



SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS



DOUGLAS
LIBRARY

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON

KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

LETTERS

OF THE

DEAD;

[Pitt, W.]

OR,

EPISTLES

FROM

THE STATESMEN OF FORMER DAYS

TO

THOSE OF THE PRESENT HOUR.

“ Always acting as if in the presence of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity.” BURKE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY,

1802.

Price One Shilling.

AC 911. 1802 L48

1802

1802

1802

S. GOSNELL, Printer,
Little Queen Street, Holborn.

PREFATORY

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor of the following publication, strongly impressed with the necessity of rectifying (or at least endeavouring to explain away) those erroneous opinions which have been for some time afloat in the political world, in regard to the characters and connexions of his Majesty's late and present Ministers (and particularly concerning a supposed collusion between the two administrations), could not but wish to lay before the public, the impartial * thoughts of a sincere and zealous friend to the freedom of the People, as well as to the constitutional rights of the Crown. In doing this, he has been led by the very apposite and elegant passage, quoted from Mr. Burke, as a general motto to the ensuing

* And impartial certainly they are, allowing for the degree of attachment which every honest man must naturally feel for experienced talent, and approved integrity.

Pol/sc
Scientia 30 #1276 Nov 1980 22.95

66180

Letters, to adopt the form of EPISTLES FROM THE STATESMEN OF PAST DAYS, TO THOSE OF THE PRESENT HOUR, as the most authoritative and impressive vehicle for conveying (or attempting to convey) those thoughts in the shape of salutary advice, and impartial and mediatory explanation, cordial concurrence, or exemplary precedent. It may also be said with truth, that the real author is bestowing on himself a garment of no inconsiderable splendour, in the cloak with which he shelters his own insignificance under the great names of our CANONIZED FOREFATHERS. May it, in humble imitation of the prophet's mantle, inspire him, but even with a *moderate*, for who shall dare to hope for a *double* portion of their patriotic spirit, and well will he be satisfied with the efforts of his zeal, and the effects of his labour. At any rate, they are the real and unbiassed opinions of one, who, like the eloquent writer of his motto, "when the equipoise
 " of the vessel in which he sails may be
 " endangered by overloading it upon one
 " side, is desirous of conveying the small
 " weight of his reasons, to that which may
 " preserve it."

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

FIRST LETTER.

THE well-informed readers of English history in general, but more especially the keen observers of political biography, whilst endeavouring to trace the clue from recorded action to secret motive, will doubtless acknowledge, in the characters of the illustrious statesman, by whom the following Letter is supposed to be written, and the no less illustrious Minister to whom it is addressed, a parallel more than commonly striking; a congeniality of sentiment and disposition, which may fairly account for the present correspondence; the connexion between departed virtue and exist-

ing talent :—born of illustrious parents, and called in the prime of manhood to the chief direction of their respective sovereigns' councils ; at a period of life when most men are but in the novitiate of their political profession, or yet more generally have hardly deigned to bestow even a thought on the drudgeries of public business ; summoned, too, in those perilous periods of national danger, which require not only brilliant talents and extensive acquisitions, but undaunted courage, and a mind not to be swayed by fear, in their application to practice, the characters of both retain their similitude throughout the whole of their political lives. We see it in the impeachments of Strafford and of Warren Hastings ; in the attack on the bishops' privileges, under Charles I. and the proposed reform of Parliament in the present reign ; in Falkland's tardy and unwilling acceptance of the seals, and Mr. Pitt's voluntary resignation of them ; in their selection of companions so different

from those of the young nobility of their times in general ; in the familiarity and friendship with men of great talents and unspotted integrity only ; in their constant pertinacity and unwearied exertions in finishing whatever they had first duly considered, and firmly resolved on ; in their great classical knowledge, and superior logical ratiocination ; in that degree of apparent pride, which in reality arises only from the internal consciousness of integrity, and the contempt (liable, certainly, to the imputation of imprudence) of those arts which must be indulged in the transaction of human affairs. But if they appear *adversus malos injucundi*, they show likewise an equal application and attachment to good and worthy men. Again also may we trace the parallel in bold and faithful characters in the commencement of their parliamentary conduct, which was for some time rather inimical to the court ; or, in the words of Clarendon, “ sharp and severe against the

