

was the patriot King to carry the House of Commons with him in his upright designs? By what means? Interdicting himself from the use of corrupt influence, what motive was he to address to the Dodingtons and Winningtons? Was cupidity, strengthened by habit, to be laid asleep by a few fine sentences about virtue and union?

Absurd as this theory was, it had many admirers, particularly among men of letters. It was now to be reduced to practice; and the result was, as any man of sagacity must have foreseen, the most piteous and ridiculous of failures.

On the very day of the young King's accession appeared some signs which indicated the approach of a great change.

The King's speech. The speech which he made to his council was not submitted to the cabinet. It was drawn up by Bute, and contained some expressions which might be constructed into reflections on the conduct of affairs during the late reign. Pitt remonstrated, and begged that these expressions might be softened down in the printed copy; but it was not till after some hours of altercation that Bute yielded; and, even after Bute had yielded, the King affected to hold out till the following afternoon. On the same day on which this singular contest took place, Bute was not only sworn of the privy council, but introduced into the cabinet.

Soon after this, Lord Holderness, one of the secretaries of state, in pursuance of a plan concerted with the court, resigned the seals. Bute

Lord Holderness resigns. was instantly appointed to the vacant place. A general election speedily followed, and the new secretary entered Parliament in the only way in which he then could enter it, as one of the sixteen representative peers of Scotland.*

Had the ministers been firmly united, it can scarcely be doubted that they would have been able to withstand the court. The parliamentary influence of the Whig aristocracy, combined with the genius, the virtue, and the fame of Pitt, would have been irresistible. But there had been in the cabinet of George the Second latent jealousies and enmities, which now began to show themselves.

* In the reign of Anne, the House of Lords had resolved that, under the 23rd article of Union, no Scotch peer could be created a peer of Great Britain. This resolution was not annulled till the year 1782.

Pitt had been estranged from his old ally Legge, the chancellor of the exchequer. Some of the ministers were Jealousies and envious of Pitt's popularity; others were, not altogether without cause, disgusted by his imperious and haughty demeanour; others, again, were honestly opposed to some parts of his policy. They admitted that he had found the country in the depths of humiliation, and had raised it to the height of glory; they admitted that he had conducted the war with energy, ability, and splendid success. But they began to hint that the drain on the resources of the state were unexampled, and that the public debt was increasing with a speed at which Montague or Godolphin would have stood aghast. Some of the acquisitions made by our fleets and armies were, it was acknowledged, profitable as well as honourable; but, now that George the Second was dead, a courtier might venture to ask why England was to become a party in a dispute between two German powers. What was it to her whether the House of Hapsburg or the House of Brandenburg ruled in Silesia? Why were the best English regiments fighting on the Maine? Why were the Prussian battalions paid with English gold? The great minister seemed to think it beneath him to calculate the price of victory. As long as the Tower guns were fired, as the streets were illuminated, as French banners were carried in triumph through the streets of London, it was to him matter of indifference to what extent the public burdens were augmented. Nay, he seemed to glory in the magnitude of these sacrifices, which the people, fascinated by his eloquence and success, had too readily made, and would long and bitterly regret. There was no check on waste or embezzlement. Our commissaries returned from the camp of Prince Ferdinand to buy boroughs, to rear palaces, to rival the magnificence of the old aristocracy of the realm. Already had we borrowed, in four years of war, more than the most skilful and economical government would pay in forty years of peace. But the prospect of peace was as remote as ever. It could not be doubted that France, smarting and prostrate, would consent to fair terms of accommodation; but this was not what Pitt wanted. War had made him powerful and popular: with war, all that was brightest in his life was associated: for war, his talents were

peculiarly fitted. He had at length begun to love war for its own sake, and was more disposed to quarrel with neutrals than to make peace with enemies.

Such were the views of the Duke of Bedford and of the Earl of Hardwicke; but no member of the government held these opinions so strongly as George

George
Grenville.

Grenville, the treasurer of the navy. George Grenville was brother-in-law

of Pitt, and had always been reckoned one of Pitt's personal and political friends. But it is difficult to conceive two men of talents and integrity more utterly unlike each other. Pitt, as his sister often said, knew nothing accurately except Spenser's *Fairy Queen*. He had never applied himself steadily to any branch of knowledge. He was a wretched financier. He never became familiar even with the rules of that House of which he was the brightest ornament. He had never studied public law as a system; and was, indeed, so ignorant of the whole subject, that George the Second, on one occasion, complained bitterly that a man who had never read *Vattel* should presume to undertake the direction of foreign affairs. But these defects were more than redeemed by high and rare gifts; by a strange power of inspiring great masses of men with confidence and affection; by an eloquence which not only delighted the ear, but stirred the blood and brought tears into the eyes; by originality in devising plans; by vigour in executing them. Grenville, on the other hand, was by nature and habit a man of details. He had been bred a lawyer; and he had brought the industry and acuteness of the Temple into official and parliamentary life. He was supposed to be intimately acquainted with the whole fiscal system of the country. He had paid especial attention to the law of Parliament, and was so learned in all things relating to the privileges and orders of the House of Commons, that those who loved him least pronounced him the only person competent to succeed Onslow in the Chair. His speeches were generally instructive, and sometimes, from the gravity and earnestness with which he spoke, even impressive; but never brilliant, and generally tedious. Indeed, even when he was at the head of affairs, he sometimes found it difficult to obtain the ear of the House. In disposition as well as in intellect, he differed widely from his

brother-in-law. Pitt was utterly regardless of money. He would scarcely stretch out his hand to take it; and, when it came, he threw it away with childish profusion. Grenville, though strictly upright, was grasping and parsimonious. Pitt was a man of excitable nerves, sanguine in hope, easily elated by success and popularity, keenly sensible of injury, but prompt to forgive; Grenville's character was stern, melancholy, and pertinacious. Nothing was more remarkable in him than his inclination always to look on the dark side of things. He was the raven of the House of Commons, always croaking defeat in the midst of triumphs, and bankruptcy with an overflowing exchequer. Burke, with general applause, compared Grenville, in a time of quiet and plenty, to the evil spirit whom Ovid described looking down on the stately temples and wealthy haven of Athens, and scarce able to refrain from weeping because she could find nothing at which to weep. Such a man was not likely to be popular. But to unpopularity Grenville opposed a dogged determination, which sometimes forced even those who hated him to respect him.

It was natural that Pitt and Grenville, being such as they were, should take very different views of the situation of affairs. Pitt could see nothing but the trophies; Grenville could see nothing but the bill. Pitt boasted that England was victorious at once in America, in India, and in Germany—the umpire of the Continent, the mistress of the sea. Grenville cast up the subsidies, sighed over the army extraordinaries, and groaned in spirit to think that the nation had borrowed eight millions in one year.

With a ministry thus divided it was not difficult for Bute to deal. Legge was the first who fell. He had given offence to the young King in the late reign, by refusing to support a creature of Bute at a Hampshire election. He was now not only turned out, but in the closet, when he delivered up his seal of office, was treated with gross incivility.

Pitt, who did not love Legge, saw this event with indifference. But the danger was now fast approaching himself. Charles the Third of Spain had early conceived a deadly hatred of England. Twenty years before, when he was King of the Two Sicilies, he had been eager to join the coalition against Maria Theresa. But an English fleet had suddenly ap-

The ministry
divided.

peared in the Bay of Naples. An English captain had landed, had proceeded to the palace, had laid a watch on the table, and had told his majesty that, within an hour, a treaty

Treaty with
the King of
Sicily.

of neutrality must be signed, or a bombardment would commence. The treaty was signed; the squadron sailed out of the bay twenty-four hours after it had sailed in; and from that day the ruling passion of the humbled Prince was aversion to the English name. He was at length in a situation in which he might hope to gratify that passion. He had recently become King of Spain and the Indies. He saw, with envy and apprehension, the triumphs of our navy, and the rapid extension of our colonial Empire. He was a Bourbon, and sympathized with the distress of the House from which he sprang. He was a Spaniard; and no Spaniard could bear to see Gibraltar and Minorca in the possession of a foreign power. Impelled by such feelings, Charles concluded a secret treaty with France. By this treaty, known as the Family Compact, the two powers bound themselves, not in express words, but by the clearest implication, to make war on England in common. Spain postponed the declaration of hostilities only till her fleet, laden with the treasures of America, should have arrived.

