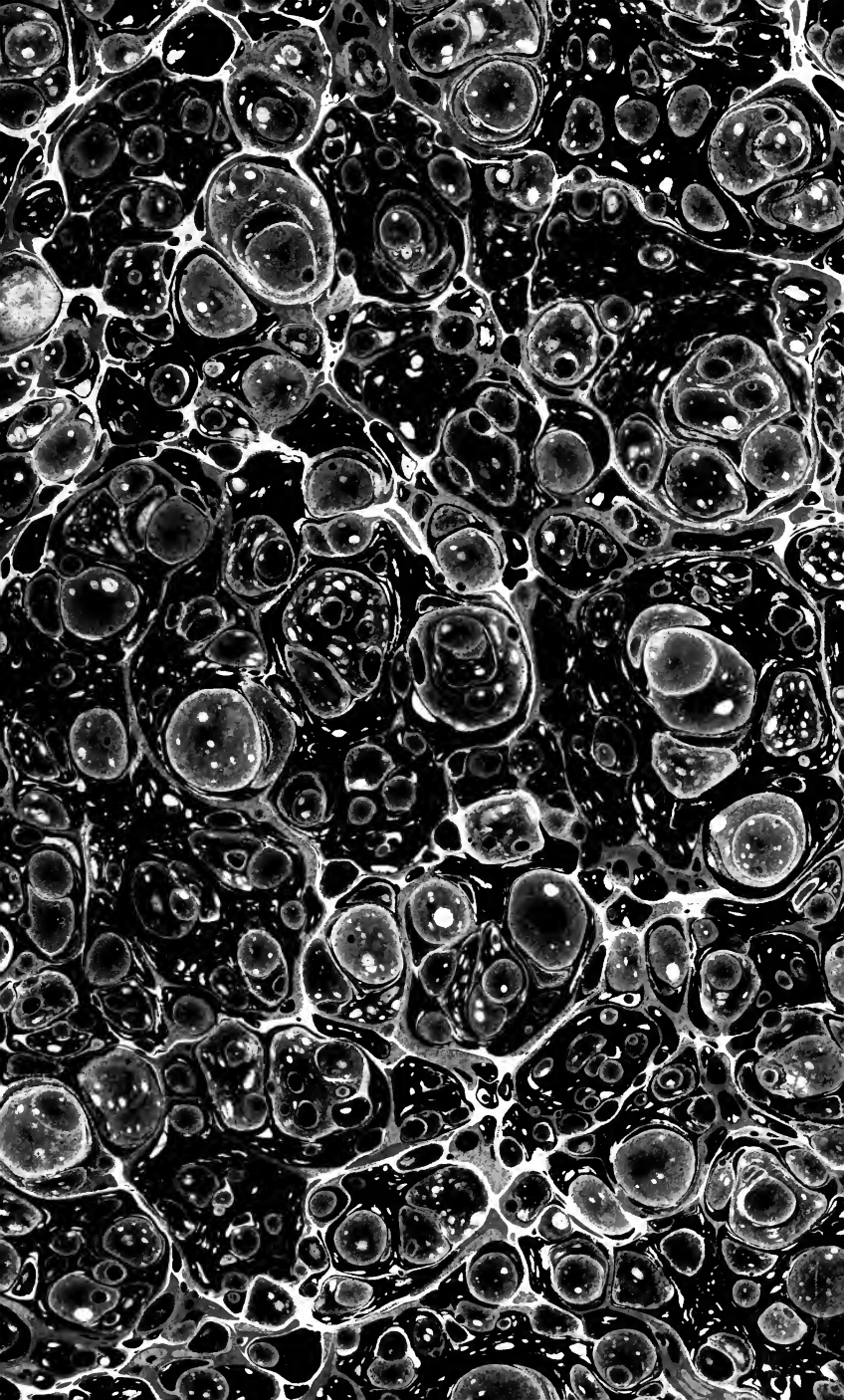


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passions, interpose : and the complete system is not always seen, and is seldom acknowledged, while the author of it is an object of fear or of envy. But, Gentlemen, when these times comes to be read ;—when traced to their causes,—posterity will act with one voice, that to the stand made by Pitt in the early period of the French Revolution, and to the uniform firmness of his course, Britain is indebted for her present elevation in Europe for the security which she is now to enjoy.



THE
SPEECHES

AND

PUBLIC ADDRESSES

OF

The Right Hon. George Canning,

DURING

THE ELECTION IN LIVERPOOL,

WHICH COMMENCED

ON FRIDAY THE 7TH AND TERMINATED ON WEDNESDAY
THE 12TH OF JUNE,

1816.

Liverpool :

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P R E F A C E.

LITTLE apology will, we think, be required for presenting to the public, in a more permanent form, a connected series of the Speeches delivered by Mr. Canning during the late Election at Liverpool. Independent of the popular and persuasive eloquence which at once animates and adorns them, these occasional effusions possess, if we mistake not, a peculiar claim upon public attention. Mr. Canning is, so far as our recollection serves, the first British Senator who has valued himself upon maintaining a constant intellectual intercourse with his constituents, and who has seized every opportunity of personally inculcating, with all the vigour of his commanding talents, those political opinions which he had invariably advocated, and with such splendid success, in the Commons' House of Parliament. We have, it is true, four election speeches of Mr. Burke, pronounced by that incomparable man during the too brief period in which Bristol enjoyed the glory of calling him her representative. But those speeches, though abounding in every variety of oratorical excellence—argumentative, ingenious, playful, and impassioned—refer chiefly to the personal conduct of that illustrious statesman upon political questions which engrossed the fleeting anxiety of the day. It was, however, the privilege of Mr. Burke's genius to give the enduring impress of his wisdom to