“ exorbitances,” which then seemed in their eyes “ grievous to the state;” but which their maturer judgments and subsequent experience led them to overlook, in preference to the risk of encountering evils, the magnitude and consequences of which might prove as far beyond calculation, as out of their ability to set aside, when once the machine was in motion. In fine, to sum up the comparison in the quaint but energetic language of the noble historian, “ to speak of *their* integrity, and high “ disdain of any bait that might seem to “ look towards corruption,

“ *IN tantis viris, INJURIA VIRTUTUM FUERIT.*”

LETTER THE FIRST.

LUCIUS *Lord Viscount* FALKLAND, *to*
the Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT.

“ Ingenium illustre altioribus studiis, juvenis admodum
“ dedit; non, ut plerique, ut nomine magnifico
“ segne otium velaret, sed quo firmior adversus for-
“ tuita, rempublicam capefferet.”

TACITI *Hist. lib. iv. sect. 5.*

IT has been a long-disputed point amongst the pious and the learned, with the divine and the philosopher, how far, “ *when we*
“ *have shuffled off this mortal coil,*” when the corporeal frame has returned to its native dust, and the mental part taken its

upward flight into the regions of refined spirituality, how far the attachments and the prejudices formed during the period of our terrestrial probation, accompany or affect the immortal essence which remains—the pure, ethereal, unembodied spirit. To this I am now enabled to give the following solution: In that kind of medium state, between the all-perfect Deity and the darkly-minded and imperfect man, in which the disembodied spirits of the just rest after their earthly labours, the grosser and the meaner cares of human life, those which lead to the laborious offices of daily subsistence; or, in a higher path, to the sordid accumulations of avarice, or the frivolous gratifyings of vanity and self-love: in these we no longer take an interest or a pleasure, and their remembrance is effaced as the print of footsteps on the sea-side, where the wave returns, and the tide flows again; but the impression is for ever lost, and is as that which never had existence. But the nobler and more spiritual affections, those which

arise from mental gratifications only, and may be regarded as emanations of that divine essence, which even in our earthly state dwells yet within the mind of man, and often leads him to the paths of immortal fame and glory ; to the well-earned love and friendship of his cotemporaries ; and the never-fading respect and veneration of succeeding ages :—these, indeed, never die ; these, like their omnipotent Author,

“ Live through all life, extend through all extent,
 “ Spread undivided, operate unspent—”

and the pure spirit of patriotism, the unabating love of that which was my native country when on earth, still glows with no diminished ardour in my present disembodied form. After the lapse of a century and a half, I feel the same interest in the victories of Lincelles and Rahmania, as warmed my bosom in the fatal field of Newbury ; when the impartial fountain of unadulterated patriotism sprang to my heart in almost equal streams—of fear for the *unlimited* success of

my sovereign, and of hope for the defeat of his rebellious subjects ; and my last feeble aspirations breathed forth *Peace to all men!*

In this unceasing warmth of affection for my beloved country, I have watched over her interests with the vigilance of a guardian angel ; have hovered around the dome of her senate-house, and been an invisible partaker of her councils ; but chiefly during the last long-lengthened and important struggle have I regarded with a jealous eye him whom the watchful care of Providence had inspired his monarch with the judgment to select as the sagacious steersman of his royal bark : the vigilant, the never-sleeping pilot through the stormy billows of the anarchic ocean. I had long known and closely had examined you ; had beheld the inmost workings of your undaunted spirit and discriminating judgment : I found you from your earliest youth undebased by the accustomed degradations of youthful folly : in infancy a man, and in the prime of man-