The existence of the treaty could not be kept a secret from Pitt. He acted as

Proposal of
Pitt.

a man of his capacity and energy might be expected to act. He at once pro-

posed to declare war against Spain, and to intercept the American fleet. He had determined, it is said, to attack without delay both Havanna and the Philippines.

His wise and resolute counsel was rejected. Bute was foremost in opposing

Pitt's counsel
rejected.

it, and was supported by almost the whole cabinet.

Some of the ministers doubted, or affected to doubt, the correctness of Pitt's intelligence; some shrank from the responsibility of advising a course so bold and decided as that which he proposed; some were weary of his ascendancy, and were glad to be rid of him on any pretext. One only of his colleagues agreed with him, his brother-in-law, Earl Temple.

Pitt and Temple resigned their offices. To Pitt the young King behaved at parting in the most gracious manner. Pitt, who, proud and fiery everywhere

else, was always meek and humble in the closet, was moved even to tears. The King and the favourite urged him to accept some substantial mark of royal

Pitt and Tem-
ple resign.

gratitude. Would he like to be appointed governor of Canada? A salary of £5,000 a year should be annexed to the office. Residence would not be required. It was true that the governor of Canada, as the law then stood, could not be a member of the House of Commons. But a bill should be brought in, authorizing Pitt to hold his government together with a seat in Parliament, and in the preamble should be set forth his claims to the gratitude of his country. Pitt answered, with all delicacy, that his anxieties were rather for his wife and family than for himself, and that nothing would be so acceptable to him as a mark of royal goodness which might be beneficial to those who were dearest to him. The hint was taken. The same gazette which announced the retirement of the secretary of state, announced also, that, in consideration of his great public services, his wife had been created a peeress in her own right, and a pension of three thousand pounds a year, for three lives, had been bestowed on himself. It was doubtless thought that the rewards and honours conferred on the great minister would have a conciliatory effect

Rewards and
honours.

on the public mind. Perhaps, too, it was thought that his popularity, which had partly arisen from the contempt which he had always shown for money, would be damaged by a pension; and, indeed, a crowd of libels instantly appeared, in which he was accused of having sold his country. Many of his true friends thought that he would have best consulted the dignity of his character by refusing to accept any pecuniary reward from the court. Nevertheless, the general opinion of his talents, virtues, and services, remained unaltered. Addresses were presented to him from several large towns. London showed its admiration and affection in a still more marked manner. Soon after his resignation came the Lord Mayor's day. The King and the royal family dined at Guildhall. Pitt was one of the guests. The young sovereign, seated by his bride in his state coach, received a remarkable lesson. He was scarcely noticed. All eyes were fixed on the fallen minister; all acclamations directed to him. The streets, the

balconies, the chimney-tops, burst into a roar of delight as his chariot passed by. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs from the windows. The common people clung to the wheels, shook hands with the footmen, and even kissed the horses. Cries of "No Bute!" "No Newcastle salmon!" were mingled with the shouts of "Pitt for ever!" When Pitt entered Guildhall, he was welcomed by loud huzzas and clapping of hands, in which the very magistrates of the city joined. Lord Bute, in the meantime, was hooted and pelted through Cheapside, and would, it was thought, have been in some danger, if he had not taken the precaution of surrounding his carriage with a strong body-guard of boxers. Many persons blamed the conduct of Pitt on this occasion as disrespectful to the King. Indeed, Pitt himself afterwards owned that he had done wrong. He was led into this error, as he was afterwards led into more serious errors, by the influence of his turbulent and mischievous brother-in-law, Temple.

The events which immediately followed Pitt's retirement raised his fame higher than ever. War with Spain proved to be, as he had predicted, inevitable. News came from the West Indies that Martinique had been taken by an expedition which he had sent forth. Havanna fell; and it was known that he had planned an attack on Havanna. Manilla capitulated; and it was believed that he had meditated a blow against Manilla. The American fleet, which he had proposed to intercept, had unloaded an immense cargo of bullion in the haven of Cadiz, before Bute could be convinced that the court of Madrid really entertained hostile intentions.

The session of Parliament which followed Pitt's retirement passed over without any violent storm. Lord Bute took on himself the most prominent part in the House of Lords. He had become secretary of state, and indeed prime minister, without having once opened his lips in public except as an actor. There was, therefore, no small curiosity to know how he would acquit himself. Members of the House of Commons crowded the bar of the Lords, and covered the steps of the throne. It was generally expected that the orator would break down; but his most malicious hearers were forced to own that he had made a better figure than they expected. They, indeed, ridi-

culed his action as theatrical, and his style as tumid. They were especially amused by the long pauses which, not from hesitation but from affectation, he made at all the emphatic words, and Charles Townshend cried out, "Minute guns!" The Lord Bute as a speaker. general opinion, however, was, that if Bute had been early practised in debate, he might have become an impressive speaker.

In the Commons, George Grenville had been entrusted with the lead. The task was not, as yet, a very difficult one: for Pitt did not think fit to raise the standard of op-
Pitt's eloquence and modesty.
 position. His speeches at this time were distinguished, not only by that eloquence in which he excelled all his rivals, but also by a temperance and a modesty which had too often been wanting to his character. When war was declared against Spain, he justly laid claim to his merit of having foreseen what had at length become manifest to all, but he carefully abstained from arrogant and acrimonious expressions; and this abstinence was the more honourable to him because his temper, never very placid, was now severely tried, both by gout and by calumny. The courtier had adopted a mode of warfare, which was soon turned with far more formidable effect against themselves. Half the inhabitants of the Grub Street garrets paid their milk-scores, and got their shirts out of pawn, by abusing Pitt. His German war, his subsidies, his pension, his wife's peerage, were shewn of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal, to the starving poetasters of the Fleet. Even in the House of Commons, he was, on one occasion during this session, assailed with an insolence and malice which called forth the indignation of men of all parties; but he endured the outrage with majestic patience. In his younger days he had been but too prompt to retaliate on those who attacked him; but now, conscious of his great services, and of the space which he filled in the eyes of all mankind, he would not stoop to personal squabbles. "This is no season," he said, in the debate on the Spanish war, "for altercation and recrimination. A day has arrived when every Englishman should stand forth for his country. Arm the whole; be one people; forget everything but the public. I set you the example. Harassed by slanderers, sinking

under pain and disease, for the public I forget both my wrongs and my infirmities!" On a general review of his life, we are inclined to think that his genius and virtue never shone with so pure an effulgence as during the session of 1762.

The session drew towards the close; and Bute, emboldened by the acquiescence of the Houses, resolved to strike another great blow, and to become first minister in name as well as in reality. That coalition, which a few months before had seemed all powerful, had been dissolved. The retreat of Pitt had deprived the government of popularity. Newcastle had exulted in the fall of the illustrious colleague whom he envied and dreaded, and had not foreseen that his own doom was at hand. He still tried to flatter himself that he was at the head of the government; but insults heaped on insults at length undeceived him. Places which had always been considered as in his gift, were bestowed without any reference to him. His expostulations only called forth significant hints that it was time for him to retire. One day he pressed on Bute the claims of a Whig Prelate to the archbishopric of York. "If your grace thinks so highly of him," answered Bute, "I wonder that you did not promote him when you had the power." Still the old man clung with a desperate grasp to the wreck. Seldom, indeed, have Christian meekness and Christian humility equalled the meekness and humility of his patient and abject ambition. At length he was forced to understand that all was over. He quitted

that court where he had held high office during forty-five years, and hid his shame and regret among the cedars of Claremont. Bute became first lord of the treasury.