every transient topic which he touched. But Mr. Canning's fortune, as a public man, has been happier than that of Mr. Burke. Summoned by the majority of an enlightened community to become not only the constitutional guardian of their interests, but the accredited expounder of their political sentiments, Mr. Canning has taken occasion to vindicate the propriety of their choice by exhibiting the extent of his ability. Upon all the leading questions of our foreign and domestic policy, Mr. Canning has submitted his opinions to his constituents, with a fairness and manly freedom which they have known how to appreciate. Placing a dignified confidence in his own practised and matured judgment, Mr. Canning shrinks from no subject, declines no controversy; but fearlessly presents his political principles and conduct to the test of popular scrutiny. We cannot conceive a more decisive proof of that progress towards the practical perfection of our unrivalled institutions, which we love to contemplate, than such a connexion subsisting between the representative and those who honour him with their choice. Mr. Canning was originally invited to become a candidate for the representation of Liverpool, by a party which had ever considered Mr. Pitt as the standard of a British Statesman. They looked to Mr. Canning as the natural inheritor, the eloquent assertor, of the principles of Mr. Pitt. After a sharp and formidable contest, with antagonists of considerable weight, and zealously supported, Mr. Canning was triumphantly returned to Parliament by his Liverpool friends. On Mr. Canning's recent acceptance of office, a feeble and fruitless attempt to prevent his re-election was made by the refuse of his old opponents. A gentleman who *declined* becoming a candidate was nominated by an individual who *declined* following up his nomination. This curious coincidence of refusal and renunciation was sufficient to show the state of parties, and to indicate the hopelessness of any farther opposition to Mr. Canning's claims. But Liverpool is large enough to possess its proportion of persons who hate the listlessness of public tranquillity. A few giddy young men, who had declaimed themselves into real folly and affected patriotism, resolved to

annoy the friends of Mr. Canning, by keeping open the poll in favour of Mr. Leyland, who had resisted all their supplications to avow himself a candidate. As there was no regular struggle, Mr. Canning had to wait until the deluded supporters of a visionary cause felt unable to continue the combat. This vexatiously protracted contest has not, however, been unproductive of good. We owe to it the speeches of Mr. Canning. The national stock of constitutional knowledge has been augmented by his eloquent appeals to the reason of the people of Liverpool. We particularly advert to Mr. Canning's powerful and conclusive refutation of the doctrine of his adversaries with respect to office. He has shown, with unequalled strength and dexterity of argument, that their disqualifying system is utterly at variance with the best interests of the people, and with the solid security and dignity of the state.

To the admirers of pure and unaffected eloquence, the following Speeches will, we are convinced, afford a very high degree of delight. Mr. Canning's style may be termed emphatically an *English* one, as contradistinguished from that florid and fanciful oratory which is clearly of Irish origin, and which abounds in violent metaphor, forced allusion, and tumid diction, more than can be easily reconciled to the rigour of English taste. Mr. Canning's speeches are wholly free from these ambitious absurdities. They exhibit great vigour of thought, and exquisite elegance of expression. The imagination of the orator is sufficiently exercised, but it is never abused. Mr. Canning also eminently excels in fitting his subject to the grasp of ordinary minds, whilst he calls forth the admiration of every auditor. He never exhausts himself in dissertation, but proceeds to a rapid and luminous exposition of the topics which he is desirous to enforce. His promptitude in detecting the most ingenious fallacy is inferior only to the polished ridicule with which he rebukes it. In that "prevailing art" by which the orator ingratiates himself into the affections of a popular assembly, Mr. Canning is confessedly without a rival. But, beyond all the blandishments of Mr. Canning's eloquence, we prize the principles which that eloquence has ever been employed

in propagating. To Mr. Canning, as the faithful follower of Mr. Pitt, the nation is disposed to yield that confidence which is the meed of tried consistency and transcendent talents. We think it hardly possible that an individual can attain a more enviable eminence than that which Mr. Canning has now won his way to; and we congratulate the country upon beholding a distinguished statesman appealing successfully to the people, for their approbation of that conduct which had secured him the signal favour of the Crown.

SPEECHES, &c.

TO THE
FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

Saltram, near Plymouth, May 27, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

MY arrival in England has been unavoidably delayed some weeks beyond the period at which I expected to have been able to resume my attendance in the House of Commons.

It was always my intention to repair to Liverpool, as soon as possible after my return, to thank you, in person, for the indulgence which your kindness has afforded me.

His Royal Highness the Prince Regent having been graciously pleased to appoint me to the office of President of the Board of Controul, the trust which you so honourably confided to me is thereby returned into your hands; and it becomes my duty to solicit a renewal of it.

I hope to present myself to you very shortly after you receive this Address; and it will be the highest gratification to me, if I shall have the

happiness to find that my acceptance of this mark of the confidence of the Crown has not impaired the confidence which you have done me the honour to repose in me.

I am, Gentlemen,
 With the sincerest gratitude, respect, and regard,
 Your obliged and faithful Servant,
 GEORGE CANNING.

SPEECH ON HIS ARRIVAL,

ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5;

*Delivered from the Balcony of the House of John Bolton, Esq.
 in Duke-street.*

GENTLEMEN,

My first duty and my first inclination, is to thank you for your past kindness—to thank you for the indulgence which I have received at your hands. And I do assure you, Gentlemen, that if there is any thing which I regret on the immediate occasion which brings me at this moment before you, it is, that I am now standing here for the double purpose—of soliciting a new favour, as well as of acknowledging those which I have already experienced from you.

I had much rather that it should have happened that my first visit to my Constituents, after my return to England, should have been purely

for the purpose of expressing my gratitude, and with no prospective object whatever.

It was my intention to have paid that visit for that purpose; and I am not responsible for the circumstance which has added another duty to that which I intended to perform.

Gentlemen, amongst the motives of regret which belong to my late absence from England, I am happy to feel assured, that I have not to reckon any neglect of your interests, general or individual. It is, indeed, a satisfaction to me to know, that, during my absence, in all that respects your interests, no want of me has been felt, and that, in addition to the zeal and activity of my worthy Colleague, there has been, on the part of others of my friends, a constant and undeviating attention to all your concerns.

Gentlemen, if there are any of my Constituents who think that they have, upon any other ground, cause of complaint against me, I may take it for granted, that many hours will not elapse before I hear it; and when I hear it, you may rest assured, that I shall be ready to answer it; I trust, to their satisfaction.

Gentlemen, after thanking you; it is my next duty, as I have said, to solicit a renewal of your confidence. I trust I have not forfeited it by receiving a mark of the confidence of the Crown.

