has he ever neglected to attend any public meeting where the interests of
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the borough at large were concerned? Where is the man who can or dares come forward, and bring any such accusation against him? What need therefore of a change, to *gratify* the *high ambition* of an *aspiring* youth, (I choose to keep as close to Mr. W. Hill's own words as possible) who tells you that when that *ambition* shall be *gratified*, *i. e.* by your supporting him in the work of most *gratefully* turning out his own relation and best friend, that his obligations and *gratitude* to you will then be so wonderfully great, that you may depend upon his constant and sedulous attention "to the peculiar interests of the borough, together with a firm and equal attachment to the just prerogatives of the crown, and the envied privileges of the British people."

But to come still a little closer.

Mr. John Hill is the near relation of the new young candidate, whose father, the late worthy Lord Berwick, left him executor to his will, and bequeathed the property of his children to his care, as one of his trustees. This trust during their minority he fulfilled with unwearied diligence, uniting the utmost tenderness to their persons, with the truest regard to their interests, whilst the long and tried friendship he had experienced from the deceased father, made him doubly happy in testifying his affection for the children. But could that late truly right honourable character now know what was going forward on the stage of life, could he behold those very sons, who in their infancy he had in a peculiar manner consigned to the care of his much esteemed friend and relation Mr. John Hill, could he, I say, behold them almost *as soon as their beards were grown*, exercising all their power and influence against that very friend and relation whom he so highly loved and valued, it is hard to affirm which would have been greatest, his surprize or his grief at
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the ungrateful treatment with which two of his sons* had recompensed all their protector's care.

In order to obviate this idea, which must strike the mind of every one, a falsehood of all others the most gross and palpable that ever disgraced an election contest, has been industriously spread abroad, and by some believed; though had the story been true, it would have been not less to the prejudice of Lord Berwick himself, than of Mr. J. Hill, since in reality it amounted to nothing short of a compromise between them to barter away the freedom of the borough, and to place it under the nod of aristocratic influence. The falsehood I allude to, is, that Mr. J. Hill accepted his seat, under promise of resigning it as soon as Lord Berwick should have a son of sufficient age to take it.

But besides that Lord Berwick was out of the country at the time Mr. J. Hill was invited to offer himself, and that Mr. Corbet of Sundorn was the first gentleman he consulted, and who honoured him with the most cordial support; can any man who knew the late judicious Lord Berwick suppose him capable of making such a proposal? Can any man who knows Mr. J. Hill suppose him capable of making a bargain so shameful and insulting to the town, so degrading to himself and his family, and which strikes as immediately at the virtue, the honour, the independence of Shrewsbury at large, as it does at the consequence of every gentleman of weight and property in its vicinity; Lord Berwick (the supposed contractor) excepted.

But, if there were nothing else to contradict so base a calumny, (let who may be the founder of it,

* We say *two* of his sons, because their amiable younger brother has, I believe, taken no part in these transactions.

he dares not come forth) the very flattering and honourable manner in which Mr. J. Hill was first called and chosen, must immediately put it to silence, and consign it to that horrible pit out of which it arose.

It is now fresh in the recollection of many, that Mr. J. Hill's first call to parliament was as unsought by himself, as it was liberal in the many respectable gentlemen who then joined, (Lord Berwick being at that time absent) in giving him the most pressing invitation to offer himself, in preference of two other candidates: This invitation however was at first refused, with every expression of humility and thankfulness, and it was not till after a very earnest repetition of it that it was accepted: And Lord Berwick then returning to Attingham, concurred in the general wish in behalf of his friend and relation Mr. John Hill.

Thus most honourably invited, and in a manner so very flattering to himself, by many gentlemen of leading interest, and wellcomed by the voters at large, will the electors of Shrewsbury (that free ancient, independent town, in which venality and corruption have never dared to shew their frightful heads,) suffer a member who, on account of the excellency of his own private character, (still pardon fraternal affection) was brought forward and seated by their own free united voices, and who has always served them in the British senate in the most upright independent manner, unfettered by place or pension, promise or *douceur*, to be turned out of parliament by the dictatorial mandate of a juvenile peer, or by the combination of any two or three great names united?

But to return more particularly to Mr. W. Hill's own advertisement, which to prevent the smallest misrepresentation, now follows *verbatim*.

*To the Worthy and Independent Burgesses and Freemen
Burgesses of the Town of Shrewsbury.*

GENTLEMEN,

ENCOURAGED by the many flattering Testimonies of Regard you have so frequently conferred upon my Family, I aspire to the high Honour of representing in Parliament the Town of Shrewsbury, at the next General Election; and, while I thus anxiously solicit your Favour and Support, must intreat your Attention to some Remarks I shall presume to offer on an Address circulated this Morning, and signed by my Cousin, your present Member.

The first Sentence charges me with an Attack upon the Personal Character of this respectable Relation, which I unequivocally disown;—neither by myself or Friends, has it been asserted that Mr. John Hill was under any Engagement to resign his Seat, whenever one of our Family was qualified to take it.—It is true my Father, though certainly incapable of *making any dishonourable Bargain*, doubtless harboured the *Wish*, and had he known *less of the human Mind*, might have entertained the *Expectation*, that such a Sacrifice would be made; as Sir Richard Hill had expressed in Conversation with a common Friend, his high Sense of the Obligation his Brother owed to my Father's Support, and, as it was then understood, more than insinuated such an Intention.

But no Thought was ever entertained of claiming this as a Promise;—other, indeed far different Circumstances, foster in my Mind the flattering Idea of representing you.—The long and uninterrupted Friendship my two immediate Ancestors had uniformly maintained with very many of the most respectable Burgesses and Freemen—the Contiguity of the Family Property—the constant Expenditure of an opulent Income, joined to the Personal Coun-
tenance

tenance and Support of most of the Neighbouring Gentlemen—These concurring Advantages induced me to submit my Pretensions to your Decision.

But it is asked, “ Why is the Peace of the Town thus early invaded?”—To this, a Statement of Facts is my Answer.—My Resolution taken, Mr. John Hill was candidly apprized of it—And he will have the goodness to recollect, that though for my own Part, disposed immediately to inform the worthy Electors of my Intention, at his Request that Inclination was suppressed, and a public Declaration deferred by mutual Engagement, from which HE afterwards requested to be released. In the Interim, common Prudence dictated an immediate Application to those Friends, upon whom my Support depended.—And will my Opponent say that his own Conduct has been the Reverse?—Have not his Friends written in the most pressing Terms to their Connections? Has Sir Richard, or Himself been wanting in any mode of Solicitation?

But Defence, not recrimination, is the Object of this Address—I hasten, therefore, to answer another Imputation—“ That I mean to trench on the Free Rights of this Independent Borough.”—This Accusation can only, it is presumed, allude to my having solicited the Assistance of some Gentlemen in the Vicinity.—And am I culpable for this? Surely not—I both confess the Fact, and defend its Principle.—*Without* most numerous Assurances of Approbation and Support, it would have ill become me, lightly to involve the Town in Contest and Dissention.—*With* such Sanction, my Hopes have been elevated, my Perseverance is justified.—Consequently, the Worthy and Independent Electors may assure themselves of my taking the Sense of the Town in the last Instance, and should that Event decide the Contest in my Favour, and gratify my highest Ambition, they may depend upon my constant and sedulous Attention to the peculiar Interests of their Borough, together with a firm and equal Attachment

attachment to the just Prerogatives of the Crown, and the envied Privileges of the British People.

With the deepest Sense of Gratitude for the Reception I have met with amongst you,

I have the Honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your most obliged and devoted

humble Servant,

WILLIAM HILL.

Attingham,
4th Dec. 1795.

My name having been twice introduced, and invidiously brought forward in this advertisement, at a time too when I was absent from Shropshire, attending my parliamentary duty, lest silence should be construed into acquiescence, I feel myself, however reluctantly, under the absolute necessity of giving an exact statement of what is there alluded to, as far as I can enter into Mr. W. Hill's meaning: and if in doing this I am led into a discussion on the whole of the subject of the opposition, I must claim the indulgence of those both in the county at large, and in the respectable town of Shrewsbury in particular, whose friendship and good-will I have ever esteemed it my honor to cultivate and my happiness to merit.