hood a philosopher ; a statesman of high attainments, and unrivalled acquisitions in political knowledge ; at a time of life, too, when the cotemporaries of your age and rank were suffering the unredeemable moments to slip by unheeded, contenting themselves with the butterfly enjoyment of sporting in the sunbeams of prosperity ; winging their airy wheelings on the fantastic breezes of the spring of fashion. But with my chosen charge, not so escaped the precious moments of his pre-eminently early manhood ; he well knew, and as strongly felt, that the enjoyments of youth are too ephemeral in their nature, too transient in their impression, to satisfy completely a mind constituted like his, with superior powers of discrimination, and a judgment as nearly approaching to infallibility, as the imperfection of human nature will admit of ; which could not agree to rest its claims to notoriety on the vanities of the coxcomb, the extravagances of the gamester, or the miser's hoarded treasures ; but was at once

determined to raise a name on solid and unalienable foundations: bedded, indeed, on the strong rock of paternal reputation, but erected by his own virtues, and cemented by his personal exertions. Aptly has an ingenious author of the present day applied to you the sublime language of the Roman annalist, in the character of Helvidius Priscus *, “*Ingenium illustre,*” &c.: he might have continued from the same authority, “*Erant quibus appetentior famæ videtur;*” and never was the sacred thirst after a good report directed to better purposes than I have witnessed in the brilliant career of your public life. I had perceived with satisfaction, nearly equal to that of your illustrious parent and preceptor, the due impression of his lessons and example: I beheld you entering the political lists, inspired with an ardour in the cause of freedom, rising almost to enthusiasm; the *contemptor opum et deliciarum*, spurning at

* Vide motto to this letter, first applied to Mr. Pitt in the “Pursuits of Literature.”

riches, and despising luxury; I saw you turn into the dry and dusty labyrinth of finance, and uniting with the quick and comprehensive talents of Colbert, the cool discriminating patience of a Walpole; beheld you avoiding the flowery paths of popularity on the one hand, or yielding court-lines on the other, to take the short, direct, but rough and thorny road to financial stability, and solid national credit. It is to your fortitude and keen perception that England owes her present solvency amidst a bankrupt world; and that she possesses a foundation for future resources, which will enable her with ease to meet the contingencies of wars to come; and make exertions almost as much beyond credibility, and as superior to the present, as these to any which the statesmen of my day could have conceived it possible for their country to make at any time.

After distancing the financiers of your own and preceding generations, by an im-

provement of the national resources, rapid-
 beyond the most sanguine expectation, and
 incontrovertibly solid to the defiance of all
 possible questioning ; in the midst of your
 well-deserved moments of reputation, I fore-
 saw the interruptions preparing for you on
 the continent, and the storm began already
 to show itself above the horizon. I saw
 and watched you with the scrutinizing eye
 of anxious hesitation, when, borrowing the
 attirements of your favourite LIBERTY,
 the foul hag LICENTIOUSNESS commen-
 ced her horrid incantations, and the blood
 of the victims already began to flow upon
 her altars ; but her countenance as yet seemed
 lovely, and gracefully to the eyes of com-
 mon beholders did she for some time con-
 tinue to win her airy way ; the purple light
 of love was on her outward cheek, but the
 convulsive throb of malice agitated the in-
 ward vibrations of her heart : the multitude
 was deceived, and the social arch already
 trembled to its very keystone, when you,
 and a few more minds of the same enlight-

ened stamp, “ *stepped in between the living
“ and the dead, and stayed the plague*.*”

The French revolution, like the purifying flame, at once distinguished the sound principles and minds of sterling value, from those of outward tinsel show, but of base alloy within. Your understanding was of a cast too correct, and of materials too intrinsically chaste, not to discriminate in an instant between licentiousness and liberty ; too sincerely devoted to the latter, not to deprecate the usurpations of her base-born, her illegitimate sister, you seized the moment for bringing forth all the powers of your country, and with a master’s hand threw them into the balance at the precise instant when, without them, the scale of social order and regulated national freedom would have kicked the beam, and universal uproar have ensued. I was a witness of your sincere reluctance to plunge your happy islands into the abyss of warfare ; and indeed none