Gentlemen, I can truly and conscientiously declare to you, that that mark of the confidence of the Crown has come to me as much unsought,

as it must, from obvious circumstances, have been unforeseen.*

Of a life in Parliament, now of more than twenty years' duration, I have passed more than half, and that of my own choice, out of office. I have oftener had occasion to justify my resignation or refusal than my acceptance of official situation.† But, Gentlemen, as I have not given up or declined office, except for what I thought just and substantial reasons; so I do not think myself at liberty, as a public man, to decline it, when my services are called for by my Sovereign, and when I think I can honourably afford them.

Gentlemen, I have but one word more to say at this our first meeting. I have accepted the office to which his Royal Highness the Prince Regent has been graciously pleased to appoint me; but I have not yet performed the customary homage of kissing his Royal Highness's hand on that acceptance. With his Royal Highness's

* The tender of the Presidency of the Board of Controul to Mr. Canning was made in consequence of the death of the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

† A puny critic of the Morning Chronicle has thought fit to censure this declaration of Mr. Canning as conveying an imputed blunder. The shallow caviller has supposed Mr. Canning's statement to imply, that he had resigned more offices than he had accepted; and an Irish case in point is facetiously cited, in order to convict Mr. Canning, by analogy, of that pleasant perplexity of thought commonly called a *bull*. Mr. Canning's obvious meaning is, simply, that he had often deemed it proper to *justify* his refusal or resignation of office, but that his acceptance of office did not, in his view of circumstances, require justification. The Zoilus of the Morning Chronicle appears to be a critic of the cast so well described by the satirist:—

“ Who thinks he reads, when he but scans and spells;
“ A word-catcher, who lives on syllables.”

permission I am here among my Constituents, before I have stood in his presence.

Gentlemen, I have no difficulty in confessing, that I not only gratify my feelings, but court an advantage in the respect which I thus pay to the popular branch of the constitution. I come before you chosen a servant of the Crown. May I not hope that you will send me back with that choice sanctioned by the people?

Gentlemen, I will now detain you no longer, than while I repeat, what I have already said, that, without anticipating objections from any part of this great community, I shall, no doubt, have abundant opportunities, in the course of the next few days, of hearing all objections which it is possible to devise against me; and you will give me credit, Gentlemen, I am sure, that I shall neither omit nor avoid any occasion of replying to them.

TO THE
FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

Duke-street, Liverpool, June 5, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

I THANK you for the kind and cordial reception which I have had the honour and happiness to experience from you this day.

The repetition of those testimonies of good-opinion and good will, which I have heretofore had so much occasion to acknowledge, satisfies me that I shall not have solicited in vain a

renewal of the trust which you have once, in so flattering a manner, confided to me.

That there should be persons who are desirous of separating us, cannot be surprising to any one who reflects upon the nature of the contest which ended in returning me as your representative; but I cannot entertain the smallest apprehension of their success; while I have before my eyes such convincing proofs of your undiminished partiality, and of your unaltered attachment to the public principles in which alone that partiality originated.

I hope to meet you at the hustings on Friday morning; and I have the honour to be,

With the utmost respect and gratitude,

Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

SPEECH BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE POLL,

ON FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1816.

[The Rev. William Shepherd, in moving, and Colonel Williams, in seconding, the nomination of Mr. Leyland, took the opportunity to vituperate Mr. Canning's political conduct; which drew from the Right Hon. Gentleman the subsequent dignified reply.]

MR. MAYOR,

ANOTHER candidate having been nominated, and a poll demanded, it is not my intention to impede your proceedings more than a few moments.

If the catechism of the Reverend Gentleman who addressed you first, and the vehemence of the Honourable Colonel who seconded him, had taken the shape of an inquiry on what grounds I stand here as a candidate, and why I have done certain things which they impute to me; and if they had declared, that, upon my satisfactorily answering their interrogatories, they would consent to my re-election;—I should have felt myself bound to give them, at once, distinct and categorical answers. But a manifesto of accusation, followed by an act of hostility, has no claim to such attention; and none shall it receive from me, in this place, and at this hour.

But let not the smile, which I see gathering on the face of my reverend accuser, and communicating itself, by sympathy, to that of his gallant friend—let it not mature into a smile of triumph. I do assure the Reverend Gentleman that I am obliged to him for the part which he has taken; and have certainly nothing to find fault with in him, as to the courtesy with which he has had the goodness to clothe his observations.

I have noted every word that has been said against me; I carry in my mind the whole indictment; and that indictment I will answer, point by point, when I address myself, after the poll, to those who have a right to hear my justification. I invite my two accusers to be present; and I assure them, on the faith of my responsibility and honour, that they shall be received

among my friends with every personal respect and civility.

To one point, and one point only, I will answer here.

The Reverend Gentleman refers to what he is good enough to describe as a laudable declaration on my part, at the close of the last election, when I declared myself to be the representative of the whole people of Liverpool. Now, I would appeal to every man who hears me—to all who are now on these hustings—to all who, from without, are looking hostilely at me—whether, in any application which they had occasion to make to me, or in any which they have known to be made to me, as member for Liverpool, any one man has ever found reason to think, from my manner of receiving such application, that I recollected to what party the applicant belonged. I would put the whole of my pretensions to support on that single issue; and if that were decided against me, I could acquiesce in your preference of this shadow of a name which the mover and seconder have opposed to me.

With the Reverend Gentleman I have had no intercourse; but with respect to the Honourable Colonel who has seconded him, he may, I am sure, remember a correspondence which passed between us; and I appeal to him whether, in the course of that correspondence, he had to complain of any want of courtesy on my part.—(*The Colonel bowed.*) I hope I am not prone to over-rate my

own labours; and yet I can assure him, that, whatever other jobs the worthy Colonel believes me to have had to do for others, I have not had any harder task imposed upon me than that of reading his letters on parliamentary reform.—
(Loud laughter.)



ON THE
CLOSING OF THE FIRST DAY'S POLL,
 FRIDAY, JUNE 7.

GENTLEMEN,

OF all the contested elections in which you have been called to bear a part, and, certainly, of all those of which I have ever heard, the circumstances of the present are the most extraordinary. A battle without an antagonist; and a surrender without a cessation of hostilities.