The favourite had undoubtedly committed a great error. It is impossible to

imagine a tool better suited to his purposes than that which he thus threw away, or rather put into the hands of his enemies. If Newcastle had been suffered to play at being first minister, Bute might securely and quietly have enjoyed the substance of power. The gradual introduction of Tories into all the departments of the government might have been effected without any violent clamour, if the chief of the great Whig connection had been ostensibly at the head of affairs. This was strongly represented to Bute by

Lord Mansfield, a man who may justly be called the father of modern Toryism, of Toryism modified to suit an order of things under which the House of Commons is the most powerful body in the state. The theories which had dazzled Bute could not impose on the fine intellect of Mansfield. The temerity with which Bute provoked the hostility of powerful and deeply-rooted interests, was displeasing to Mansfield's cold and timid nature. Expostulation, however, was vain. Bute was impatient of advice, drunk with success, eager to be, in show as well as in reality, the head of the government. He had engaged in an undertaking, in which a screen was absolutely necessary to his success, and even to his safety. He found an excellent screen ready in the very place where it was most needed; and he rudely pushed it away.

And now the new system of government came into full operation. For the first time since the accession of the House of Hanover, the Tory party was in the ascendant. The prime minister himself was a **Tories in the ascendant.** Tory. Lord Egremont, who had succeeded Pitt as secretary of state, was a Tory, and the son of a Tory. Sir Francis Dashwood, a man of slender parts, of small experience, and of notoriously immoral character, was made chancellor of the exchequer, for no reason that could be imagined, except that he was a Tory and had been a Jacobite. The royal household was filled with men whose favourite toast, a few years before, had been the "King over the water." The relative position of the two great national seats of learning was suddenly changed. The University of Oxford had long been the chief seat of disaffection. In troubled times, the High Street had been lined with bayonets; the colleges had been searched by the King's messengers. Grave doctors were in the habit of talking very Ciceronian treason in the theatre; and the under-graduates drank bumpers to Jacobite toasts, and chanted Jacobite airs. Of four successive Chancellors of the University, one had notoriously been in the Pretender's service; the other three were fully believed to be in secret correspondence with the exiled family. Cambridge had therefore been especially favoured by the Hanoverian Princes, and had shown herself grateful for their patronage. George the First had enriched her library;

George the Second had contributed munificently to her senate-house. Bishoprics and deaneries were showered on her children. Her Chancellor was Newcastle, the chief of the Whig aristocracy; her High-Steward was Hardwicke, the Whig head of the law. Both her burgesses had held office under the Whig ministry. Times had now changed. The University of Cambridge was received at St. James's with comparative coldness. The answers to the addresses of Oxford were all graciousness and warmth.

The watchwords of the new government were prerogative and purity. The

Prerogative and purity. sovereign was no longer to be a puppet in the hands of any subject, or

of any combination of subjects. George the Third would not be forced to take ministers whom he disliked, as his grandfather had been forced to take Pitt. George the Third would not be forced to part with any whom he delighted to honour, as his grandfather had been forced to part with Carteret. At the same time, the system of bribery which had grown up during the late reigns was to cease. It was ostentatiously proclaimed that, since the accession of the young King, neither constituents nor representatives had been bought with the secret service money. To free Britain from corruption and oligarchical cabals, to detach her from continental connections, to bring the bloody and expensive war with France and Spain to a close, such were the specious objects which Bute professed to procure.

Some of these objects he attained. England withdrew, at the cost of a deep stain on her faith, from her German connections. The war with France and Spain was terminated by a peace, honourable indeed and advantageous to our country, yet less honourable and less advantageous than might have been expected from a long and almost unbroken series of victories, by land and sea, in every part of the world. But the only effect of Bute's domestic administration was to make faction wilder and corruption fouler than ever.

The mutual animosity of the Whig and Tory parties had begun to languish after

Party animosity revived. the fall of Walpole, and had seemed to be almost extinct at the close of the reign of George the

Second. It now revived in all its force. Many Whigs, it is true, were still in

office. The Duke of Bedford had signed the treaty with France. The Duke of Devonshire, though much out of humour, still continued to be Lord-Chamberlain. Grenville who led the House of Commons, and Fox who still enjoyed in silence the immense gains of the Pay-office, had always been regarded as strong Whigs. But the bulk of the party throughout the country regarded the new minister with abhorrence. There was, indeed, no want of popular themes for invective against his character. He was a favourite; and favourites have always been odious in this country. No mere favourite had been at the head of the government since the dagger of Felton reached the heart of the Duke of Buckingham. After that event, the most arbitrary and the most frivolous of the Stuarts had felt the necessity of confiding the chief direction of affairs to men who had given some proof of parliamentary or official talent. Strafford, Falkland, Clarendon, Clifford, Shaftesbury, Lauderdale, Danby, Temple, Halifax, Rochester, Sunderland, whatever their faults might be, were all men of acknowledged ability. They did not owe their eminence merely to the favour of the sovereign. On the contrary, they owed the favour of the sovereign to their eminence. Most of them, indeed, had first attracted the notice of the court by the capacity and vigour which they had shown in opposition. The Revolution seemed to have for ever secured the state against the domination of a Carr or a Villiers. Now, however, the personal regard of the King had at once raised a man who had seen nothing of public business, who had never opened his lips in Parliament, over the heads of a crowd of eminent orators, financiers, diplomatists. From a private gentleman, this fortunate minion had at once been turned into a secretary of state. He had made his maiden speech when at the head of the administration. The vulgar restored to a simple explanation of the phenomenon, and the coarsest ribaldry against the Princess Mother was scrawled on every wall and in every alley.

This was not all. The spirit of party, roused by impolitic provocation from its long sleep, roused in turn a still fiercer and more malignant Fury, the spirit of national animosity. The grudge of Whig against Tory was mingled with the grudge of Englishman against Scot. The two sections of the great British

people had not yet been indissolubly blended together. The events of 1715 and of 1745 had left painful and enduring traces. The tradesmen of Cornhill had been in dread of seeing their tills and warehouses plundered by bare-legged mountaineers from the Grampians. They still recollected that Black Friday, when the news came that the rebels were at Derby, when all the shops in the city were closed, and when the Bank of England began to pay in sixpences. The Scots, on the other hand, remembered, with natural resentment, the severity with which the insurgents had been chastised, the military outrages, the humiliating laws, the heads fixed on Temple Bar, the fires and quartering-blocks on Kennington Common. The favourite did not suffer the English to forget from what part of the island he came. The cry of all the south was that the public offices, the army, the navy, were filled with high-cheeked Drummonds and Erskines, Macdonalds and Macgillivrays, who could not talk a Christian tongue, and some of whom had but lately begun to wear Christian breeches. All the old jokes on hills without trees, girls without stockings, men eating the food of horses, pails emptied from the fourteenth story, were pointed against these lucky adventurers. To the honour of the Scots it must be said, that their prudence and their pride restrained them from retaliation. Like the princess in the Arabian tale, they stopped their ears tight, and, unmoved by the shrillest notes of abuse, walked on, without once looking round, straight towards the Golden Fountain.

Bute, who had always been considered as a man of taste and reading, affected,

Bute as a
Mæcenæ.

from the moment of his elevation, the character of a Mæcenæ. If he expected to conciliate the public by encouraging literature and art, he was grievously mistaken. Indeed, none of the objects of his munificence, with the single exception of Johnson, can be said to have been well selected; and the public, not unnaturally, ascribed the selection of Johnson rather to the Doctor's political prejudices than to his literary merits. For a wretched scribbler named Shebbeare, who had nothing in common with Johnson except violent Jacobitism, and who had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Revolution, was honoured with a mark of royal approbation, similar

to that which was bestowed on the author of the English Dictionary, and of the Vanity of Human Wishes. It was remarked that Adam, a Scotchman, was the court architect, and that Ramsay, a Scotchman, was the court painter, and was preferred to Reynolds. Mallet, a Scotchman of no high literary fame, and of infamous character, partook largely of the liberality of the government. John Home, a Scotchman, was rewarded for the tragedy of Douglas, both with a pension and with a sinecure place. But, when the author of the Bard, and of the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, ventured to ask for a Professorship, the emoluments of which he much needed, and for the duties of which he was, in many respects, better qualified than any man living, he was refused; and the post was bestowed on the pedagogue under whose care the favourite's son-in-law, Sir James Lowther, had made such signal proficiency in the graces and in the humane virtues.