The most pointed stroke in this advertisement, is that which is levelled at a part the most susceptible of feeling its severity; I mean that, which under the expression "*had my father known less of the human mind, &c.*" conveys no dubious insinuation

tion both against my *honor*, my *veracity*, and my *probity*. But if these are gone, farewell every thing else, since the man who exists without them only lives to disgrace himself, and to be the pest of society. If Mr. W. Hill has any other meaning to fix on the expression, I shall be very happy to admit his own interpretation; but it appears to me, that the only construction which common sense can put upon it, is, that if the late Lord Berwick had not known Sir Richard Hill so well as he did, he might have *expected* that Sir Richard would have shewn himself a man of honor.

I now beg leave to state that the very first word I had ever heard of any promise or compromise whatever, either before or since my brother had the honor of his seat in Parliament, was from a very respectable gentleman of large property in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, Mr. Corbet of Sundorn, who I am persuaded had not the smallest doubt of what he asserted on that head, and *therefore* (to use his own word,) had come to the resolution of withholding the kind and powerful support with which he had on a former occasion honored my brother, in order to give it to Mr. W. Hill. This letter from Mr. Corbet was in answer to one I wrote to him requesting his interest in my brother's behalf, and this I thought was only a small mark of attention and respect to one, who had long been so good a friend to us both. I did not however, do this till some time after my arrival in London; besides this letter, I wrote to two or three confidential friends, but all was fair and open, and I was and am perfectly indifferent whether or no my letters were read by all the world, nay so fearful was I of acting in an underhand way in what I said to Mr. Corbet that I requested him to shew my letter at Attingham. Except in these instances, I have not solicited a single vote, neither have I had any communi-

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cation

cation whatever with my brother's agents, or had so much as seen his advertisement till some time after it appeared in the Shrewsbury Chronicle; and unless I had seen my brother absolutely knocked down, and had refused to help him up, I could not surely have done less. Yet the young Candidate puts the interrogatory in a very vaunting or rather taunting manner. "*Has Sir Richard been wanting in any mode of solicitation?*"

I do not think myself at liberty to publish either of Mr. Corbet's letters without his permission, suffice it to say that in a polite answer to my last, he freely acknowledged a conviction, that no promise or compromise had ever taken place as to my brother's resignation, but he had heard Lord Berwick express *hints* that he wished it, when he should have a son of age to take the seat.

But though I have no right to publish Mr. Corbet's letters to me, I hope it will throw some light on what must otherwise be looked on as a dark transaction, if I here give a copy of my last letter to Mr. Corbet.

"DEAR SIR,

" I certainly ought to apologize for troubling you with another letter after your decisive answer to my first; but as it is merely to rectify a very great mistake, I hope you will not be displeased.

" I beg leave to assure you upon my word and honor, that there never was the smallest idea, much less promise of my brother's resigning his seat to any son of Lord Berwick; neither indeed could there have been, for in the first instance, such a compromise would have been a shameful insult to the
Electors

Electors of Shrewsbury, and to all those Gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who invited him to stand

“ 2dly. I hope you know enough of my brother, to be assured he never would have wished for his seat on any such dishonourable terms. And enough of the late worthy Lord Berwick, to be certain that he never would have offered them.

“ 3dly. If my brother had been mean enough to submit to such a proposal, he must have added falsehood to meanness now to deny it.

“ 4thly. You must well recollect, that you was the first person my brother waited on after Sir Charlton Leighton’s death, when Lord Berwick was out of the country, and that he (my brother) asked you if you had any thoughts of offering yourself? If you then had an idea that my brother was only to stop the gap for Lord Berwick’s family, would not the question itself have been both ridiculous and affronting to you, as well as to many others?

“ Pray excuse my having given you this further trouble, and believe me,

“ Dear Sir,

“ With true respect and esteem,

“ Your most obliged humble servant,

“ R. HILL.”

“ P. S. As I wish to do nothing privately or underhand, you have my free permission to shew this at Attingham.”

Notwithstanding all our pains to contradict it, the report of my brother's promise of resignation still gained ground, which made him judge it necessary to write to Mr. Edward Burton, a near relation of the late Lord Berwick, to inquire on what authority he had asserted, that he understood the borough was to be resigned when Lord Berwick should have a son old enough to take the seat; Mr. Edward Burton states in his answer, that a conversation had passed between him and Sir Richard Hill at Carnarvon, on that point, and even affirms that Sir Richard then *voluntarily* told him that, "if one of Lord Berwick's sons had been of age to have offered himself, his (Sir Richard's brother) would not have thought of the borough;" and further says, that *to the best of his recollection*, Sir Richard added, that "if ever one of them should hereafter think of it, he was sure that his brother would not be the means of keeping him out."

Upon this Mr. John Hill inclosed a copy of Mr. Edward Burton's letter to me, and by the next post I wrote back as follows.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I HAVE this day received yours, and am quite astonished at the contents of that which you have had from Mr. E. Burton, and which ought to be most positively contradicted as soon as possible; I cannot answer for his memory; though I am persuaded he would not willingly misrepresent in order to serve a purpose, much less that his visit was with intent to draw any thing out of me, that he might in future take advantage of, when he called on me for a few minutes at Carnarvon; at which time I do not know that a single syllable passed between us relative to the election, though it is possible something might
be

be said on that as well as any other subject, especially as it was, I believe, soon after you came into Parliament. That I *might* mention our obligations to Lord Berwick for his support, is also very probable, though I knew that he was absent from home, when you were first invited to offer yourself; but upon the utmost stretch of my recollection, I do not remember that one word, hint, or idea, ever passed through my mind, much less through my lips, relative to your resignation on a future occasion to any son of Lord Berwick, or that I, or Mr. E. Burton, started any thing whatever on the business. He is therefore much in the right to give his letter an appearance of candour, by making some concessions as to the abominable falsehood, which has been raised *somewhere*; and without which, Mr. W. Hill could not have had a word to offer, in his own behalf; but in order to add insult to injury, we are both of us accused of a breach of promise to palliate his ingratitude.

“ I further assure you my dear brother, upon my word and honor, that nothing even in the slightest way, ever passed between me and the late Lord Berwick, on the subject of your giving up your seat to his son; if there had, you must certainly have been the first person to whom I should have mentioned it, but I am sure I should never have wished to see you sitting in the House of Commons, whilst under any such shameful and degrading circumstances, shameful and degrading not less to the town of Shrewsbury, than to yourself and to me; and certainly not much to the credit of Lord Berwick himself.

“ I shall only add, that as I most sensibly and gratefully feel my obligations to the county at large on my own account, so to the town of Shrewsbury in a most particular manner on account of us both; and therefore, I hope you will rest assured, that as you were at first called to represent the borough in a
way

way so very honourable to yourself, and so very handsome in your constituents, I should look upon a desertion of you, as a desertion of them, and of their dearest rights and privileges. In short, I think the town as well as most of the neighbouring gentlemen very cavalierly treated, without one shadow of a reason given for the indignity offered them, and, if I mistake not, they will think so too.

“ Believe me,

“ My dear Brother,

“ Ever most affectionately yours,

RICHARD HILL.”

“ P. S. Mr. E. Burton says, he recollects some conversation between Lord Berwick and him, relative to your resignation in favour of his son, when you first came into Parliament; I pretend not to affirm, what might or might not have passed between these two gentlemen, when nobody was present but themselves; but as Mr. W. Hill was at that time quite a *baby*, it was looking very far forward indeed to view him seated in St. Stephen's chapel; and it is wonderfully strange, that during the space of ten or twelve years, not a syllable about this most submissive resignation should ever have been mentioned, or as far as it appears ever have been thought on, till the present occasion oiled up some rusty memories.”

HAVING, I hope, thoroughly cleared away every impression, which might have been made on the minds of any, as to a promise or compact between either my brother or myself with the late Lord Berwick, or any thing which had a tendency to create such an idea; having also animadverted on the exulting interrogatory, “ Has Sir Richard been wanting in any mode
of

of solicitation?" I now come to speak a little more particularly, as to some other parts of Mr. W. Hill's address. Having confessed that he does not found his pretensions on the basis of any such promise or compromise, he proceeds to tell us on what he does found them: And these are, "the friendship and
 "connections of his two immediate ancestors with
 "the borough—the contiguity of the family pro-
 "perty—the constant expenditure of an opulent in-
 "come, joined to the personal countenance and
 "support of most of the neighbouring gentle-
 "men."