Gentlemen, in most struggles, it has been sufficient for him who came into the field, that he had nobody to oppose him. But this has not been my fortune on the present occasion. Our first victory has been from want of a combatant:—our next has been over the unacknowledged representative of the combatant whom our adversaries could not bring forward. And, having defeated the representative, who would not fight, we have now to fight the self-constituted substitutes who have thrust themselves in the place which he becomingly abandoned.

Gentlemen, in this fruitless and unnecessary contest, we have, however, obtained a victory that might put to flight the most substantial antagonist. I am assured, that the majority which we possess on this day is unexampled for a first day's poll in any contest for Liverpool. We have polled, Gentlemen, 250:—there have polled for my antagonist—I beg pardon, I should rather say, in spite of my antagonist—159; the result is a majority of 91 in our favour.

Of the Gentleman whose name is thus unwarrantably put forward against his own desire I beg not to be understood as meaning to speak with the slightest disrespect. Of the Gentleman who constituted himself the representative of the nonjuring candidate, I mean Mr. Shepherd, I have to say, that his conduct appears to me to have been, in all that I have seen of it, not only exempt from blame, but entitled to the praise of fairness, honour, and liberality. But who they are that, after the abjuration of the principal, and after the abdication of the substitute, have put themselves in array against the declared sense of all parties, to vex and harass the population of this great town, and who hazard thus, for no object and to no end, all the results which may arise from the fermentation which they have excited, it behoves me not to conjecture; nor will I characterize their proceedings with the epithet that I think they deserve.

Gentlemen, I told you, on our first meeting,

that I should, no doubt, be catechised sufficiently when I met my antagonists face to face. That meeting has taken place this day ; and I informed the Gentlemen, who, in moving and seconding this fruitless nomination, thought proper to arraign my public conduct, that, if they would do me the honour to accompany me home this evening, they should have whatever advantage they might fancy they could derive from hearing my answers to all that they had alleged against me.

I do not blame them, Gentlemen, if they have not availed themselves of my offer : they must consider the contest at an end ; and I am perfectly satisfied that their attacks were not directed against me with any personal hostility, but were only intended to influence your suffrages.

Gentlemen, if there were any truth—(truth, I mean, in argument)—in the grounds which were stated for inducing you to reject me on the present occasion, I will venture to say, that the admission of them would tend to a complete change in the Constitution.

Gentlemen, it was contended, that any man holding office—especially high and responsible office—was unfit, for that very reason, to become the representative of the people—(*Cries of No ! No !*) I state the argument, Gentlemen, only for the purpose of answering it ; of expressing, though in much feebler language, the just and emphatic refutation which it has received in your unanimous denial.

Gentlemen, if there be truth in this doctrine of our adversaries, I have read the Constitution wrong. For I have always thought, that it was one great practical security for the continuance of that freedom which we happily enjoy, and of which we should enjoy the name only, if it were not embodied in the political institutions of the country—I have considered it always, I say, as one great security, that, though there be no written law which circumscribes the choice of the Crown in the selection of its ministers, yet that, since England has been what it is, the Sovereign has always looked for his ministers among the members of the two Houses of Parliament.

Is it possible, Gentlemen, that persons of so acute understandings as those who were arrayed against me to-day, should not see, that if a minister ought not to be a member of Parliament, the converse would be equally true, that the Crown ought not to choose a member of Parliament for its minister? And what would be the consequence? That the House of Lords, the hereditary counsellors of the Crown, and hereditary representatives of the great mass of the property of the kingdom;—that the House of Commons, containing a selection, through various channels, and for various qualifications, of all that is most distinguished in talents, in property, and consideration, among the commons of the country;—that these two bodies of men, necessarily, from their

constitution, the flower of the kingdom, should be absolutely excluded from the management of the affairs of the state; and that the Crown should be driven to look for its servants, among those who could not obtain, or among those who had declined, the representation of the people!

I take for granted, Gentlemen, that I do no injustice to the argument of my adversaries, when I assume, that it is meant to exclude members of the House of Peers, equally with those of the other House of Parliament, from office. If, indeed, they intend a distinction between the two houses, and would confine the offices of state to peers, pleasant candidates, to be sure, they are for popular favour, and nice adjusters of the balance of the Constitution!

But there is another view which these Gentlemen take of office, as if it were something in itself dishonourable, something which did not imply or convey distinction, but absolute degradation and contamination. When they have said that a man holds office—or, still more, when, straining their faculties for ridicule and invective to the utmost pitch, they insinuate that he seeks it—they think that they have said all:—the blow is struck—the work is done. Be it so. But let us see how far these Gentlemen are consistent in their revilement of office. Is there no occasion on which they speak of it in another strain, and represent it in another light? Can they be the same persons whom you may have heard on former

occasions declaiming against those laws by which a proportion of our fellow-subjects are excluded from office? They think, and, though I differ from many of you, Gentlemen, in this opinion, I think with them, that these disqualifications should be removed. I have done my best to procure the removal of them. In this I am consistent. I think ineligibility to office a grievance, because I think office an honourable occupation. But what is the creed of our adversaries? They ought, in consistency, to consider such ineligibility as a privilege rather than a privation. Is it tyranny to save a man from the danger of being degraded? Is it any thing but a wise and salutary restraint, to fence him round against the chance of contamination?

But, Gentlemen, I rest my appeal to you both upon the theory and practice of the Constitution. I do not come before you an apologist for having accepted office. When tendered to me on the part of my Sovereign, it was my duty to accept it; unless I could assign sufficient public reasons for declining it, or felt in my own mind insuperable difficulties in acceptance. The country has, I conceive, a claim on the services of every man, according to the measure of his abilities. Of that measure he is not himself the proper judge; and the call of the Sovereign is paramount, where there is no justifiable motive for a refusal.

Gentlemen, whatever difficulties I may have

felt on former occasions, when (for instance) at our first meeting I told you that I had twice declined office in the course of that year; public reasons I have none for declining office now, and motives of personal feeling, if then I had any, have long been wholly at an end.

Gentlemen, the next material charge against me, and it behoves me to meet it fairly, is on the score of my absence from you for the last eighteen months, and the situation which I held, during a part of that interval, at Lisbon.