Thus, the first lord of the treasury was detested by many as a Tory, by many as a favourite, and by many as a Scot. All the hatred which flowed from these various sources soon mingled, and was directed in one torrent of obloquy against the treaty of peace. The Duke of Bedford, who negotiated that treaty, was hooted through the streets. Bute was attacked in his chair, and was with difficulty rescued by a troop of guards. He could hardly walk the streets in safety without disguising himself. A gentleman who died not many years ago used to say, that he once recognized the favourite Earl in the piazza of Covent Garden, muffled in a large coat, and with a hat and wig drawn down over his brows. His lordship's established type with the mob was a jack-boot, a wretched pun on his Christian name and title. A jack-boot, generally accompanied by a petticoat, was sometimes fastened on a gallows, and sometimes committed to the flames. Libels on the court, exceeding in audacity and rancour any that had been published for many years, now appeared daily both in prose and verse. Wilkes, with lively insolence, compared the mother of George the Third to the mother of Edward the Third, and the Scotch minister to the gentle Mortimer. Churchill, with all the energy of hatred, deplored the fate of his country, invaded by a new race of savages, more cruel and

ravenous than the Picts or the Danes, the poor, proud children of Leprosy and Hunger. It is a slight circumstance, but deserves to be recorded, that in this year pamphleteers first ventured to print at length the names of the great men whom they lampooned. George the Second had always been the K—. His ministers had been Sir R— W—, Mr. P—, and the Duke of N—. But the libellers of George the Third, of the Princess Mother, and of Lord Bute, did not give quarter to a single vowel.

It was supposed that Lord Temple secretly encouraged the most scurrilous assailants of the government. In truth, those who knew his habits tracked him as men track a mole. It was his nature to grub underground. Whenever a heap of dirt was flung up, it might well be suspected that he was at work in some foul crooked labyrinth below. But Pitt turned away from the filthy work of opposition, with the same scorn with which he had turned away from the filthy work of government. He had the magnanimity to proclaim everywhere the disgust which he felt at the insults offered by his own adherents to the Scottish nation, and missed no opportunity of extolling the courage and fidelity which the Highland regiments had displayed through the whole war. But, though he disdained to use any but lawful and honourable weapons, it was well known that his fair blows were likely to be far more formidable than the privy thrusts of his brother-in-law's stiletto.

Bute's heart began to fail him. The Houses were about to meet. The treaty would instantly be the subject of discussion. It was probable that Pitt, the great Whig connection, and the multitude, would all be on the same side. The favourite had professed to hold in abhorrence those means by which preceding ministers had kept the House of Commons in good humour. He now began to think that he had been too scrupulous.

Utopian
visions at an
end.

His Utopian visions were at an end. It was necessary, not only to bribe, but to bribe more shamelessly and flagitiously than his predecessors, in order to make up for lost time. A majority must be secured, no matter by what means. Could Grenville do this? Would he do it? His firmness and ability had not yet been tried in any perilous crisis. He had been generally regarded

as a humble follower of his brother Temple, and of his brother-in-law Pitt, and was supposed, though with little reason, to be still favourably inclined towards them. Other aid must be called in. And where was other aid to be found?

There was one man whose sharp and manly logic had often in debate been found a match for the lofty and impassioned rhetoric of Pitt, whose talents for jobbing were not inferior to his talents for debate, whose dauntless spirit shrank from no difficulty or danger, and who was as little troubled with scruples as with fears. Henry Fox, or no-body, could weather the storm which was about to burst. Yet was he a person to whom the court, even in that extremity, was unwilling to have recourse. He had always been regarded as a Whig of the Whigs. He had been the friend and disciple of Walpole. He had long been connected with close ties with William Duke of Cumberland. By the Tories he was more hated than any man living. So strong was their aversion to him, that when, in the late reign, he attempted to form a party against the Duke of Newcastle, they had thrown all their weight into Newcastle's scale. By the Scots, Fox was abhorred as the confidential friend of the conqueror of Culloden. He was, on personal grounds, most obnoxious to the Princess Mother. For he had, immediately after her husband's death, advised the late King to take the education of her son, the heir-apparent, entirely out of her hands. He had recently given, if possible, still deeper offence; for he had indulged, not without some ground, the ambitious hope that his beautiful sister-in-law, the Lady Sarah Lennox, might be queen of England. It had been observed that the King at one time rode every morning by the grounds of Holland House, and that, on such occasions, Lady Sarah, dressed like a shepherdess at a masquerade, was making hay close to the road, which was then separated by no wall from the lawn. On account of the part which Fox had taken in this singular love-affair, he was the only member of the Privy Council who was not summoned to the meeting at which his majesty announced his intended marriage with the Princess of Mecklenburg. Of all the statesmen of the age, therefore, it seemed that Fox was the last with whom Bute, the Tory, the Scott, the favourite of the Princess Mother, could, under any cir-

cumstances, act. Yet to Fox Bute was now compelled to apply.

Fox had many noble and amiable qualities, which in private life shone forth in full lustre, and made him dear to his children, to his dependents, and to his friends; but as a public man he had no title to esteem. In him the vices which were common to the whole school of Walpole appeared, not perhaps in their worst, but certainly in their most prominent form; for his parliamentary and official talents made all his faults conspicuous. His courage, his vehement temper, his contempt for appearances, led him to display much that others, quite as unscrupulous as himself, covered with a decent

An unpopular statesman.

veil. He was the most unpopular of the statesmen of his time, not because he sinned more than many of them, but because he canted less.

He felt his unpopularity; but he felt it after the fashion of strong minds. He became, not cautious, but reckless, and faced the rage of the whole nation with a scowl of inflexible defiance. He was born with a sweet and generous temper; but he had been goaded and baited into a savageness which was not natural to him, and which amazed and shocked those who knew him best. Such was the man to whom Bute, in extreme need, applied for succour.

Such succour Fox was not unwilling to afford. Though by no means of an

Bute in need of Fox. envious temper, he had undoubtedly contemplated

the success and popularity of Pitt with bitter mortification. He thought himself Pitt's match as a debater, and Pitt's superior as a man of business. They had long been regarded as well paired rivals. They had started fair in the career of ambition. They had long run side by side. At length Fox had taken the lead, and Pitt had fallen behind. Then had come a sudden turn of fortune, like that in Virgil's foot-race. Fox had stumbled in the mire, and had not only been defeated, but befouled. Pitt had reached the goal, and received the prize. The emoluments of the Pay-office might induce the defeated statesman to submit in silence to the ascendancy of his competitor, but could not satisfy a mind conscious of great powers, and sore from great vexations. As soon, therefore, as a party arose adverse to the war and to the supremacy of the great war-minister, the hopes of Fox began to revive.

His feuds with the Princess Mother, with the Scots, with the Tories, he was ready to forget, if, by the help of his old enemies, he could now regain the importance which he had lost, and confront Pitt on equal terms.

The alliance was, therefore, soon concluded. Fox was assured that, if he would pilot the government out of its embarrassing situation, he should be rewarded with a peerage, of which he had long been desirous. He

Hopes of a peerage.

undertook on his side to obtain, by fair or foul means, a vote in favour of the peace. In consequence of this arrangement he became leader of the House of Commons; and Grenville, stifling his vexation as well as he could, sullenly acquiesced in the change.

Fox had expected that his influence would secure to the court the cordial support of some eminent Whigs who were his personal friends, particularly of the Duke of Cumberland and of the Duke of Devonshire. He was disappointed, and soon found that, in addition to all his other difficulties, he must reckon on the opposition

Opposition.

of the ablest prince of the blood, and of the great house of Cavendish.

But he had pledged himself to win the battle; and he was not a man to go back. It was no time for squeamishness. Bute was made to comprehend that the ministry could be saved only by practising the tactics of Walpole to an extent at which Walpole himself would have stared. The Pay-office was turned into a mart for votes. Hundreds of members were

A mart for votes.

closeted there with Fox, and, as there is too much reason to believe, departed carrying with them the wages of infamy. It was affirmed by persons who had the best opportunities of obtaining information, that twenty-five thousand pounds were thus paid away in a single morning. The lowest bribe given, it was said, was a bank-note for two hundred pounds.