With regard to most of these, is Mr. J. Hill, more exceptionable than his present worthy colleague, Sir William Pulteney, or than the two former Members, Sir Charlton Leighton, or the late Lord Clive? Or is the borough of Shrewsbury to be looked on as hereditary, because Lord Berwick and his father both represented it for a time? It is true Attingham is some miles nearer to Shrewsbury, than either Prees or Hawkstone, though not much if at all nearer than Hardwick, where the late Sir Rowland Hill resided many years: and I believe if a calculation could be made of the sums expended in Shrewsbury for these last ten years, by the house of Attingham, and those of Prees and Hawkstone, that the scale would greatly preponderate in favour of the latter.

Family property and an opulent income, it will readily be allowed, are no trifling considerations, and that Lord Berwick is possessed of these in a high degree, and that they bring with them a large weight of consequence, especially when attached to personal rank, is not to be doubted. But Mr. W. Hill in his present situation can have no other claim to these, except what rests in his brother's will and pleasure;
 and

and having no house or residence, that he can call his own, may he not be, and is he not, here and there and every where, according as fancy and caprice may lead him? And what benefit then can the town expect from his own purse or favours? When once the bustle of an election is over, and the Candidate has gained his own ends, we often see expectations and protestations vanish into air; but this neither has been, nor can be the case, so long as you adhere to your present member, who has given you so long a proof of his attachment to you, though he never thought of any *right* or *footing*, but what was derived through your free and honourable suffrages.

The only personal advantages, therefore, which MAY accrue to Mr. W. Hill, from the circumstances mentioned in his address, arise principally from Lord Berwick's house and estate, which are no more his at present, than the Hawkstone property belongs to my brother, who, if I may judge from all his past conduct, would not think himself *over modest* if, during my life time, he had held out that *opulent income* as a bait to his present constituents; and if he had, I am certain that none of them would have swallowed it. Nevertheless, that Mr. W. Hill, by a recent elevation over the head of the family, (into the cause of which we *now* make no inquiry) has thereby gained a superiority in point of rank over his cousin, Mr. J. Hill, is not to be doubted; but let it be well considered, that near affinity to a Peer of the realm, in most places where the purity of the constitution is respected, would operate as no small obstacle to the choice of such a representative, for in proportion as the House of Commons is influenced or garbled by the House of Peers, the former loses its consequence, and dwindles into nothing; and hence that long recorded but little regarded resolution of the House of Commons,

“ that

“ that no Peer should interfere in the election of a member of the Lower House.”

We will therefore grant Mr. W. Hill all that preeminence and dignity, to which he has risen by his father's late creation to a Peerage; we will allow, that his rank entitles him to go into a private room, before his relation Mr. J. Hill, but this rank gives him no pretensions to go first into the great assembly of the nation.

Let us, however, pursue this subject a little further, and see by what means our young candidate ascended the ladder of honor, on which he is now mounted.

From whence had Lord Berwick and his family all their present riches, and all their consequence? Let it be known to all the good burgeses of Shrewsbury, (though few in this neighbourhood can be ignorant of it) that every acre of land they possess, in Shropshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire, some late changes and purchases excepted, the patronage they enjoy, the arms they bear, the name they take, the house at Tern, as well as that in Cleveland Court, London, ALL came to them from the Hills of Hawkstone; being bequeathed to the Harwoods considerably within the date of the present century, by the honourable Richard Hill, uncle to the late Sir Rowland Hill, and about that time, Ambassador in Holland, whose sister Mr. Harwood married.*

If these things are so, surely the younger *branch* of the family ought not to boast itself against the elder, nor yet the ungrateful *stock* to forget the

* The late Lord Berwick was the first of that family who was born a Hill, the name of his Lordship's father the late Mr. Hill of Tern, was Harwood, till he changed it for that of Hill, pursuant to my great Uncle's will.

fcion by which it was meliorated, and its nature changed.

But leaving allegory, it may be asked, Is inferiority of extraction the fault of any man? certainly not; but it is a reason why he should not raise his crest too high; and if he be raised, why he should at least be grateful to those who first lifted him out of obscurity: yet so very marked and pointed is the opposition of Mr. W. Hill against his own relation and his father's old steady friend, that his (Mr. W. Hill's) agents solicit votes for Sir William Pulteney, jointly as for himself, and he declares that no step he takes is at all meant to affect him, but only Mr. J. Hill. But upon this occasion, Sir William, whose conduct throughout this business, has been honorable, open, and upright in the extreme, may well reply

*Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis
Tempus eget.*

There is still a further reason why Mr. W. Hill should have observed some degree of delicacy and respect, before he had come forward in the way he has done.

It is well known by many, (and particularly so to Mr. W. Hill, for I mentioned it to him at Hawkstone, in my brother's presence, though he appeared no stranger to it) that when the late Lord Berwick wished to represent the county instead of the borough, he made his first application, to Sir Rowland Hill for his support; which application was prefaced by a declaration, "that if either Sir Rowland himself, or his son, (now Sir Richard Hill) had any intention of offering themselves, he should not think of it." Sir Rowland having long before resigned his parliamentary seat for the comforts of retirement, had no thoughts
of

of such an honor at his time of life, but having previously held conversation with his son on the subject of offering himself, (provided he was approved by the gentlemen of the county) Mr. Hill was again consulted, and his answer was in substance exactly as follows, "that as his near relation, Mr. Noel Hill, appeared so anxious for the honor of representing the county, he would not stand in the way of his wishes, however desirous he might be on a future occasion of coming in himself, if the sense of the county was in his favour." Thus the matter ended, to Mr. Noel Hill's intire satisfaction, and he expressed his obligations in the highest terms, both to Sir Rowland and to Mr. Hill, for the very handsome manner in which they had behaved to him. In return for this friendly and disinterested conduct, I am now injuriously, *spitefully*, and without the smallest provocation on my part, reproached by the son in a second address, with "*entertaining the bold idea of monopolizing both town and county.*" In answer to this, I shall gratefully bring to the recollection of my kind constituents, that I was placed in the seat which I have the honour to fill in Parliament, in the same truly honourable and independent manner, in which my brother was invited to his; without the smallest attempt to force myself on the country, much less to *thrust out* any other member.

WHAT other reason can be devised for discarding the member, who has filled his seat with so much credit to himself, and with the unanimous good will of his constituents for so many years?

Does the young Candidate suppose that his youth and inexperience will furnish him with a more sound judgment and greater abilities for the discharge of his parliamentary duty, than his relation, who has seen more than twice his years, or has he in store any particular services for the town of Shrewsbury

and the public at large, which it is out of the power of the present member to confer? By the pompous conclusion of his address, one would really think this to be the case.

If Mr. W. Hill had wished to represent the town of Shrewsbury, and had restrained his wishes within the bounds of civility and politeness, perhaps (agreeable to what I told him at Hawkstone) in a very short period, that door would have opened to him on its own accord; of which he must now force the lock.

Men of judgment will consider times and opportunities, and will regulate their own desires and behaviour by them. Who may have been Mr. W. Hill's advisers on this occasion, I pretend not to guess; but this is certain, that if he had consulted with men of sound sense and experience, his line of conduct would have been very different from what it has been. But rash young men are too apt to be of Rehoboam's mind, and to refuse taking old heads for their counsellors.

How long ago it may be since the mischief was planned, and first brought into operation, I pretend not to determine; but that it must have been a considerable time is certain; for, when Mr. J. Hill wrote to some gentlemen, who *had been* his steady friends, and to whom he never gave cause to be otherwise, either publicly or privately, the answer he received from them, was, "that they had promised to support Lord Berwick's brother."

Nay, it was even rumored, that whilst Lord Berwick was in camp last summer, with the county militia, he had solicited, and had obtained promises of the support and interest of some gentlemen of great

great respectability and consequence in Mr. W. Hill's behalf.

It is very possible, that as Mr. J. Hill is fond of a country life, and has a numerous family to attend to, that had the present Lord Berwick and Mr. W. Hill made him acquainted with their wishes in a generous, open, friendly manner, before they had set engines at work for his overthrow; that after he had consulted those friends who first invited him to offer himself, and who afterwards seated him in the borough, he might have resigned his seat, and have left it to the free electors, in whom alone is vested the right of choice, to have filled it up in what manner they should judge best; but to have made a transfer of it to Mr. W. Hill, or to any other gentleman, was a step in no way to be borne or thought of; and unless Mr. J. Hill's constituents had deserted him, he must now be highly blameable to desert them, on account of any menacing appearances of opposition from the overgrown influence of two or three individuals, who expect all the rest, both corporation and freemen to dance after their beck.