With respect to the cause of my departure, and of my solicitation to my friends here to accept my resignation, and supply my place, if they could not, consistently with the interests of the town, indulge me in a temporary absence, you are all apprized of the facts; and I have to thank you all for your indulgence. I know, Gentlemen, that you believe me when I say, upon my honour, that my departure from England originated not in the slightest degree in any view to the appointment, which, indeed, was incidentally cast upon me after my private arrangements had been made. The moment that I learnt the Prince Regent of Portugal's determination not to return last year to his European dominions, I resigned. It is false, Gentlemen, as (I am told) is asserted, that I continued in a public capacity to the period of my leaving Lisbon. Of the seventeen months, or thereabouts, which I passed in Portugal, the last six months I was as private an individual as

any among you, and it was no fault of mine that I was not much sooner superseded : it was in the month of April last year that I sent in my resignation. I remained there, according to my original intention, invested with no public character, discharging no public duty, and receiving, in consequence, no public pay. Nor can I imagine how the mistake (if mistake be the true name) could have arisen, as to my continuing in a public character, unless it were that, being settled in Lisbon, I did continue, long after the expiration of my public character, to receive such of my countrymen as happened to come recommended to me, with such civility as the means of a private individual could allow.

Gentlemen, I am not aware that there have been any other objections urged against me which are not comprised, in substance, under one or other of these two heads,—the question of office, as it is now held by me; and the question of the office which I held at Lisbon.

The question which *you* have to decide is, whether you will now countenance a doctrine hitherto unknown to the Constitution of this country, the doctrine, that a man cannot serve at once the people and the Crown. We have always held, (meaning by *we* those who hold the principles which first brought you and me together)—*we* have always held, that the Crown, firmly upheld, and in the exercise of its legitimate, but restricted, power, is the best safeguard for the liberties of

the people; and that the lawful rights and just freedom of the people are the best foundations of the stability of the throne.

Whenever the opinions which have been brought forward to-day shall be adopted as the rule of your conduct, undoubtedly you and I must part. I need not say how much it is my wish to perpetuate our connexion. I trust it may coexist with the devotion of my services, whenever they are thought useful, to my country.

Gentlemen, I have detained you longer than it was fitting to do—(*Cries of No! No!*) I have now only to solicit the continuance of your zeal in our unexampled struggle,—a struggle with an invisible phantom. Let us see whether, before the Sabbath, this phantom may not be laid.

ON THE CLOSING OF THE SECOND DAY'S POLL,

SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH I am undoubtedly very much concerned to find that the disturbed state of the town, consequent upon the vexatious protraction of the poll, is likely to be prolonged another day, it is some consolation to me, that I shall thereby have another opportunity of addressing you, which, in the midst of all that I see passing under my eyes, I could not do to-day,

without hazarding the continuance of the irritation which now prevails.

I need not say how deeply I am affected by the attendance of that thronged multitude of respectable persons whom I now see before me. But I think that I shall better consult your peace, and as well thereby your interests as my own, if I exhort you to return, as soon as possible, to your respective homes, and endeavour to preserve, or rather to restore, the tranquillity of your neighbourhoods.

I cannot dismiss you, however, without mentioning the state of the day's poll. We have maintained our rate of superiority, and have, within two, *doubled* the majority of yesterday. By your exertions, I have the honour and satisfaction to stand 180 above my opponent.

Gentlemen, as yet we know not our antagonists in any apparent or palpable shape; but they threaten us, on Monday next, with the rare advantage of an actual, visible, substantial, candidate of flesh and blood.

The hope of so extraordinary a phenomenon must necessarily keep alive the enthusiasm of our hitherto visionary antagonists. You, Gentlemen, require no incitement to quicken your exertions; but after having fought so manfully against a shadow, the promised substance will, I am sure, bring new energies into the field.

ON THE CLOSING OF THE THIRD
DAY'S POLL,

MONDAY, JUNE 10, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I were addressing you only as a Candidate, I should, indeed, be grieved at the scenes which I have just witnessed; but, as a brother-freeman, I confess I am ashamed for our town.

Gentlemen, what have they to answer for, who have created and who prolong this state of things, without any possible object, when a single word, fairly spoken out, would have the effect of putting an end to it!

Gentlemen, I know nothing of Mr. Leyland but his name; but I understand and believe him to be a gentleman of respectable character, of immense fortune, and of great influence in the town of Liverpool. Standing in such a situation, how can he bear that his name should be made a pretext of outrage and riot, which will couple the memory of his opposition (if it be his) with the disgrace of this great town?

Gentlemen, if there be any friend of Mr. Leyland's in this assembly, I earnestly wish that he would go to Mr. Leyland from hence, would represent to him the scandalous scenes that have been passing, and call upon him manfully to come forward, and lend his aid towards checking the disorders which are committed in his name. If

Mr. Leyland yet retains hope of success on the poll, let him appear in his own person on the hustings; but if he persevere in the determination which is ascribed to him, not even to avail himself of a majority, should he obtain one, nor, if elected your representative in Parliament, to serve, unless compelled by law; in God's name, let him make an unequivocal and conclusive declaration to that effect; and, I presume, all contest must cease.

I have heard of men whose element is mischief, and whose delight is in disturbance. Such, surely, cannot be the temper of Mr. Leyland. I have heard of those, who, in pursuit of a tempting object, would not much scruple as to what measures they employed, or what evils they might occasion. But this is the first time in my life, that I have heard of a man who would risk the peace of the community of which he is a member, and in which he must have many friends, not for an object of his own desire, but for the acquisition of what, even if acquired, he would disdain. I trust that such cannot be Mr. Leyland's intention. I cannot but believe, that, when truly informed of the state of the town, if he regards the good will of his neighbours, if he regards his duty as a magistrate, sworn to maintain that peace which is now so shamefully violated—I cannot help thinking, that, on a review of all these considerations, he will feel it his duty to appear to-morrow at the hustings, and to say, distinctly, intelligibly, and

definitively, whether he does or does not take any interest in all that you are risking and enduring on his account.