Intimidation was joined with corruption. All ranks, from the highest to the lowest, were to be taught that the King would be obeyed. The Lords-Lieutenant of several counties were dismissed. The Duke of Devonshire was especially singled out as the victim by whose fate the magnates of England were to take warning. His wealth, rank, and influence, his stainless private character, and the constant

attachment of his family to the House of Hanover, did not secure him from gross personal indignity. It was known that he disapproved of the course which the government had taken; and it was accordingly determined to humble the Prince of the Whigs, as he had been nicknamed by the Princess Mother. He went to the palace to pay his duty. "Tell him," said the King to a page, "that I will not see him." The page hesitated. "Go to him," said the King, "and tell him those very words." The message was delivered. The Duke tore off his gold key, and went away boiling with anger. His relations who were in office instantly resigned. A few days later, the King called for the list of privy-councillors, and with his own hand struck out the Duke's name.

In this step there was at least courage, though little wisdom or good-nature. But as nothing was too high for the revenge of the court, so also was nothing too low.

A persecution, such as had never been known before and has never been known since, raged in every public department. Great numbers of humble and laborious clerks were deprived of their bread, not because they had neglected their duties, not because they had taken an active part against the ministry, but merely because they had owed their situations to the recommendation of some nobleman or gentleman who was against the peace. The proscription extended to tide-waiters, to gaugers, to doorkeepers. One poor man to whom a pension had been given for his gallantry in a fight with smugglers, was deprived of it because he had been befriended by the Duke of Grafton. An aged widow, who, on account of her husband's services in the navy, had, many years before, been made housekeeper to a public office, was dismissed from her situation, because it was imagined that she was distantly connected by marriage with the Cavendish family. The public clamour, as may well be supposed, grew daily louder and louder. But the louder it grew, the more resolutely did Fox go on with the work which he had begun. His old friends could not conceive what had possessed him. "I could forgive," said the Duke of Cumberland, "Fox's political vagaries, but I am quite confounded by his inhumanity. Surely he used to be the best-natured of men."

At last Fox went so far as to take a legal opinion on the question, whether the patents granted by George the Second were binding on George the Third. It is said that, if his colleagues had not flinched, he would at once have turned out the tellers of the Exchequer and justices in Eyre.

Meanwhile the Parliament met. The ministers, more hated by the people than ever, were secure of a majority, and they had also reason to hope that they would have the advantage in the debates as well as in the divisions. For Pitt was confined to his chamber by a severe attack of gout. His friends moved to defer the consideration of the treaty till he should be able to attend. But the motion was rejected. The great day arrived. The discussion had lasted some time, when a loud huzza was heard in Palace-yard. The noise came nearer and nearer, up the stairs, through the lobby. The door opened, and from the midst of a shouting multitude came forth Pitt, borne in the arms of his attendants. His face was thin and ghastly, his limbs swathed in flannel, his crutch in his hand. The bearers set him down within the bar. His friends instantly surrounded him, and with their help he crawled to his seat near the table. In this condition he spoke three hours and a half against the peace. During that time he was repeatedly forced to sit down and to use cordials. It may well be supposed that his voice was faint, that his action was languid, and that his speech, though occasionally brilliant and impressive, was feeble when compared with his best oratorical performances. But those who remembered what he had done, and who saw what he suffered, listened to him with emotion stronger than any that mere eloquence can produce. He was unable to stay for the division, and was carried away from the House amidst shouts as loud as those which had announced his arrival.

A large majority approved the peace. The exultation of the court was boundless. "Now," exclaimed the Princess Mother, "my son is really King." The young sovereign spoke of himself as freed from the bondage in which his grandfather had been held. On one point, it was announced, his mind was unalterably made up. Under no circumstances whatever should those

The court
exultant.

Whig grandees, who had enslaved his predecessors and endeavoured to enslave himself, be restored to power.

His vaunting was premature. The real strength of the favourite was by no means proportioned to the number of votes which he had, on one particular division, been able to command. He was soon again in difficulties. The most important part of his budget was a tax

Tax on cider. on cider. This measure was opposed, not only by those who were generally hostile to his administration, but also by many of his supporters. The name of excise had always been hateful to the Tories. One of the chief crimes of Walpole, in their eyes, had been his partiality for this mode of raising money. The Tory Johnson had in his Dictionary given so scurrilous a definition of the word "excise," that the Commissioners of Excise had seriously thought of prosecuting him. The counties which the new impost particularly affected had always been Tory counties. It was the boast of John Philips, the poet of the English vintage, that the Cider-land had ever been faithful to the throne, and that all the pruning-hooks of her thousand orchards had been beaten into swords for the service of the ill-fated Stuarts. The effect of Bute's fiscal scheme was to produce an union between the gentry and yeomanry of the Cider-land and the Whigs of the capital. Herefordshire and Worcestershire were in a flame. The city of London, though not so directly interested, was, if possible, still more excited. The debates on this question irreparably damaged the government. Dashwood's financial statement had been confused and absurd beyond belief, and had been received by the House with roars of laughter. He had sense enough to be conscious of his unfitness for the high situation which he held, and exclaimed, in a comical fit of despair, "What shall I do? The boys will point at me in the street and cry, 'There goes the worst chancellor of the exchequer that ever was.'" George Grenville came to the rescue, and spoke strongly on his favourite theme, the profusion with which the late war had been carried on.

Necessity for taxation. That profusion, he said, had made taxes necessary. He called on the gentlemen opposite to him to say where they would have a tax laid, and dwelt on this topic with his usual prolixity. "Let

them tell me where," he repeated, in a monotonous and somewhat fretful tone. "I say, sir, let them tell me where. I repeat it, sir; I am entitled to say to them—tell me where." Unluckily for him, Pitt had come down to the House that night, and had been bitterly provoked by the reflection thrown on the war. He revenged himself by murmuring, in a whine resembling Grenville's, a line of a well-known song, "Gentle shepherd, tell me where." "If," cried Grenville, "gentlemen are to be treated in this way——" Pitt, as was his fashion when he meant to mark extreme contempt, rose deliberately, made his bow, and walked out of the House, leaving his brother-in-law in convulsions of rage, and everybody else in convulsions of laughter. It was long before Grenville lost the nickname of the gentle shepherd.

But the ministry had vexations still more serious to endure. The hatred which the Tories and Scots bore to Fox was implacable. In a moment of extreme peril, they had consented to put themselves under his guidance. But the aversion with which they regarded him broke forth as soon as the crisis seemed to be over. Some of them attacked him about the accounts of the Pay-office. Some of them rudely interrupted him when speaking, by laughter and ironical cheers. He was naturally desirous to escape from so disagreeable a situation, and demanded the peerage which had been promised as the reward of his services.

It was clear that there must be some change in the composition of the ministry. But scarcely any, even of those who, from their situation, might be supposed to be in all the secrets of the government, anticipated what really took place. To the amazement of the Parliament and the nation, it was suddenly announced that Bute had resigned.