* Applied by the author of the “ *Pursuits of Literature*” to Edmund Burke.

but the predetermined and wilful misrepresenter of facts, the malicious, foolish, or insane, could have supposed you voluntarily guilty of incurring expenses which must necessarily counteract your favourite plans of public economy; and of encountering enemies, against whom, if not successful, your financial reputation must be blighted by the wayward and giddy breath of popular opinion, “*Quam hoc non credibile in hoc?*” But the calls of public duty silenced the voice of private interest, and you pursued with firm and steady step the only path to national salvation; you proved yourself endued *mente solidâ, civium ardore prava jubentium, non quatiendâ*; and to the fortitude of yourself and your little phalanx of co-patriots, is not only Britain, but the whole civilized world indebted for the check (may it prove a *permanent* one!) which the progress of anarchy, the *sure*, though not *ostensible* harbinger of despotism in its worst form, has encountered. That measures so wisely planned, and steadily

pursued, have failed of obtaining their entire success, must not on you reflect the smallest shadow of a blame: what man could, you did; and to the indolence of some princes, the self-interestedness of others, the blindness of the greater powers, the impotence of the smaller ones; to the disunion of the whole, the infidelity of their ministers, and the treachery of their generals; “nor least, “though last,” the inflammatory language of the opposers of those measures at home, is to be attributed the failure of a combination, which ought to have crushed the revolutionary monster in the shell, ere her gigantic flight over the continent had covered the lesser inhabitants of its atmosphere, till every pinion flagged except her own; and even the seagull, as he flitted over the chalky cliffs of his beloved Albion, and beheld her *stationary** squadrons, shrieked in dismay lest the sanguinary tyrant should direct her murderous course to these blest realms of

* During the mutiny in 1797.

peace and loyalty. You prepared to meet the threatened danger with animated prudence and tempered resolution; what was just was granted, what was impolitic refused; the guilty suffered punishment, the faithful were rewarded; subordination was restored with added vigour; and with transport I beheld you rouse a spirit in your countrymen, which armed each hand, and devoted every heart to repel the lawless plunderers of the globe: “ raptores orbis, “ postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terræ, “ et mare scrutantur; si locuples hostis est, “ avari; si pauper, ambitiosi; quos non “ oriens, non occidens fatiaverit; soli omnium, opes atque inopiam, pari affectu “ concupiscunt; auferre, trucidare, rapere “ falsis nominibus *imperium*, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, *pacem* appellant.” Whilst a nation of soldiers lined your shores, the winds of heaven carried your invincible seamen to fresh conquests in every quarter of the compass; the navies of united enemies sunk before your fleets; and Britain once

more reigned, *unquestionably* reigned, the sole, unrivalled, unresisted mistress of the seas: whilst your ancient competitor in the lists of naval glory, virtually acknowledged, in his blockaded ports and crippled commerce, the truth of your proud boast—

“ Non *illi* imperium pelagi, sævumque tridentem,
 “ Sed *mihî* forte datum.”