Let Mr. Leyland come before you as a Candidate, and, for myself, I am ready to receive him with all the respect which belongs to the character of your townsman, and with all the courtesy in which, I hope, I have never been wanting to any rival Candidate for your favour. If, on the other hand, he comes forward to decline the contest, and declines it in so explicit a manner as to throw upon those who use his name without his permission such a responsibility as shall prevent them longer from sporting, as they have hitherto done, with the feelings and safety of the town, he will act the part of an upright magistrate, and an honourable man. But if, pursuing neither of these intelligible lines of conduct, he continues to allow his name to be used for the purpose of keeping open a vexatious poll, and risking thereby the repetition of such excesses as we have this day witnessed; upon him, in my conscience I think, lies the responsibility for all the mischief that may follow.

Gentlemen, I will not address you to-day on any other subject: but I cannot dismiss you without thanking you for the protection which you have this day given, not to me personally, because I have no reason to apprehend that to me any personal outrage was intended, but to those valuable friends of mine, your eminent fellow-townsmen,

who accompanied me, and not a hair of whose heads I could bear to see injured in my cause. I trust that the awakened activity of the magistracy will prevent the renewal of any call for your exertions in self-defence.

I will now add nothing more, except to communicate to you the state of the poll. We have improved greatly both the amount and the relative proportion of our majority of Saturday. I am 298 above (what I must call him, for want of any other term which would express more precisely the relation in which we stand to each other) my opponent.

ON THE CLOSING OF THE FOURTH DAY'S POLL,

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM happy to address you to-day in the language of congratulation; and first in respect to what was uppermost in my thoughts and feelings when I addressed you last night—the peace and tranquillity of the town.

Gentlemen, the magistrates have performed their duty in the most prompt and judicious manner: and every one of you may return from this assembly to his home to-night, in the assurance, that his aid will not be wanted to repress tumult

in the streets, and that his family will not be assailed in their chambers by the brutal fury of a drunken mob.

Gentlemen, it would be uncandid not to mention to you, that Mr. Leyland has this day attended in his place, to take his share of duty and responsibility as a magistrate ; and that he has thus lent his aid to the restoration of that tranquillity which had been disturbed by the use (or abuse) of his name as a mock candidate for your favour. Gentlemen, I am informed that Mr. Leyland has done more : that he has taken the opportunity which his attendance as a magistrate afforded him, of renewing this day, in a more explicit and distinct form, the declaration that he does *not* court your suffrages on the present occasion ; and that even if, contrary to all reasonable probability, he were to be returned, by an unsought and unwelcome majority, he would still decline to serve you. Gentlemen, I know of no law which would compel him to serve ; and the result, therefore, of such a return, could his friends (as they call themselves) have obtained it at the price which they were ready to pay for it, in the destruction of your peace and comfort, would have been to present to you the shadow of a candidate matured into the shadow of a representative.

But, Gentlemen, with Mr. Leyland I have done. He returns, by his declaration of this day, within the sacred pale of private life, into which

God forbid that he or any man should be pursued by political hostility.

The legacy, however, which Mr. Leyland involuntarily leaves behind him, to the friends who have so just a claim upon his remembrance, is a persevering, though hopeless, contest. Hopeless, I am sure, you will agree with me in pronouncing it, when you know that the poll of this day has augmented my numbers to 1,200; an amount unexampled (as I am informed) in a four days' poll at Liverpool; and that my majority over the votes polled,—I know not for whom—(disclaimed as they are by Mr. Leyland)—the *thrown away* votes, I believe, I must call them—which was yesterday 298, is this day augmented to 494.

Gentlemen, what course our adversaries now mean to pursue, disowned as they are by the worthy Gentleman in whose name they have so long attempted to delude you; whether they have some other invisible candidate to substitute in his room; some new *bottled conjuror*, whom they will invite you to see uncorked at the hustings, I cannot pretend to divine. But I would have you be prepared for continued exertion; for though I and my friends near me are aware, that rumours of the complete abandonment of the contest are to be circulated this evening, we are aware also that the object of such rumours is to throw you off your guard, and, if possible, to get the start of you to-morrow. If my friends on the hustings

to-day had listened to the insinuations which were conveyed to them, they would have believed the close of the poll to be at hand, and would have relaxed in those exertions which must, ultimately, make us triumphant. But they were too wary to be thus deceived. In another day, I have no doubt, we shall wring from the avowed necessities of our antagonists that success which they would fain have had us believe to-day could only be the fruit of concession and compromise.

Gentlemen, after the close of the poll another opportunity will occur, more favourable than the present, for the consideration of other topics, which I purposely omit during the continuance of the contest. I take leave of you for this evening; exhorting you to maintain that moderation which you have displayed hitherto, without, however, at all relaxing that firmness which has caused your moderation to be respected. The result which you desire cannot be long withheld from you; but your continued efforts are still necessary to secure it.

AT THE HUSTINGS, ON THE FINAL CLOSING OF THE POLL,

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1816.

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

WHEN you recollect what took place on these hustings on the first day of the poll, upon Mr. Shepherd's handsome, but

ineffectual, retirement, you will not be surprised that I should have paused some time before I could believe the contest to be at length really concluded. Nor will it, I hope, be considered as ungracious on my part, if I do not profess myself to be at this moment at all affected by the same feelings which overpowered me when I addressed you on that occasion.

At the same time, I can assure the Gentlemen who have been the instruments of prolonging this vexatious poll, that I entertain no resentment against them. They have been acting, no doubt, on a sense of duty, however mistaken: or if politics and party have been the influencing motives of their conduct, I am well persuaded that there has been nothing personal to me in their hostility, and that now, as in the memorable contest four years ago, the struggle has been a struggle of principles.

I rejoice the more in the victory; but without assuming to myself now, any more than in 1812, any personal share in the triumph.

In offering my acknowledgments to you, Mr. Mayor, and to the other officers concerned in the election, for their constant attention and activity; in returning my warmest thanks to my friends, for their unparalleled exertions in my behalf;—I take leave of my opponents with the same declaration which I made on the close of the last election, that, once again Member for Liverpool, no one of my Constituents, who may have occasion

to apply to me in that character, shall find reason to believe, from my manner of receiving his application, that I recollect his conduct here, or bear in mind his political connexions.