Twenty different explanations of this strange step were suggested. Some attributed it to profound design, and some to sudden panic. Some said that the lampoons of the opposition had driven the Earl from the field; some that he had taken office only in order to bring the war to a close, and had always meant to retire when that object had been accomplished. He publicly assigned ill-health as his reason

Explanation of Bute's resignation.

for quitting business, and privately complained that he was not cordially seconded by his colleagues; and that Lord Mansfield, in particular, whom he had himself brought into the cabinet, gave him no support in the House of Peers. Lord Mansfield was, indeed, far too sagacious not to perceive that Bute's situation was one of great peril, and far too timorous to thrust himself into peril for the sake of another. The probability, however, is, that Bute's conduct on this occasion, like the conduct of most men on most occasions, was determined by mixed motives. We suspect that he was sick of office; for this is a feeling much more common among ministers than persons who see public life from a distance are disposed to believe. And nothing could be more natural than that this feeling should take possession of the mind of Bute. In general, a statesman climbs by slow degrees. Many laborious years elapse before he reaches the topmost pinnacle of preferment. In the earlier part of his career, therefore, he is constantly lured on by seeing something above him. During his ascent he gradually becomes inured to the annoyances which belong to a life of ambition. By the time that he has attained the highest point, he has become patient of labour and callous of abuse. He is kept constant to his vocation, in spite of all its discomforts, at first by hope, and at last by habit. It was not so with Bute. His whole public life lasted little more than two years. On the day on which he became a politician he became a cabinet minister. In a few months he was, both in name and in show, chief of the administration. Greater than he had been he could not be. If what he already possessed was vanity and vexation of spirit, no delusion remained to entice him onward. He had been cloyed with the pleasures of ambition before he had been seasoned to its pains. His habits had not been such as were likely to fortify his mind against obloquy and public hatred. He had reached his forty-eighth year in dignified ease, without knowing, by personal experience, what it was to be ridiculed and slandered. All at once, without any previous initiation, he had found himself exposed to such a storm of invective and satire as had never burst on the head of any statesman. The emoluments of office were now nothing to him; for he had just succeeded to a princely property by the death of his

father-in-law. All the honours which could be bestowed on him he had already secured. He had obtained the Garter for himself, and a British peerage for his son. He seems also to have imagined, that by quitting the treasury he should escape from danger and abuse without really resigning power, and should still be able to exercise in private supreme influence over the royal mind.

Whatever may have been his motives, he retired. Fox at the same time took refuge in the House of Lords; and George Grenville became first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer.

We believe that those who made this arrangement fully intended that Grenville should be a mere puppet in the hands of Bute; for Grenville was as yet very imperfectly known even to those who had observed him long. He passed for a mere official drudge; and he had all the industry, the minute accuracy, the formality, the tediousness, which belong to the character. But he had other qualities which had not yet shown themselves—devouring ambition, dauntless courage, self-confidence amounting to presumption, and a temper which could not endure opposition. He was not disposed to be anybody's tool; and he had no attachment, political or personal, to Bute. The two men had, indeed, nothing in common, except a strong propensity towards harsh and unpopular courses. Their principles were fundamentally different.

*Grenville's
character-
istics.*

Bute was a Tory. Grenville would have been very angry with any person who should have denied his claim to be a Whig. He was more prone to tyrannical measures than Bute; but he loved tyranny only when disguised under the forms of constitutional liberty. He mixed up, after a fashion then not very unusual, the theories of the republicans of the seventeenth century with the technical maxims of English law, and thus succeeded in combining anarchical speculation with arbitrary practice. The voice of the people was the voice of God; but the only legitimate organ through which the voice of the people could be uttered was the Parliament. All power was from the people; but to the Parliament the whole power of the people had been delegated. No Oxonian divine had ever, even in the years which immediately followed the

*Difference
between Bute
and Grenville.*

Restoration, demanded for the King so abject, so unreasoning a homage, as Grenville, on what he considered as the purest Whig principles, demanded for the Parliament. As he wished to see the Parliament despotic over the nation, so he wished to see it also despotic over the court. In his view, the prime minister, possessed of the confidence of the House of Commons, ought to be mayor of the palace. The King was a mere Childeric or Chilperic, who might well think himself lucky in being permitted to enjoy such handsome apartments at St. James's, and so fine a park at Windsor.

Thus the opinions of Bute and those of Grenville were diametrically opposed. Nor was there any private friendship between the two statesmen. Grenville's nature was not forgiving; and he well remembered how, a few months before, he had been compelled to yield the lead of the House of Commons to Fox.

We are inclined to think, on the whole, that the worst administration which has governed England since the Revolution was that of George Grenville. His public acts may be classed under two heads, outrages on the liberty of the people, and outrages on the dignity of the crown.

He began by making war on the press. John Wilkes, member of parliament for Aylesbury, was singled out for persecution.

John Wilkes. Wilkes had, till very lately, been known chiefly as one of the most profane, licentious, and agreeable rakes about town. He was a man of taste, reading, and engaging manners. His sprightly conversation was the delight of green-rooms and taverns, and pleased even grave hearers when he was sufficiently under restraint to abstain from detailing the particulars of his amours, and from breaking jests on the New Testament. His expensive debaucheries forced him to have recourse to the Jews. He was soon a ruined man, and determined to try his chance as a political adventurer. In Parliament he did not succeed. His speaking, though pert, was feeble, and by no means interested his hearers so much as to make them forget his face, which was so hideous that the caricaturists were forced, in their own despite, to flatter him. As a writer, he made a better figure. He set up a weekly paper, called the North Briton. This journal, written with some pleasantry, and great audacity and im-

pudence, had a considerable number of readers. Forty-four numbers had been published when Bute resigned; and, though almost every number had contained matter grossly libellous, no prosecution had been instituted. The forty-fifth number was innocent when compared with the majority of those which had preceded it, and indeed contained nothing so strong as may now be found daily in the leading articles of the *Times* and *Morning Chronicle*. But Grenville was now at the head of affairs. A new spirit had been infused into the administration. Authority was to be upheld. The government was no longer to be braved with impunity. Wilkes was arrested under a general warrant, conveyed to the Tower, and confined there with circumstances of unusual severity. His papers were seized, and carried to the Secretary of State. These harsh and illegal measures produced a violent outbreak of popular rage, which was soon changed to delight and exultation. The arrest was pronounced unlawful by the Court of Common Pleas, in which Chief-Justice Pratt presided, and the prisoner was discharged. This victory over the government was celebrated with enthusiasm both in London and in the Cider-counties.

While the ministers were daily becoming more odious to the nation, they were doing their best to make themselves also odious to the court. They gave the King plainly to understand that they were determined not to be Lord Bute's creatures, and exacted a promise that no secret adviser should have access to the royal ear. They soon found reason to suspect that this promise had not been observed. They remonstrated in terms less respectful than their master had been accustomed to hear, and gave him a fortnight to make his choice between his favourite and his cabinet.

George the Third was greatly disturbed. He had but a few weeks before exulted in his deliverance from the yoke of the great Whig connection. He had even declared that his honour would not permit him ever again to admit the members of that connection to his service. He now found that he had only exchanged one set of masters for another set still harsher and more imperious. In his distress he thought on Pitt. From Pitt it was possible that better terms might

The North
Briton.

The ministers
odious.

Change of
masters.

be obtained than either from Grenville, or from the party of which Newcastle was the head.

Grenville, on his return from an excursion into the country, repaired to Buckingham House. He was astonished to find at the entrance a chair, the shape of which was well known to him, and indeed to all London. It was distinguished by a large boot, made for the purpose of accommodating the great Commoner's gouty leg. Grenville guessed the whole. His brother-in-law was closeted with the King. Bute, provoked by what he considered as the unfriendly and ungrateful conduct of his successors, had himself proposed that Pitt should be summoned to the palace.

Pitt closeted with the King. Bute, provoked by what he considered as the unfriendly and ungrateful conduct of his successors, had himself proposed that Pitt should be summoned to the palace.

Pitt had two audiences on two successive days. What passed at the first interview led him to expect that the negotiation would be brought to a satisfactory close; but on the morrow he found the King less complying. The best account, indeed the only trustworthy account of the conference, is that which was taken from Pitt's own mouth by Lord Hardwicke. It appears that Pitt strongly represented the importance of conciliating those chiefs of the Whig party who had been so unhappy as to incur the royal displeasure. They had, he said, been the most constant friends of the House of Hanover. Their power and credit were great; they had been long versed in public business. If they were to be under sentence of exclusion, a solid administration could not be formed. His Majesty could not bear to think of putting himself into the hands of those whom he had recently chased from his court with the strongest marks of anger. "I am sorry, Mr. Pitt," he said, "but I see this will not do. My honour is concerned. I must support my honour."

The King's honour. How his Majesty succeeded in supporting his honour, we shall soon see.