No one within this circle, need be told that the houses of Attingham and Sundorn were by no means in unison on the point of Shrewsbury politics, during most of the late Lord Berwick's time; and that his Lordship and the late Mr. Mytton were still at a much farther political distance, is well known: the coalition therefore formed on this occasion, is not less extraordinary than the opposition of Attingham to the Hawkstone family. Far be it from me to lament that neighbouring gentlemen of property who were at variance, should be reconciled. On the contrary, I rejoice at it, and am only grieved that an event which makes those to be friends who before were at enmity, should prove injurious to any other gentlemen

men who have always had the honor and happiness of living on the best of terms with all parties.

This contest certainly includes in it much more than if there had been a vacancy by either of the present members declining to offer themselves again; for it is not merely whether I shall vote for Mr. W. Hill, but whether I shall vote for forcibly turning Mr. J. Hill out; and under what difficult circumstances must this consideration involve many, who always have lived, and who always wish to live on a friendly footing with both families, and who never have experienced any thing but the utmost good will from the present members? Because I wish to render Mr. W. Hill a favour, am I therefore to do Mr. J. Hill an injury? and even to do violence to my own feelings, whilst I am obliging the one at the expence of disobliging the other, and absolutely giving him the wound of his political death, as a reward for his past services in his king and country's cause? And shall these be totally forgotten; as well as those of his brave sons, who have been exposing themselves to all the hardships and dangers of foreign war in the same glorious cause, and on whose account he is surely intitled to respect, as well as on his own?

But it is the will and pleasure of a young Lord and his brother that he should be dismissed, because this brother of his Lorship's wants his seat, and is of opinion, that you **MUST** obey.

Let me now observe, that the indignity offered you as free electors, by first attempting to take the town by surprize, and then bombarding it from the ramparts of ambition, with the shells of promises, and the red hot balls of threatenings, can only be exceeded by the dishonourable terms on which you are now called upon to surrender it into the hands of the besiegers,
and

and with it the precious stores of your own privileges and independence, and that perhaps,———FOR EVER.

That this is no aggravation, will be clear when I say, (it is most strongly suspected,) that the same coalition now formed to turn out Mr. J. Hill, the member of your own choice, has already so far forged the iron links of your future slavery, as to have settled it among themselves, who shall represent you jointly with Mr. W. Hill, when your other worthy member shall be no more; and this is probably the reason why Mr. W. Hill declares that no blow was *now* aimed at Sir William Pulteney.

Many may say, they are sorry for the distractions the borough is thrown into, but let them consider who has been the cause of them; and whether in order to promote peace, they ought to encourage the disturbers of it: some again talk of a happy compromise for the sake of the town: Can it be well called a *happy compromise* to knock your present old member on the head, and deprive him of his parliamentary life, in order to make room for his hopeful young Ward? Brotherly affection still apart, I beseech you to consider the indelicacy, the indignity, and cruelty of such usage in return for past and faithful services. But if after all, you are tame enough to sacrifice the dearest rights of Englishmen and freemen, to the ambitious views and wanton caprice of an unexperienced stripling, then let Salopia mingle her tears with the stream that surrounds her walls. Her sons have lost their liberties, and she herself is reduced to a state below the abject condition of Old Sarum: Since in that poor borough two or three voters are under the controul of one great man, whilst in Shrewsbury two or three great men, would bring more than five hundred voters under their controul.

It

It is possible that the town of Shrewsbury as well as Mr. J. Hill, might have been won by gentle means, but I am mistaken if it will surrender by storm; nor is there a calm, dispassionate man in it, who will not feel for the mischiefs and calamities, which are brought upon it by the puerile ambition and impetuosity of the new candidate, by a short address to whom, I shall now conclude this pamphlet.

It is little worth my while sir, to conjecture who may have been the author of the advertisement, in which I am so particularly brought forward to notice; to suppose it was written by yourself, would be a thought severe in the extreme, since a more complete farrago of bombast, folly, nonsense, misrepresentation, and contradictions, surely never appeared before the public eye in so short a compass of paper; for whilst it substantiates every fact in my brother's address, which it is meant to invalidate, it makes you at once deny, that you are the *invader* of the peace of the borough, and compels you to confess, that you have *lightly involved it in contest and dissention*; and whilst it is addressed to the independent voters in general, it holds you up as brought forward only by some great names, and appeals to the electors at large solely *in the last instance*. Nay more, it boasts of the *long uninterrupted friendship* between your *two immediate ancestors with both burgesses and freemen*, though it be well known that your late father was an enemy to the just rights of the latter, and that the very name of *freemen burgesses* was a term unheard of in your grandfather's time. With regard to myself personally, it contains two good round assertions, in which open generous truth has no share at all.

I shall only add, that those who esteem you most, will in future wish you a better cause or a better advocate.

But suffer a word of expostulation,

If

Is it nothing to you, young gentleman, to throw the town into confusion? to sow the seeds of animosity and discord among nearest and dearest friends, relations, and neighbours? To introduce a spirit of dissipation and licentiousness among the lower orders of men, which must always open the way to bribery and corruption, and all this because your own pride urges you to it, and must be gratified? At all events, *Delenda est Carthago*.—Down goes Shrewsbury.

What is the cause of all this? Have not *you*, have not all that belong to you, been uniformly treated with every mark which friendship, esteem, and love could bestow, by all the Hawkstone family? And are these your returns?

Whilst we lament that such a copious stream of ingratitude should issue from the descendants of *Harwood*, we trust not a single drop or particle of it will be found in the veins of a TRUE HILL.

Let us for a moment suppose you arrived at the height of your wishes in this business, and seated as member for Shrewsbury instead of your relation Mr. John Hill, could you find yourself easy, satisfied, and even happy in your triumph? A triumph over all the generous sentiments and endearing ties which connect society and adorn human nature; a triumph over all the liberal grateful feelings which we owe to benefactors, friends and relations; a triumph over the virtue and moral principles of many, as well as over the freedom and independence of Shrewsbury itself, which henceforward must in case of your success, hide its once honorable head, and sneak under the mean and servile appellation of *Lord Berwick's borough*.

No doubt, Sir, we shall be favored with many more promises, besides those contained in your present address,

dress, of your independent conduct in parliament, and of your steady attachment to the place you wish to represent ; but by what rule can we give credit to these promises ? Can that man lay claim to independence himself, who would wrest the independence of others out of their hands ? Or can any member be attached to his constituents, who himself is a stranger to every attachment of affinity, consanguinity, gratitude, and affection ?

Do not, Sir, rate your own interest, consequence, or popularity, by the number of votes you may have, but consider how many would have been glad to have given them to your injured relation, but who from dependence, or what may be called awkwardness of situation, could not avoid voting for you.

Who will praise you for the part you have taken ? In my conscience, I believe scarcely a single individual. Who will blame you ? Not only all, who go against you, but many, very many of those, who think they **MUST** go with you.

Look at the free, honest, independent support of the old member. Consider how many gentlemen of worth, good sense, honor and respectability give him their hearts, as well as their voices : look, I say, at this, and then let all the world judge, whether Mr. J. Hill would not have more cause to triumph in his honorable retreat, than you in your extorted majority, among whom are some very reluctant freemen burgesses, who notwithstanding the late discovery made by the young candidate of the *long and uninterrupted friendship of his two immediate ancestors with both burgesses and freemen*, need not be reminded that it was owing to the **MANDAMUS CAUSE** alone, that they obtained their rights. Does it favour much of free choice, to have it said to an old member,

member, "O Sir! Sir! I should be happy to vote for you, and to have you keep your seat, for indeed I have no fault to find with you. I am sensible that you have been extremely ill used, and that this is a very UNNATURAL opposition; but you know Sir, you know, you know how I am circumstanced, and how I have been threatened, however come on it what will, I cannot go against honest John Hill." Spoke like a truly honest man, and I doubt not, but it is and will be the language of many.

Let your reasons for disturbing the peace of the borough be ever so many, or ever so specious, they must all centre in this one. "I want to get my own relation, and my father's friend out, that I may fill his place. If he will tamely submit, I will thank him with great politeness, and give him my hand; if not, I must beg leave to make use of my foot."