AFTER HAVING BEEN CHAIRED,

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I could forget all the trouble and inconvenience which have been occasioned to you, and could contemplate the result of this day only as it affects myself, what reason should I not have to pour forth my gratitude to those men who have laboured against me with so vexatious an opposition? For, with whatever spirit and design they may have acted, I will venture to affirm, that never did the most anxious and active friendship procure for any individual such a triumph as their hostility has earned for me this day. They laboured to separate us from each other; and they have united us more closely than before. They hoped to efface the memory of that victory which crowned your former exertions in my favour; and they have, if not effaced, yet thrown it into the shade, by the transcendent splendour of this day's triumph; by the increased and overpowering demonstrations of your unwearied kindness and regard. Indebted to my opponents for the excitement which has called

forth these demonstrations, what a heart must I have, Gentlemen, if I did not bless their *beneficent* enmity !

But, Gentlemen, proud as I naturally must be of what I have experienced this day, and exalted as I cannot but feel myself by the contemplation of the magnificent scene which is now before me ; by the view of those countless multitudes, among which every eye is turned upon me with an expression of benignity ; yet I do assure you, Gentlemen, and there are those around me who can vouch for the truth of what I say, that I was most anxious, that it was my fixed purpose and determination, to entreat you to spare yourselves the trouble of this day's ceremony. I did not think that the occasion of returning your Representative, on a re-election, called for any peculiar expression of triumph ; nor did I think that a victory over a non-existing, or non-appearing, adversary, justified the same marks of exultation as when able, substantial antagonists had been driven from the field.

But, Gentlemen, my mind was changed, and I yielded to the wishes of my friends, upon information which I have received to-day. The nature of that information I will state to you. I am assured from London, and upon testimony from which it is impossible for me to withhold my belief, that there were among our antagonists some who reckoned upon intimidation as an instrument of success. In the first moments of transport, at the

promising commencement of the riots, they communicated this hope to their friends in the metropolis. They fondly flattered themselves that you, Gentlemen, could be scared from my side, and that I should be forced to retire. Intimidation ! how little do they know either me or you ! After this information I felt that it would be a false delicacy to abstain from any expressions of exultation, and that our conduct might be liable to misconstruction if we abridged, by a single formality, the triumph of this day.

Gentlemen, with the election, let the local topics, the local enmities, the local disagreements, of the election cease. But cease not with the election the principles upon which your choice has been founded, on whomever, at any time hereafter, your choice may fall, whether on myself, or on a worthier object. For, Gentlemen, I know how little I ought to consider myself as contributing to the glorious result of this contest. Much less important is it to whom individually you commit your representation in Parliament, than that you should fix steadily in your minds the standard by which that representative shall be tried. Let him be a man true to the principles of the Constitution, not as understood in the new-fangled doctrines of the day, but as transmitted to us from older times, before the pure current of British freedom had been contaminated by the influx of foreign theories.

Gentlemen, we all know that on the former

occasion, in 1812, the eyes of England were in a great measure fixed upon Liverpool, as the *arena* in which the contest between two sets of political principles was to be decided. But on that occasion, Gentlemen, though you occupied a great space in the public attention, you could not completely monopolize it. There was then a general election. The interest excited, indeed, by the Liverpool contest was pretty widely diffused; but the actual warfare was among ourselves; no stranger had leisure to mingle in our battle. Among other consequences of this state of things, one was, that we were tolerably free from imported calumny; and that, considering the vehemence of the contest, there was, so far as I know, little of personal malignity mixed with it. In the present instance, Liverpool alone has fixed the undistracted attention of both parties, and upon me, in particular, have the full phials of Whiggish wrath been discharged.

Standing thus exposed, I have had what some would call the misfortune, but what I must now esteem the singular happiness, of being a mark for the attacks of every political enemy that I have in the world. I do Liverpool the justice to acknowledge, Gentlemen, that the grossest and foulest calumnies are not of native produce, but have been rolled down in one tide of filth from the fountain head of Whiggish detraction in London. All the approved practices of the libellers of former periods have been resorted to: my private

history ransacked for topics of abuse; every action, every inconsiderate word, of earlier life raked up; and recorded with malignant industry; and invention called in aid where research could find no theme of invective.—

—————“The lie, so oft o'erthrown,
“Th' imputed trash and nonsense not my own;”

—all, all has been exhausted:—and what is the result? That here I stand.

Gentlemen; amongst other charges, one of fair hostility, but whimsically chosen, considering the quarter from which it comes, is, that of my being about to act in public life with men from whom I have occasionally differed in opinion. Gentlemen, the charge is substantially unfounded. It is unfounded, because though on particular questions I may have differed from many of my present colleagues; (as what two men may not occasionally differ if each has an opinion of his own,) yet, upon all the great outlines of our political system, and upon every main principle, affecting the foreign policy of England, our opinions have generally concurred. Those opinions I have, to the best of my power, supported, in whatever hands the government of the country has been placed. I have supported them not less strenuously when myself out of office, than when I formed a part of the Administration.

Gentlemen, I am really alarmed at the state of pressure in which I see great part of the multitude below. Had I not better take leave of you,

and entreat you to disperse?—(*Cries of Go on ! go on !*)*

Perhaps, Gentlemen, I was the more alive to the danger to which I apprehended you to be exposed, and the more anxious to dismiss you before any accident had happened, from recollecting, that one of the charges most frequently, of late, preferred against me is my habit of addressing you. And yet, Gentlemen, I am old enough to remember, when the great idol of Whiggism himself, (of whom I mean to speak with all reverence and honour,) in the plenitude of his glory, and in the maturity of his mighty powers, did not disdain to mount various *rostra*, and to descant, not to his constituents only, but to whoever would come to hear him, upon oppression, grievance, tyranny, taxes, and war, and all other matters best calculated to rouse the passions of the populace. Nor are there wanting imitators in our days, who pursue the same course, whenever the people will listen to them.