To follow your footsteps minutely through every path of your administration, would be the work of much time, and even to *spiritual* activity, of no small labour. The facts are too well known to justify a repetition to those who are disposed to judge them candidly; and to the envious, wilful, or malicious, it would be time mispent, and labour ill bestowed, to attempt their vindication. In very truth they need none.—The consequences, though, for reasons arising from unforeseen events (which I may hereafter mention), not so complete as might have been expected, speak yet a language sufficiently

plain and decisive. Had another system been pursued ; had any other measures (speaking only with general reference to the great plan and principle of your exertions) been adopted ; and had you suffered your fellow-subjects, already in part intoxicated with the high spirit and seducing flavour of the revolutionary *liqueurs*, to have partaken in the inebriate somnolency of the continent ; Europe, shaken as she now is, to her very vitals, and dislocated and distorted in every joint and muscle, from the tortures of the Gallic inquisition, must have experienced a perfect political dissolution. Britain, my beloved Britain ! the seat of Honour and the throne of Freedom ; Britain, with her glorious constitution, the progressive work of ages, the legislative triumph of sober, practical, experienced wisdom ; reared by her cautious senators, and cemented with the blood of her best patriots and firmest heroes—-together must have fallen beneath the overwhelming, all-devouring rage of universal revolution ; in

the great wreck of every civilized society ;
of every virtue, moral or religious.

This is a position which has been sufficiently discussed ; and the example of that nation which has chosen, madly chosen, to think otherwise and act differently, is at this moment in full and bold relief before the eyes of your countrymen ; who, when they think with caution, and reflect with judgment, when the keen eye of unbiassed criticism pierces beneath the tinselled varnish of the gaudy picture, and views the sombrous solid body of its colourings, must know and feel that France, in her wild rage for theoretical perfection, has sunk into the misery of practical imperfectness ;—that all her Consular triumphs, her extensive conquests, and continental acquisitions, have been bought too dear, in the *political* sale of her navy, and her commerce ; and the *moral* auction of her religion, and her virtue. But, we are told, that peace, the gentle harbinger of every blessing, will there, as

here, be sure to set all right; and that the hour which terminates the horrors of hostility, will be the commencement of a new æra; that the same governing talents and ability which have rendered France in war triumphant, will, in peace, lay the immediate foundations for an improved state of national honour, wealth, and happiness. What, then, does the Dictator sit so firmly on his throne?—He to whom plundered Italy may once again exclaim, “ *Quod auri, quod argenti, quod ornamentorum in meis urbibus, sedibus, delubris fuit, quod in unaquâque re beneficio senatûs populique Romani juris habui—id mihi eripuisti, atque abstulisti.—Si universa, ut dixi provincia, loqui posset, hac voce uteretur.*”—Are the deserted heroes of his quondam troops in Egypt, the gallant soldiers left to perish on the burning sands of Africa, or swell the triumph of a handful of their enemies, are these no longer in existence? Does disappointed ambition so

totally forget the vain monopolizer of all power and glory ; or the republican think so well of him, who has established the severest despotism ? Has the atheist bowed repentant at the footstool of his insulted Maker ; and learned to acquiesce in the restoring of religious restraints ? And will the Gallic Sylla be allowed to end his days in useful peace and honourable safety ; or shall we not again see the “ *Unus erit Consul, et is non in administrando bello, sed in sufficiendo collega occupatus ?* ”

At this instant, even at this very instant, when she fondly anticipates the delights of freedom, and the enjoyments of internal quiet, France stands in trembling hesitation upon the precipice's brink, from whence she may perhaps be fortunate enough to alight on the narrow but firm path of restored and limited monarchy ; but where the odds are tenfold for her plunging on the one hand into the deep abyss of re-revolu-

tionary chaos; or on the other, into the rocky cavern of military despotism.

But of this, something too much; and to my more immediate subject. It has been said of you, though *erroneously*, by the same well-read scholar, who first compared you with Helvidius Priscus, that POWER, NOT FAME, was the enshrined idol of your adorations; but after sixteen years of united, almost undisturbed, enjoyment of them both, a question rose, fatally rose, to urge your choice, and force you to relinquish one or the other of them. Much as I deprecated the *unnecessary* agitating of that question, it was with the most cordial approbation of your subsequent conduct, that I beheld you abandon, without a doubt, almost to the exclusion of a pause, that power which could but be retained at the expense of fame; or, what in your unspotted heart outweighed them both, the consciousness of your political integrity. In the meridian

of your splendid day, in the plenitude of corporeal and intellectual strength, you gave up power, precedence, influence, wealth; and all that talents earn, or judgment could select to make life honourably happy; you offered them a precious hecatomb, at the fair shrine of truth; and sweetly was the oblation sanctified by the pure incense of unbroken honour.