Once more. If the borough of Shrewsbury were so much your object, would it not have become you much better, if you had in a confidential manner, consulted your kind relation Mr. J. Hill, as to his intentions of offering himself again at the next election, instead of forming dark conspiracies and cabals, working your way like a mole under ground, so long before the election took place? What, I say, was all this, but to act over again the part of Guy Faux, whose train of gun-powder was not discovered till the blow was just going to be struck; and then you and Lord Berwick confessed and told what you could no longer keep secret, by a letter to my brother and me, which I think neither Lord Berwick nor you will venture to make public? But how does this conduct agree with the pretty tale lately invented and propagated, of a promise on the part of Mr. J. Hill (by the approbation of his brother Sir Richard) to resign his seat to you? Does not all this subterranean

ous business prove to demonstration that no such compromise, insinuation, or idea, call it what you please, ever existed? Else, why go this way to work? Why not come forward and claim the compact? At least, why was it never so much as hinted at, either to Sir R. Hill or his brother, (the supposed parties concerned in it,) during the long space of a dozen years, and never brought out of the budget till a few weeks ago? Had this been the case, what need of *nocturnal canvasses*,* or any other indirect means to obtain what was already gained and settled? Besides, what ground or pretensions could the late Lord Berwick have for expecting my brother would ever have acquiesced in such an unreasonable proposal? Might he not with equal, nay, with much more cause have requested a resignation from the late Sir Charlton Leighton, of whom he was the strenuous supporter? Yet I am persuaded he never mentioned such an idea to him or to any other person; but it seems that even a *hint* thrown

* It is really curious to observe how Mr. W. Hill and his party throw their own *dark* transactions at my brother's door, by accusing him of what he never was guilty of, in order to exempt themselves, as in this case of *night canvassing*, which they actually began, contrary to every agreement, whilst he was attending his parliamentary duty in London. What was this but to imitate the cruel Nero, who set the city of Rome in flames, and then caused the christians to be punished for the fact?

The same sort of conduct has been observed in all the addresses and advertisements which have been published. Whatever comes forth from Mr. W. Hill's party, however scurrilous, full of misrepresentation, spiteful or ill-natured, is *carrying on the contest in a good humored, amicable manner*; but when his subterfuges are discovered and laid open, and plain, simple unveiled truth and stubborn facts bear hard upon decorated falsehood; O, then the cry is, *How replete with acrimony! Nothing short of gall and vinegar itself!!!* but so it generally happens, that where good sense and arguments fall short, the lack of them is plentifully supplied by calling names and flinging dirt.

out

out by his Lordship several years ago, and with which my brother himself was never acquainted, is now to operate for dispossessing him of his seat — You must well remember the friendly conversation, which on the receipt of Lord Berwick's most extraordinary letter, in which the names of Mr. PROBERT* and Mr. Mytton are brought up, and which I should be glad to see published, took place both at Hawkstone and at Prees, particularly at the latter, and on whom you then threw the blame, as being the author, or rather the *authoress* of the opposition, for the confession was, *Dux fœmina facti*, and you then called her THAT AMBITIOUS WOMAN. You must also perfectly recollect the good advice which both I and my brother gave you on the occasion, (abstracted from the delicacy of his own situation) and the reasons why, attacked as he had been, he could not give up his seat, without giving up his friends also. Mr. J. Hill and myself both thought you appeared to be satisfied. How, after this you came to declare either by word or letter, *that Mr. J. Hill had not*

* Many causes might be assigned why this gentleman should on all occasions shew himself friendly to Hawkstone and Prees, but not one why he should be inimical to either; and if I do him the injustice in thinking this to be the case, I confess my suspicions are grounded on Lord Berwick's letter.

It is true he did not personally attend Mr. W. Hill's canvass, (being rather *sick that day*) but his clerk was exhibited in the grand procession; so that the *royal assent was given by commission*. This *busy meddling* gentleman himself best knows his obligations to Lord Berwick's family, but I never heard that he had any, which makes me suspect that he has *something* more in view than Mr. W. Hill's success on the present occasion. But be his plots and schemes what they may, I have no apprehensions concerning them, being determined whatever may be my own or my brother's situation now or in future, that Mr. Probert's machinations shall never operate to rob me either of my own peace of mind, or of that real respect, esteem, and gratitude which I owe and bear to every gentleman in this county, and with whom I ever wish to live and dye in terms of the most perfect harmony.

Just

sufficiently explained himself as to his intention of standing again, must be left to your own consideration.

This interview which took place only a few days before the present meeting of Parliament, was carried on in the most amicable manner. My brother then told you, that whatever might be his (my brother's) design in future, he could not submit to be taken by surprize; he pressed you not to disturb the friendship which had so long subsisted between the families, and cautioned you always to avoid talking of *a right* to the borough, which he was sure the independence of Shrewsbury would never relish!

The advice I then gave you was nearly in the following words, which I prefaced by saying, that I would speak to you like that friend I hoped I had always proved myself (and my partiality to you is well known) and would put my brother's situation quite out of the question. "My dear lad, you are
" very young; be contented for a short period, do
" not, I beseech you, interrupt the peace of the
" town, and the harmony of two families so nearly
" allied. I hope the interests of the Hills will always
" be one and the same: Perhaps, in a very short
" while, every thing may go agreeably to your own
" and Lord Berwick's wishes, whereas a false or
" impetuous step now, may be the means of ex-
" cluding you at present, and even on a future oc-
" casion."

Let it be observed, that when this conversation took place, neither I or my brother had the smallest suspicion, how far matters had proceeded towards his overthrow; else the question would have been put to you, why or wherefore is the opposition raised? And if you can give any other answer
than

than "merely to gratify my boyish ambition," you may now produce it, otherwise we shall be obliged to agree with a discerning and most respectable gentleman, who has always been a sincere friend to the house of Attingham, that it is *wanton, ungrateful, and illiberal*, in the highest degree.

And now after all I have written, I must confess the truth, and say, that as I loved you from a child, so I feel in spite of your provocations that I still love you, and am ready to persuade myself that the breach between us was made by some *deep designing* men, who whilst we become their dupes, have other views before them than what regard the present contest: but if an everlasting separation is to take place, and the families must remain at irreconcilable variance, I find I cannot take leave of you without sensations similar to those which an affectionate parent once experienced towards a revolted child when he went away weeping, and cried, "O my son Absalam, O Absalam my son, my son!!!"

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, Mr. E. Burton has written to me complaining of misrepresentation and severity on account of my letter, page 12, 13, &c. I can only say that I am very sorry he should think there was either the one or the other, and *in point of time*, am much obliged to him for having from his own memorandum book, corrected an undesigned error in my letter; though as to the supposed conversation itself, I cannot alter my opinion at all: If however he wishes to investigate this business more fully, he is perfectly at liberty to publish his own letters to me and my answers, that by the perusal of both, others may form a proper judgment which of us have most cause of complaint. In the mean while, I hope he will give me full credit; when I assure him that I would not willingly give him the smallest degree of offence whatever, and should be extremely concerned if misapprehensions or mistakes on either side, should occasion a separation between us, or operate to make me forfeit his regard and friendship, or that of his family, for all of whom I profess a very sincere esteem.

APPENDIX.

N. B. I now annex my brother's first advertisement; that every reader may judge how far Mr. W. Hill's is an answer to it, by seeing them both together.

To

*To the Free and Independent Burgesses and Freemen
Burgesses of the Town of SHREWSBURY.*

GENTLEMEN,

IT gives me the deepest Concern to be under the necessity of addressing you on the very distressing circumstance of an attack, being made (from a quarter from whence I little expected, and trust still less merited) not only on my pretensions to your future favours; but also on what is even more dear to me than the high honor I have enjoyed of being one of your Representatives in Parliament for nearly twelve years: my own *Character* as an *honest Man*, and your free rights to elect your own Representative.

You doubtless know, that Mr. William Hill, Lord Berwick's Brother, is my Opponent, and that he is cordially supported by some, whose confidence I formerly enjoyed, and whose friendships (as I was not conscious of having done any thing to forfeit) I flattered myself until very lately, that I still possessed. Had I in confidence received any intimation of a wish being entertained for me to retire, I should have thought it my *indispensable* Duty to have consulted you, who did me the Honor of calling me forth from private life to represent you; and had it appeared to be your inclination that I should resign my future Pretensions in favor of my Opponent, I certainly would have done it with as much satisfaction and gratitude, as I at first accepted the high Honour you conferred on me.