Pitt retired, and the King was reduced to request the ministers whom he had been on the point of discarding, to remain in office. During the two years

Grenville a hard master. which followed, Grenville, now closely leagued with the Bedfords, was the master of the court; and a hard master he proved. He knew that he was kept in place only because there was no choice except between himself and the Whigs. That, under any circumstances, the

Whigs would be forgiven, he thought impossible. The late attempt to get rid of him had roused his resentment; the failure of that attempt had liberated him from all fear. He had never been very courtly. He now began to hold a language, to which, since the days of Cornet Joyce and President Bradshaw, no English King had been compelled to listen.

In one matter, indeed, Grenville, at the expense of justice and liberty, gratified the passions of the court while gratifying his own. The persecution of Wilkes was eagerly pressed. He had written a parody on Pope's Essay on Man, entitled the Essay on Woman, and had appended to it notes, in ridicule of Warburton's famous Commentary.

This composition was exceedingly profligate, but not more so, we think, than some of Pope's own works—the imitation of the second satire of the first book of Horace, for example; and, to do Wilkes justice, he had not, like Pope, given his ribaldry to the world. He had merely printed at a private press a very small number of copies, which he meant to present to some of his boon companions, whose morals were in no more danger of being corrupted by a loose book, than a negro of being tanned by a warm sun. A tool of the government, by giving a bribe to the printer, procured a copy of this trash, and placed it in the hands of the ministers. The ministers resolved to visit Wilkes's offence against decorum with the utmost rigour of the law. What share piety and respect for morals had

The Essay on Woman.

in dictating this resolution, our readers may judge from the fact, that no person was more eager for bringing the libertine poet to punishment than Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry. On the first day of the session of Parliament, the book, thus disgracefully obtained, was laid on the table of the Lords by the Earl of Sandwich, whom the Duke of Bedford's interest had made Secretary of State. The unfortunate author had not the slightest suspicion that his licentious poem had ever been seen, except by his printer and by a few of his dissipated companions, till it was produced in full Parliament. Though he was a man of easy temper, averse from danger, and not very susceptible of shame, the surprise, the disgrace, the prospect of utter ruin, put him beside himself. He picked a

quarrel with one of Lord Bute's dependents, fought a duel, was seriously wounded, and, when half recovered, fled to France. His enemies had now their own way both in the Parliament and in the King's Bench. He was censured; expelled from the House of Commons; outlawed. His works were ordered to be burned by the common hangman. Yet was the multitude still true to him. In the minds even of many moral and religious men, his crime seemed light when compared with the crime of his accusers. The conduct of Sandwich, in particular, excited universal disgust. His own vices were notorious; and, only a fortnight before he laid the Essay on Woman before the House of Lords, he had been drinking and singing loose catches with Wilkes at one of the most dissolute clubs in London. Shortly after the meeting of Parliament, the Beggar's Opera was acted at Covent-Garden theatre. When Macheath uttered the words—"That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me,"—pit, boxes, and galleries, burst into a roar which seemed likely to bring the roof down. From that day Sandwich was

Nickname of Sandwich.

universally known by the nickname of Jemmy Twitcher. The ceremony

of burning the North Briton was interrupted by a riot. The constables were beaten; the paper was rescued; and, instead of it, a jackboot and a petticoat were committed to the flames. Wilkes had instituted an action for the seizure of his papers, against the under-secretary of state. The jury gave a thousand pounds damages. But neither these nor any other indications of public feeling had power to move Grenville. He had the Parliament with him; and, according to his political creed, the sense of the nation was to be collected from the Parliament alone.

Soon, however, he found reason to fear that even the Parliament might fail him. On the question of the legality of general warrants, the opposition, having on its side all sound principles, all constitutional authorities, and the voice of the whole nation, mustered in great force, and was joined by many who did not ordinarily vote against the government. On one occasion, the ministry, in a very full House, had a majority of only fourteen votes. The storm, however, blew over. The spirit of the opposition, from whatever cause, began to flag at the

moment when success seemed almost certain. The session ended without any change. Pitt, whose eloquence had shone with its usual lustre in all the principal debates, and whose popularity was greater than ever, was still a private man. Grenville, detested alike by the court and by the people, was still minister.

A small majority.

As soon as the Houses had risen, Grenville took a step which proved, even more signally than any of his past acts, how despotic, how acrimonious, and how fearless his nature was. Among the gentlemen not ordinarily disposed to the government, who, on the great constitutional question of general warrants, had voted with the minority, was Henry Conway, brother of the Earl of Hertford, a brave soldier, a tolerable speaker, and a well-meaning, though not a wise or vigorous politician. He was now deprived of his regiment, the merited reward of faithful and gallant service in two wars. It was confidently asserted that in this violent measure the King heartily concurred.

A despotic act.

But whatever pleasure the persecution of Wilkes, or the dismissal of Conway, may have given to the royal mind, it is certain that his Majesty's aversion to his ministers increased day by day. Grenville was as frugal of the public money as of his own, and morosely refused to accede to the King's request, that a few thousand pounds might be expended in buying some open fields to the west of the gardens of Buckingham House. In consequence of this refusal, the fields were soon covered with buildings, and the King and Queen were overlooked in their most private walks by the upper windows of a hundred houses. Nor was this the worst. Grenville was as liberal of words as he was sparing of guineas. Instead of explaining himself in that clear, concise, and lively manner, which alone could win the attention of a young mind new to business, he spoke in the closet just as he spoke in the House of Commons. When he

Grenville's frugality.

had harangued two hours, he looked at his watch, as he had been in the habit of looking at the clock opposite the Speaker's chair, apologized for the length of his discourse, and then went on for an hour more. The members of the House of Commons can cough an orator down, or can walk away

A long harangue.

to dinner; and they were by no means sparing in the use of these privileges when Grenville was on his legs. But the poor young King had to endure all this eloquence with mournful civility. To the end of his life he continued to talk with horror of Grenville's orations.

About this time took place one of the most singular events in Pitt's life. There was a certain Sir William Pynsent, a

Sir William Pynsent.

Somersetshire baronet of Whig politics, who had been a Member of the House of Commons in the days of Queen Anne, and had retired to rural privacy when the Tory party, towards the end of her reign, obtained the ascendancy in her councils. His manners were eccentric. His morals lay under very odious imputations. But his fidelity to his political opinions was unalterable. During fifty years of seclusion he continued to brood over the events which had driven him from public life, the dismissal of the Whigs, the peace of Utrecht, the desertion of our allies. He now thought that he perceived a close analogy between the well-remembered events of his youth and the events which he had witnessed in extreme old age; between the disgrace of Marlborough and the disgrace of Pitt; between the elevation of Harley and the elevation of Bute; between the treaty negotiated by St. John and the treaty negotiated by Bedford; between the wrongs of the House of Austria in 1712 and the wrongs of the House of Brandenburg in 1762. This fancy took such possession of the old man's mind that he determined to leave his whole property to Pitt. In this way Pitt unexpectedly came into possession of near three thousand pounds a-year. Nor

Legacy to Pitt. could all the malice of his enemies find any ground for reproach in the transaction. Nobody could call him a legacy-hunter. Nobody could accuse him of seizing that to which others had a better claim. For he had never in his life seen Sir William; and Sir William had left no relation so near as to be entitled to form any expectations respecting the estate.

The fortunes of Pitt seemed to flourish; but his health was worse than ever.

Pitt's health. We cannot find that, during the session which began in January 1765, he once appeared in Parliament. He remained some months in profound retirement at Hayes, his favourite villa, scarcely moving except

from his arm-chair to his bed, and from his bed to his arm-chair, and often employing his wife as his amanuensis in his most confidential correspondence. Some of his detractors whispered that his invisibility was to be ascribed quite as much to affectation as to gout. In truth his character, high and splendid as it was, wanted simplicity. With genius which did not need the aid of stage-tricks, and with a spirit which should have been far above them, he had yet been, through life, in the habit of practising them. It was, therefore, now surmised that, having ac-

Surmises.

quired all the consideration which could be derived from eloquence and from great services to the state, he had determined not to make himself cheap by often appearing in public, but, under the pretext of ill health, to surround himself with mystery, to emerge only at long intervals and on momentous occasions, and at other times to deliver his oracles only to a few favoured votaries, who were suffered to make pilgrimages to his shrine. If such were his object, it was for a time fully attained. Never was the magic of his name so powerful, never was he regarded by his country with such superstitious veneration, as during this year of silence and seclusion.