Fortunate was it for these realms, that in abandoning the helm of state you could transfer it to the chosen friend of your youth, the object of hereditary friendship; the companion, whose mild virtues and dignified conciliatory manners, were first brought forth into their due relief, under your friendly patronage. Differing widely in your characters; but coinciding in your fundamental principles, in your unshaken patriotism, your undeviating love of Britain and her constitution, your veneration and respect for your Sovereign, and your

determined hostility to his opposers ; it was impossible to fix on a successor more likely to persevere in preserving the Crown's true dignity, the subject's real freedom.

How far the measures followed by the present Premier, consist with those of your administration, comes not within the scope and compass of the present subject. But I have heard you called, by shallow politicians, unwise and inconsistent, for affording your support to that in others, which, in your own day, they say you condemned and set aside (or, in their language, *shuffled off*) ; the making of a peace with France, as a republic. And they prefer, to yours, the conduct of that part of your late colleagues who have declared their open opposition to the peace ; because, say they, that conduct is consistent. But will these statesmen of Laputa, these counsellors of Gotham, allow no change of time, or place, or circumstance, to operate in bar of one unchanging,

never-yielding sentiment? Will they, or can they, prove, that, when in power, you did not always fairly, openly, and most explicitly declare, that though a restoration of the ancient form of government of France, with rational and moderate limitations, would ever be a leading object of your best wishes, and your soundest judgment; yet that no form whatever, promising but a probable duration, so as to secure the inviolate performance of the terms agreed on, and to preclude a repetition of the unjust, invasive principles of their then leaders, should prevent your treating for and concluding a peace at any time? Or will they not allow, that, without recurrence to either of the above sufficient reasons, it is the high prerogative of Majesty to make the peace, as to declare the war; and that, when made, the credit of the nation, that sacred pledge which Britain never yet left unredeemed, will stand committed to observe the treaty, with nicest honour and religious faith?

You feel and own the tie; and with the fair and equitable reservation of a final opinion on the merit of the terms, you give your successors your best support; and to yourself a title in every wise and honest man's approval.

Great in your morn of entrance into public life; still greater in the noon of power and influence, by their well-directed use and application; you are yet greatest in the voluntary exchange of them for self-approving, conscientious rectitude; and in the candid, liberal, and disinterested assistance (for it is much more than mere support which they receive in the benefit of your experienced talents), that you afford to those who now possess your former station.

Proudly, therefore, but with the scrupulous exactness of veracity, may you thus finally address your grateful countrymen :

“ *Rempubli- can, vitamque omnium vestrũm,*
 “ *bona, fortunas, conjuges, liberosque ves-*
 “ *tros, atque hoc domicilium clarissimi im-*
 “ *perii, fortunatissimam pulcherimamque*
 “ *urbem, hodierno die, laboribus, consiliis,*
 “ *periculisque meis, ex flamma atque ferro,*
 “ *ac pene ex faucibus fati ereptam, et vobis*
 “ *conservatam ac restitutam, videtis.*”

FALKLAND.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general
 description of the country, its climate, soil, and
 productions. The second part contains a
 detailed account of the principal cities and
 towns, with a description of their fortifications,
 and the manner of their government. The third
 part is a history of the country, from the
 first settlement to the present time. The fourth
 part is a description of the manners and
 customs of the people, and the state of their
 agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.

APPENDIX

This part of the book contains a list of the
 principal cities and towns, with a description
 of their fortifications, and the manner of
 their government. It also contains a list of
 the principal manufactures, and a description
 of the state of the agriculture, and
 commerce of the country.