You, Gentlemen, will naturally enquire why is the Peace and Harmony of the Town (which has so long and happily reigned among us) to be thus early disturbed? I can with confidence assure you, that it has been my earnest endeavour to prevent it. As soon as I knew that it was the determination of my young Relations to endeavour to turn me out of my seat in Parliament, I requested of them (engaging to do the same myself) to defer

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taking any steps until a dissolution of Parliament, (which I then thought and still continue to think will not be soon) should actually take place. To this they refused to accede, and, I am well informed, have been taking some advantage of my absence, when obeying your Instructions, and attending my duty in the House of Commons, at a moment of more than *ordinary Difficulty and Danger*. I cannot conclude this Address to you without taking notice of a Report which I find has been industriously circulated to my disadvantage and discredit, *viz.* "That on my first coming into Parliament I engaged to resign my situation, when a Son of Lord Berwick's was qualified to succeed me." However, as my greatest Adversaries now allow this to be a misrepresentation, I shall only add, that could I have been guilty of such a breach of faith, I should not only have been deservedly deemed unfit for your Representative, but also unworthy your Society. I am certain that all of you who knew my late dear and worthy Friend, well know him to have been incapable of attempting to make such a Bargain of you, and I will venture to affirm, that he had too high an opinion of my Honor to think that I would accede to such Terms.

Flattering myself that you will excuse the liberty I have taken in thus publicly addressing you, in hopes of removing some Prejudices which I fear, through private misrepresentations, may be entertained against me; I beg leave to subscribe myself, trusting for a continuance of your Support at the next General Election,

Very respectfully,

GENTLEMEN,

Your much obliged and

Most devoted humble Servant,

JOHN HILL.

Press,

Dec. 3, 1795.

For Mr. W. Hill's Reply to the above, the Reader is referred to page 6, in this pamphlet.

A day or two afterwards my Brother's Answer to Mr. W Hill appeared in the Shrewsbury Chronicle as follows.

To

*To the Free and Independent Burgesses and Freemen
Burgesses of the Town of SHREWSBURY.*

GENTLEMEN,

AS Mr. WILLIAM HILL has just announced his intention of "paying his personal respects to you," by a *public canvass*, I think it incumbent on me to explain the circumstance on which he would attempt to justify so indelicate and extraordinary a proposal. In the course of my canvass yesterday and to-day, which was conducted in the most private manner, a gentleman accidentally met me and the Friend who did me the honor of accompanying me on that occasion, walked with us for a short time, and then left us. On this trivial and *incidental* circumstance Mr. W. Hill grounds the false and injurious charge of my having "thus early commenced a *public canvass*," though, I declare upon my honor, that it was the studied wish of myself and my Friends to avoid even the appearance of what he would thus unjustly lay to my charge. In justification of my own conduct, and to prevent any unfavourable impression which the *notice* he has just circulated of *his* intention to commence a *public canvass* may make on your minds, I have thought it necessary to expose the futility and injustice of the pretext he has adopted for the purpose of giving ample scope to his ambitious procedure; which I trust, none of you, who wish well to the peace of the town, and expect that *truth* and *decorum* should be conspicuous in the deportment of the candidates for your support, can possibly justify.

But, Gentlemen, I have something more important to submit to your consideration. I have been through every stage of this painful business, extremely cautious of asserting any thing, which I could not prove on the most indubitable evidence; and my caution would be proportionably excited as the occasion on which I publicly addressed you, Gentlemen, was important and critical. In my former Address, I complained of "an *attack* having been made on my character as an honest man," by a report industriously

circulated, and too precipitately credited, that I was under the engagement of a *promise* to resign my seat in Parliament in favour of one of the sons of the late Lord Berwick. That such an attack *was made*, and such a rumour spread, it is now my business to prove by incontestable evidence; especially as Mr. W. Hill in his Address to you has declared that "neither by himself nor his Friends has it been asserted that I was under any such engagement."

Now, Gentlemen, I assure you, and I am willing to rest my pretensions to the character of an "honest man," and my hopes of your countenance and support, on the truth of the assertion, that I have in my possession, *a letter*, which I received from a respectable gentleman in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, and have shewn to several of my Friends, in which he "*supposes*" that the engagement alluded to, was actually made, and the promise given; and in which he declares that upon that *supposition* he transferred his interest to Mr. W. Hill. This single fact proves the truth of my former assertion, and might suffice for the purpose of shewing how dishonourably and unjustly I have been treated, and of exposing the weakness and falsity of the plea that has been urged to palliate the unjustifiable conduct of my opponent. But I am furnished with additional evidence in proof both of the one and the other. I have also in my possession *a letter*, which I have received from a respectable tradesman in Shrewsbury, in which he declares, and is ready to confirm the declaration by the solemn formality of an *oath*, that a gentleman, one of Mr. W. Hill's, *agents*, did say, when applying to him for his vote, that *I was engaged by promise to resign my seat in Parliament to one of the sons of the late Lord Berwick*, and even talked of my *ingratitude* for not fulfilling that promise. The same declaration, with the same insinuation of ingratitude has been made by two others of his agents, the one in public company, the other in private address.

Now, I appeal to you, gentlemen, whether this was not a direct attack on my *honour*; whether I have not proved the facts on which

which my charge was founded; and whether the assertion of Mr. W. Hill, when denying the facts which have tended to calumniate my reputation and to lessen my influence with my constituents, is not destitute of even the appearance of truth, and leaves him and his *friends* in an awkward predicament. I presume not to determine what is his *definition* of a Friend, or how many are entitled to that honourable appellation. But he is here evidently involved in a dilemma, which reduces him to the painful alternative of either disowning as his "*Friends*," the gentlemen who have acted under the supposition of a promise never made by myself or by any one for me, or of acknowledging that what he has *written* refuted on the most irrefragable evidence, is not true. And then, if consistent and ingenuous, he must confess that I have suffered injury from some of his friends, in consequence of gross misrepresentation, that must have originated some where. For, I have too high an opinion of the honour of one gentleman in particular, to suppose he would fabricate the report, or entertain the *supposition* he has expressed, without some antecedent information, though indeed extremely erroneous and injurious.

With regard to any promise made by my brother, Sir Richard Hill, which is disengenuously insinuated in Mr. W. Hill's Address, though, "no thought" it seems "was ever entertained of claiming it" (yet if made, why not claimed?) I have the most positive assurance from him dictated in the strongest terms, that he never made any such promise, and that the thought never entered his mind. As to the sentiments of my late *dear* and *honoured* friend, he could never have expected that I should make a "sacrifice" which would be a disgrace to my character, and an insult to my constituents. And I am persuaded, whatever comprehension of mind may have distinguished his political character, either in a review of the occurrences that passed before his eyes, or in the foresight of future ones in the political world, he never could have "wished" nor ever anticipated such a scene as that of his sons rising up, without any provocation on my part, to oppose and turn out of his seat in parliament; his own relation and confidential friend.

Thus,

Thus, gentlemen, I have laid before you a few facts, the truth of which can never be overturned by any decisive evidence, still less by specious insinuations: it is for you to judge how far I have succeeded in the vindication of my own character, and how far I am entitled to your support on the approaching general election. A consciousness of my own unvaried rectitude of conduct, and the favor shewn me by so many of you in the course of my causes, give me the greatest hopes, that I shall experience a renewal of your favours, and with it a renewed sense of the high obligations and unfeigned respect, with which I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your much obliged, and most faithful

Humble Servant

JOHN HILL.

Shrewsbury;
Dec. 10, 1795.

A few days after, another Advertisement made its appearance from Mr. W. Hill, in the following words.

*To the Worthy and Independent Burgesses and Freemen
Burgesses of the Town of Shrewsbury.*

GENTLEMEN,

IN my first declaration of those pretensions I have presumed to form, I was under the unavoidable necessity of noticing some unhandsome insinuations thrown out against me by Mr. J. Hill; but egregiously mistated, as I conceived both my conduct and claims to be, in his publication; no traces, I flatter myself, either of ill humour or ill manners, are to be discovered in my reply.—Nor shall

shall ill example now, provoke any deviation from this principle of acting. In refuting his arguments, I will carefully avoid imitating his *unprovoked asperity*.

He begins with accusing me of having adopted the *indelicate* and *extraordinary* intention of publicly canvassing the town (announced in a circular card to the inhabitants.) A proceeding, it seems, which meets *his* disapprobation, but which has in the strongest manner been recommended to *me*. Was I disposed to dispute with him the strictest definition of the word *public*, this charge might be more than recriminated; for what *want* of publicity was there in his own canvass? My information states it to have been *general, regular*, and to an unusual degree, *pressing*. The gentlemen who attended, were not indeed *many*; for which the best of causes might be assigned; but the notoriety of the transaction is indisputable.