But, Gentlemen, the self-styled Whigs have a most convenient, though somewhat arbitrary, mode of argument. To them every mode of political warfare is lawful; but to them only: the people are their property; and woe be to the unlicensed intruder who presumes to trespass upon the manor. Or is this the distinction to be taken

* Mr. Canning retired for a few moments, till the pressure of the crowd was, in some measure, diminished; and then, being loudly and repeatedly called for, again came forward.

against me? Am I vilified, not because I address the people, but because I address them on the side of tranquillity and good order; that, instead of seeking out every topic of delusion and inflammation, I am more solicitous to bring before them grounds for contentment, and motives of attachment to their country; to inculcate their duties as well as their rights; and to hold them firm in their allegiance to the constitutional monarchy of England? Am I arraigned on an inverted construction of the rules of civilized warfare, not because I scatter arrows among the people, but because my arrows are not poisoned?

But, Gentlemen, to recur to the point at which I was interrupted by my alarm for your safety: By the organ of what party is it that I am accused of inconsistency for acting with men from whom I may have occasionally differed? Why, Gentlemen, by the organ of a party whose birth and growth, whose essence and element, are coalition; a party which sprung from the coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox, and which has been revived, within all our memories, by the coalition between Lord Grenville and Lord Grey; a party of which, in spite of all its coalitions, the members are, in reality, so little *coalescent*, that, but last year, on the greatest question which ever the government of this country was called upon to decide, and its Parliament to sanction,—on the question of the renewal of the war against Bonaparte,—they were divided half and half: and all

versary to contend with) is at length happily terminated: and the record of your successful exertions in my favour, and in a cause peculiarly your own, exhibits the unexampled majority of 542.

In addition to the 1280 freemen who had given their votes before twelve o'clock this day, I am informed, that hundreds more were anxiously pressing to the poll, whose services were rendered unnecessary; but of whose zeal I shall not retain a less grateful remembrance.

The haste which I made to present myself to you, Gentlemen, immediately on my arrival in England, has delayed the performance of other of my public duties.

I trust that this consideration will be accepted by you as an apology for my not remaining in Liverpool to tender to you my personal respects and acknowledgments.

I take leave of you with feelings more deeply impressed than I can describe, by the testimonies of your undiminished, your augmented kindness.

I have the honour to be,

With the truest respect and gratitude,

Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

Liverpool, June 21, 1816.

THE
SPEECHES
AND
PUBLIC ADDRESSES

OF THE
Hon. George Canning,

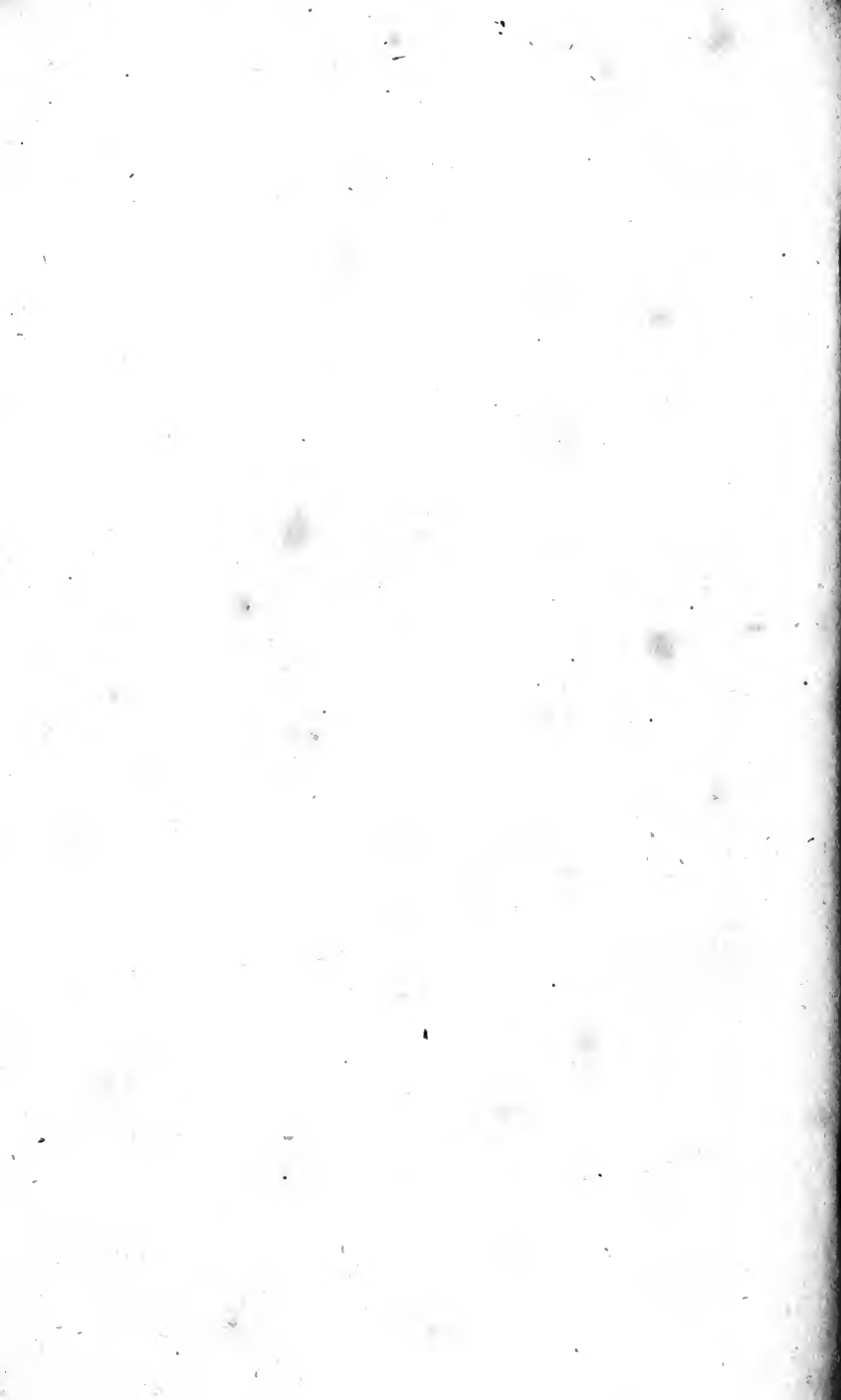
DURING THE
ELECTION IN LIVERPOOL,

WHICH COMMENCED
ON THURSDAY THE 18TH AND TERMINATED ON
THURSDAY THE 25TH OF JUNE,

1818.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED,
A compendious Account of the Election.

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