Mr. J. Hill thus chose his own mode of proceeding, (well advised, doubtless, for I scoff not at *his* friends.) And why not accord to his relation the same privilege? I may be young, but am, however, more politic than to permit my adversary to chalk out the line, on which I must implicitly tread. It has been urged to *me*, as the best and fairest method, to take the sense of the town by a public canvass, accompanied by my friends; I shall do so, and Mr. J. Hill may then see of what description they consist, and, of course, will form his own definition of their number and respectability. This canvass, I repeat shall be *open* and *public*, in the face of day. A mode of proceeding I prefer to the *decorum of midnight solicitation*—the sleep invading *alarm* of twilight intrusion.

To refute the reiterated accusations of having insidiously represented my opponent under *an obligation to resign*. I must first repeat the declaration already made, and then be indulged with some observations upon it. I again disown having, by myself or friends, asserted, *that my cousin was under any such engagement*,

Indeed,

Indeed, in this last address, am not *personally* implicated ; how far my agents have done it, remains therefore the only question for discussion. Now I assure you, gentlemen, that the only agents commissioned by me, uniformly disavow this imputation ; and challenge calumny to affix it on either of them. They cannot prove a negative, but call on Mr. J. Hill, to name this *respectable* and *oath-taking* tradesman, as well as the specific agent, who thus improperly committed himself :—when this is done, the public may expect his justification.

Mr. J. Hill also says, “ that he has in his possession a letter, received from a respectable gentleman in the neighbourhood, who supposes that the engagement alluded to was actually made, and the promise given,”—“ that the gentleman would not fabricate the report, or entertain the supposition without some antecedent information, though indeed extremely erroneous and injurious.”—To clear up all this ambiguity, let me intreat your attention to the letter itself ; there you will read—“ I always had reason to suppose Mr. J. Hill had the support of the late Lord Berwick, and his friends, with the idea, that whenever a son of his wished to be in Parliament, he would give him up his seat, and every assistance.”—Here then the public will decide between us, whether the foregoing letter will bear my opponent out in the construction he is pleased to put upon it. And I am authorized by the gentleman himself to assert, that he never supposed any engagement was actually made, or promise given, to my late father, in return for the support he then afforded the present member.—And further, that the same gentleman wrote to Sir. R. Hill, upon finding his former letter misrepresented, stating what his idea was, and assuring him no such agreement was made (indeed from delicacy none such could be made) but that he and others had often heard my father intimate, his hopes that Mr. J. Hill would resign in favour of one of his sons, if approved of by the town, and those gentlemen who had supported the family ; which, from the long friendship that had subsisted between them, he did not doubt his complying with. But this explanation ill according with the present purpose.

purpose, has been suppressed, and general invective indulged against an ambition, which, however soaring, never entertained the bold idea of monopolizing the representation of both town and county within a single branch of one family.

The last imputation refers to a conversation, which occurred with a common and much respected friend. Here my adversary seems to tread upon ice, and he skips over it with the utmost precipitation, as well as embarrassment. He asks, "if any promise was made, why was it not claimed?—I have before allowed, that not any actual promise was ever given; and have asserted, that my present claim to the favor and suffrages of the Shrewsbury electors, rests on other and different foundations. But an absolute necessity now arises of quoting, accurately and literally, the conversation alluded to: and I am thus instructed to state it, premising that it occurred at Carnarvon, on Sunday, August 21st, 1785. Sir Richard introduced the subject himself, by remarking, "That if one of Lord Berwick's sons had been of age to have offered himself, his brother would not have thought of the borough;" and, to the best of this gentleman's recollection, he added, "*if ever one of them should hereafter think of it, he was sure his brother would not be the means of keeping him out.*"—Upon this conversation being repeated to my father, how correct a presentiment did he form of what has since happened?—"Ah!" replied he, "when John Hill has had long possession, I fear Sir Richard will think very differently."

I have now recapitulated correctly the whole of a transaction, to the question in debate surely strictly relevant, as well as highly important.—I only add, that in consequence of this gentleman thinking himself strongly implicated in my opponent's last address, he has since that publication, with a manly consistence, that marks his character, written to Mr. John Hill, confirming, in the strongest manner, all he has ever said or written on the occasion. And it is at his request I solicit that gentleman to shew, or make public, this "Correspondence; adding, *that he will ever maintain what he has thus explicitly affirmed.*"

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I cannot

I cannot conclude this part of my exculpation, without risking a most obvious remark upon the universality of a report, which appears to have stung my adversary most sensibly. Certainly, the very general reception this idea has met with, is the most pointed proof how natural and reasonable it appeared, and how singular it seemed to every considerate elector, that a stranger, comparatively speaking, should attempt permanently to wrest from our family, that pre-eminence in the good will of the Shrewsbury electors, they had so long and sedulously endeavoured to merit. This obvious sentiment too, must have been much strengthened in the minds of those who were acquainted with the Carnarvon conversation; and even should Sir Richard (as his brother more than insinuates) be disposed to dissent from the above statement, we will admit him so to do, and join issue upon the opposite degree of credit the electors may give to *him*, or the gentleman who asserts the fact.

The combined testimony of the persons above alluded to, precludes, I apprehend, the necessity of much reflection on that part of my opponent's address, wherein my father's sentiments on the present controversy are so boldly decided upon. Nothing is more clear than what his hopes and even expectations were; and I must be admitted to retort on Mr. J. Hill, that it seems infinitely more probable he would feelingly have lamented that intemperate spirit in *a relation and confidential friend*, which opposes, not only the most pointed objection, but the keenest personal animosity, against the favourite wish of his heart.

Having at last gone through each separate article of this multifarious accusation, I must alike congratulate my readers and myself, on the completion of a task so peculiarly unpleasing. Why Mr. J. Hill has thought proper to introduce into our correspondence, the too frequent, but unnecessary, ill temper and illiberality of election controversy, I know not; except it may be concluded, that the bad success of his late public or private canvass, he may call it which he pleases, I venture not again to define it)

it) which was undertaken immediately before his late publication, may have caused this unjustifiable acrimony of expression. But be that as it may, (the purport of these addresses, inevitably tending to widen animosities) it is not my present intention to proceed further in the altercation. Indeed I had indulged, and do still indulge the hope, that a period may come, when, having tried our respective interests with the electors, each may rest satisfied with their decision. We both have an undoubted right to offer our services; are both legally eligible to occupy the station to which we aspire. Let, then, our controversy be conducted with temper and placability; and let us await the catastrophe with patience and good humour.

It remains only to express my apprehensions, that much inaccuracy of expression may have escaped a pen unfledged in disputation, ill qualified to contend with veterans in the field of Polemic wrangling, and to apologize, gentlemen, to you, for this long intrusion upon your attention. *Self defence* compelled me to it; and in this defence I must confidently maintain, that truth has been as scrupulously adhered to, and decorum much less violated, than in the virulent invective that gave rise to it.

With the strongest sentiments of esteem and gratitude,

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most devoted, and obedient

humble servant,

WILLIAM HILL.

Shrewsbury,
Dec. 15.

One more Address from my Brother, as follows, closed the whole of this correspondence.

*To the Free and Independent Burgesses, and Freemen
Burgesses of the Town of SHREWSBURY.*

GENTLEMEN,

THE conviction, which I am persuaded my late address must have carried to your minds, of the rectitude of my conduct, and of the unjustifiable means used to weaken my influence with my constituents, emboldens me to proceed; not through any ambition of having the last word, that meanest of all triumphs in any controversy, but principally to testify my respect for you, gentlemen, whose *honour* I consider so necessarily interwoven with my own, as to make our cause and my vindication of it one, and inseparable.

You have seen Mr. William Hill's last condescending and elaborate performance. Though not reluctant openly to avow his *aspiring* to political 'pre-eminence,' yet he "very *modestly* disclaims any qualifications for entering the field of controversy with *veterans*;" his "pen" he says, "is *unfledged*" in disputation. Some of you may, perhaps, think, that his aspiration after parliamentary honours, at a time of life, when his genius, as well as his pen, must be *unfledged*, might require some apology; and that as men are not intuitively wise, and the human intellect acquires growth, and increases its vigour, by years, study, and experience, his modesty, in one instance, is so borne down by confidence in the other, as to render *this* extravagant, and *that* suspected. However, the very appearance of *modesty* is so amiable in youth, even though nothing but "an *unfledged pen*" be the subject of its effusions, that you will join me in most heartily congratulating him on this rare specimen of his diffidence; the happy preface I trust, of his future progressive advancement in a science which adds lustre to every endowment, and without which even learning is pedantry, and youth, impertinence.

I wish

I wish it were in my power to extend commendation and indulge hope in his favour during the present contest. But while the fever of ambition operates so strongly on the natural effervescence of youth, and the sanguine hopes of success in his political career inspire him with confidence, no wonder that his language and his actions should be tinged with the prospects that inflate his imagination, and the ambitious principles that govern his deportment. Ample proofs of this meet the eye of the reader in various parts of his last letter, couched under forms of expression, that aim at witicism and the point and glitter of sarcasm, or that coin epithets and urge charges in the boldest but most awkward style of crimination, remote equally from truth and decency. If he thinks that my feelings can be for one moment "stung" or even disturbed by the puerilities of an "unfledged pen," or that long verbose *leadén periods* void of grace and accuracy, and defective in argument, can produce any other effect than that of relaxing the muscles of his readers into a *smile*, he is greatly mistaken. - Some of his paragraphs I beg leave to consign over to the *critics* to be purged from their turpitude of diction, and others to commentators, to be elucidated. To me, who make no pretensions to literary refinement, some parts appear involved in such obscurity through the blundering structure of the sentences, that, after even frequent perusal, they remain absolutely unintelligible; and, therefore, what is not to be understood, cannot be answered. In other parts his meaning cannot be mistaken; as in those that follow---He charges me with "an *intemperate spirit*, with the *keenest personal animosity*, with *ill temper and illiberality*, with *acrimony of expression*," and calls me his "*adversary*."

Now, gentlemen, I presume not to be judge in my own cause, but leave you and every man of candour to determine whether my second address to you, which I laboured to make as cool, dispassionate and argumentative as possible, merited the obloquy which he has directed against it. From what source he has derived so many brilliant tropes and metaphors, or from what *bank* he has culled such pretty flowers of rhetoric, with which to decorate his style

style and amuse his readers, I think it beneath me to inquire. A crop so luxuriant transplanted to St. Stephen's Chapel would make senators stare, and keep the most somnolent awake. Delightful preface of future eloquence!

That you, gentlemen, may have one striking and decisive specimen how far Mr. William Hill adheres to truth and fair representation, I refer you to his second paragraph; where the poorest *sophism* is used, to blind the eyes of his readers, and elude the evidence of a plain matter of fact; a *sophism*, so gross, as not to be detected by the most undiscerning, and of so dishonourable a complexion as to add insult to injury. My canvass, the two first days, was a *private* one, in the *strict* sense, in which a *private canvass* is always understood. Out comes his card, *charging me* with having made a *public canvass*, and announcing *his* intention of making a *public one*, in consequence. I assured the public that he was mistaken, and appealed to my friends for the truth of my declaration. The evidence of the fact, and the truth of my appeal he does not attempt to overthrow, for, he cannot; but flying from the question, charges me merely with "accusing him of having adopted an intention of *publicly canvassing* the town." Here he stops, and leaves out the very thing of which I really accused him, that of *charging me* with having made a *public canvass*, contrary to the most undeniable evidence. Instead of retracting what was *not true*, and suspending what on that ground was "an indelicate and extraordinary proposal," he says, "the notoriety of *the transaction* was indisputable." Of what transaction? that I made a *public canvass*? Thus having circulated an untruth in his *card*, though convicted of a dishonourable assertion, he stands forth with unblushing modesty, not to retract, but to avow a transaction, which in this last stage of it, surpasses any thing I ever saw, in point of evasion and dishonourable representation. What a pity, since his pen is unfledged in disputation, that it is not fledged in the fair representation of facts.

But another specimen of his mode of adherence to truth, appears in the third paragraph. Elated with the prospect of *numbers*

on his public canvass, and ravished with the idea of such a triumphant scene, flattering equally to the vanity and the hopes of aspiring youth, because exhibited too, "in the face of day;" he contrasts with this "open and public exhibition," what he calls "the decorum of midnight *solicitation*." My distance from Shrewsbury, and the shortness of the days, may, I hope, be a sufficient apology for continuing my canvass after dinner. As neither my *cause* nor my *character* could dread an exposure to even the blaze of day, the light of the firmament, as well as the light of truth, bear equal testimony to the rectitude and purity of my conduct; nor, for *myself* have I any reason to shrink from the closest investigation. But, as to the indirect charge of the "solicitation" of votes at "midnight," it is not true; and Mr. W. Hill must have known it to be false, when he wrote the groundless insinuation. But, *truth* seems to have been sacrificed here, for the sake of a line of unintelligible rhapsody. But, however fiction may be allowed in verse, it is unpardonable in *prose*. All insinuations, however, on this subject, come with a very ill grace from *him*; since, I have been assured by gentlemen, of whose honour and authenticity of information, I can have no doubt, that for three weeks, before I made any canvass at all, some of *his* party paid *nightly visits* to the houses of freemen, in search of *votes*. My young relation seems, on this subject, not sufficiently aware, that the rectitude of a cause does not necessarily depend on the number of its patrons, and that works of darkness may be perpetrated in open day.---The publicity in such a case adds to the audacity and guilt of the transaction.

I complained to you Gentlemen, on a former occasion, that I had been injured, through the industrious circulation of a report, that I was under an engagement to resign my seat in Parliament, to one of the sons of the late Lord Berwick. I produced two principal instances in proof of the justice of that complaint, and in confirmation of the probable injury done to my political interests, and to my character as an honest man. One of the instances alluded to, was that of a respectable gentleman, whose
letter

letter led me naturally to conclude, that in the transfer of his interest to Mr. W. Hill, he acted under the supposition of my having engaged to resign. My opponent has introduced the principal part of that letter into his last Address to you, in proof that the gentleman was influenced by no such supposition, but has *omitted* the last sentence, which I think necessary to the explanation of the whole. "Therefore" says that Gentleman, "I shall give Mr. W. Hill, every support." I acknowledge that every man is the most proper expositor of his own language, where from obscurity of subject, or any accidental ambiguity of expression, there is a possibility of mistaking his meaning. Yet, with all the candour and attention that I exercised in the perusal of the letter, where the author says, "He always had *reason to suppose* Mr. J. Hill, had the support of the late Lord Berwick and his friends, with the idea, that whenever a Son of his wished to be in Parliament, he (Mr. J. Hill), would give him up his seat, and every assistance," and that "therefore, he should give Mr. W. Hill every support;" does it not seem, by the most candid rules of interpretation, that "the idea" entertained of my resigning in favour of one of Lord Berwick's Sons, is the *assigned cause* of that gentleman's transferring his interest to Mr. W. Hill? that that "idea" must have been conceived from mere supposition, which is no ground at all, or that of previous information? and that I was justified in drawing the inference I did, from the letter in question, when the *whole* is read, and not produced in the *mutilated* form, in which it has been laid before the public, by my opponent.

I am happy now to inform you, Gentlemen, that in consequence of my exertions in hunting calumny through all its subterfuges, my very enemies now begin at last to confess their belief that no *compromise, agreement or promise whatever*, respecting my seat in Parliament, was ever made by me to Lord Berwick, or any one else; and this is even acknowledged under the hand of my opponent. I hear now of nothing but some, "*Hints, Hopes, and Wishes.*" But as they were not mine, I leave such innocent chimeras

chimeras in the quiet possession of those, who amused their own imagination with them, and made them the instrument of inflating vanity, that ought to have been repressed. As far as my Brother is implicated in the question, he will in a short time answer for himself, by an appeal to the public. Since Mr. W. Hill, with an air of unbecoming triumph, solicits an investigation of the evidence from the respectable Tradesmen alluded to before, he may depend upon it, proper measures shall be taken to substantiate his testimony *upon oath* before credible witnesses; and to prove, by superadded evidence, the fact of my honour having been attacked by some of the Friends and Agents of my Opponent.

And now, Gentlemen, after offering you my warmest acknowledgements for the generous and very flattering support I have received in the course of my canvass, I have only to assure you upon my word of honour, that I am determined to abide the issue of the present contest; and never to desert my friends. I will meet you, if life be spared, on the day of election. And, as our cause is good, for it is the cause of Liberty, I am resolved that we shall stand or fall together. With this resolution, and with sentiments of the most unfeigned regard,

I have the Honor to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obliged and most faithful

humble Servant,

JOHN HILL.

Shrewsbury,
Dec. 17, 1795.