While Pitt was thus absent from Parliament, Grenville proposed a measure destined to produce a great revolution, the effects of which will long be felt by the whole human race. We speak of the act for imposing stamp-duties on the North American colonies. The plan was eminently characteristic of its author. Every feature of the parent was found in the child. A timid statesman would have shrunk from a step, of which Walpole, at a time when the colonies were far less powerful, had said—"He who shall propose it, will be a much bolder man than I." But the nature of Grenville was insensible to fear. A statesman of large views would have felt, that to lay taxes at Westminster on New England and New York, was a course opposed, not indeed to the letter of the statute-book, or to any decision contained in the Term Reports, but to the principles of good government, and to the spirit of the constitution. A statesman of large views would also have felt, that ten times the estimated produce of the American stamps would have been dearly purchased

by even a transient quarrel between the mother country and the colonies. But Grenville knew of no spirit of the constitution distinct from the letter of the law, and of no national interests except those which are expressed by pounds, shillings, and pence. That his policy might give birth to deep discontents in all the provinces, from the shore of the Great Lakes to the Mexican sea; that France and Spain might seize the opportunity of revenge; that the Empire might be dismembered; that the debt—that debt with the amount of which he perpetually reproached Pitt—might, in consequence of his own policy, be doubled; these were possibilities which never occurred to that small, sharp mind.

The Stamp Act will be remembered as long as the globe lasts. But, at the time,

The Stamp Act. it attracted much less notice in this country than another act which is now almost utterly forgotten. The King fell ill, and was thought to be in a dangerous state. His complaint, we believe, was the same which, at a later period, repeatedly incapacitated him for the performance of his legal functions. The heir-apparent was only two years old. It was clearly proper to make provision for the administration of the government, in case of a minority. The discussions on this point brought the quarrel between the court and the ministry to a crisis. The King wished to be entrusted with the power of naming a regent by will. The ministers feared, or affected to fear, that, if this power were conceded to him, he would name the Princess Mother, nay, possibly the Earl of Bute. They, therefore, insisted on introducing into the bill words confining the King's

Choice of a Regent. Having thus excluded Bute, they urged the King to let them, in the most marked manner, exclude the Princess-Dowager also. They assured him that the House of Commons would undoubtedly strike her name out, and by this threat they wrung from him a reluctant assent. In a few days, it appeared that the representations by which they had induced the King to put this gross and public affront on his mother were unfounded. The friends of the Princess in the House of Commons moved that her name should be inserted. The ministers could not decently attack the parent of their master. They hoped that the opposition

would come to their help, and put on them a force to which they would gladly have yielded. But the majority of the opposition, though hating the Princess, hated Grenville more, beheld his embarrassment with delight, and would do nothing to extricate him from it. The Princess's name was accordingly placed in the list of persons qualified to hold the regency.

The King's resentment was now at the height. The present evil seemed to him more intolerable than any other. Even the junta of Whig grandees could not treat him worse than he had been treated by his present ministers. In his distress he poured out his whole heart to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. The duke was The Duke of Cumberland. not a man to be loved; but he was eminently a man to be trusted. He had an intrepid temper, a strong understanding, and a high sense of honour and duty. As a general, he belonged to a remarkable class of captains—captains, we mean, whose fate it has been to lose almost all the battles which they have fought, and yet to be reputed stout and skilful soldiers. Such captains were Coligni and William the Third. We might, perhaps, add Marshal Soult to the list. The bravery of the Duke of Cumberland was such as distinguished him even among the princes of his brave house. The difference with which he rode about amidst musket-balls and cannon-balls was not the highest proof of his fortitude. Hopeless maladies, horrible surgical operations, far from unmanning him, did not even discompose him. With courage, he had the virtues which are akin to courage. He spoke the truth, was open in enmity and friendship, and upright in all his dealings. But his nature was hard; and what seemed to him justice was rarely tempered with mercy. He was, therefore, during many years one of the most unpopular men in England. The severity with which he had treated the rebels after the battle of Culloden, had gained for him the name of the butcher. His attempts to introduce into the army of England, then in a most relaxed state, the rigorous discipline of Potsdam, had excited still stronger disgust. Nothing was too bad to be believed of him. Many honest people were so absurd as to fancy that, if he were left regent during the minority of his nephews, there would be another smothering in the Tower. These

feelings, however, had passed away. The Duke had been living, during some years, in retirement. The English, full of animosity against the Scots, now blamed his royal highness only for having left so many Camerons and Macphersons to be made gaugers and custom-house officers. He was, therefore, at present a favourite with his countrymen, and especially with the inhabitants of London.

He had little reason to love the King, and had shown clearly, though not obtrusively, his dislike of the system which had lately been pursued. But he had high and almost romantic notions of the duty which, as a prince of the blood, he owed to the head of his house. He determined to extricate his nephew from bondage, and to effect a reconciliation between the Whig party and the throne, on terms honourable to both.

In this mind he set off for Hayes, and was admitted to Pitt's sick-room. For

The Duke
visits Pitt.

Pitt would not leave his chamber, and would not communicate with any messenger of inferior dignity. And now began a long series of errors on the part of the illustrious statesman, errors which involved his country in difficulties and distresses more serious even than those from which his genius had formerly rescued her. His language was haughty, unreasonable, almost unintelligible. The only thing which could be discerned through a cloud of vague and not very gracious phrases was, that he would not at that moment take office. The truth, we believe, was this. Lord Temple, who was Pitt's evil genius, had just formed a new scheme of politics. Hatred of Bute and of the Princess had, it would seem, taken entire possession of Temple's soul. He had quarrelled with his brother George, because George had been connected with Bute and the Princess. Now that George appeared to be the enemy of Bute and the Princess, Temple was eager to bring about a general family reconciliation. The three brothers, as Temple, Grenville, and Pitt were popularly called, might make a ministry, without leaning for aid either on Bute or on the Whig connection. With such

Influence of
Temple.

views, Temple used all his influence to dissuade Pitt from acceding to the propositions of the Duke of Cumberland. Pitt was not convinced. But Temple had an influence over him such as no other person had ever possessed. They were very old

friends, very near relations. If Pitt's talents and fame had been useful to Temple, Temple's purse had formerly, in times of great need, been useful to Pitt. They had never been parted in politics. Twice they had come into the cabinet together; twice they had left it together. Pitt could not bear to think of taking office without his chief ally. Yet he felt that he was doing wrong, that he was throwing away a great opportunity of serving his country. The obscure and unconciliatory style of the answers which he returned to the overtures of the Duke of Cumberland, may be ascribed to the embarrassment and vexation of a mind not at peace with itself. It is said that he mournfully exclaimed to Temple,

"*Extinxi te meque, soror, populumque,
patresque
Sidonios, urbemque tuam.*"

The prediction was but too just.

Finding Pitt impracticable, the Duke of Cumberland advised the King to submit to necessity, and to keep Grenville and the Bedfords. It was, indeed, not a time at which offices could safely be left vacant. The unsettled state of the government had produced a general relaxation through all the departments of the public service. Meetings, which at another time would have been harmless, now turned to riots, and rapidly rose almost to the dignity of rebellions. The Houses of Parliament were blockaded by the Spitalfields weavers. Bedford House was assailed on all sides by a furious rabble, and was strongly garrisoned with horse and foot. Some people attributed these disturbances to the friends of Bute, and some to the friends of Wilkes. But, whatever might be the cause, the effect was general insecurity. Under such circumstances the King had no choice. With bitter feelings of mortification, he informed the ministers that he meant to retain them.

They answered by demanding from him a promise on his royal word never more to consult Lord Bute. The promise was given. They then demanded something more. Demand of the ministers.

Lord Bute's brother, Mr. Mackenzie, held a lucrative office in Scotland. Mr. Mackenzie must be dismissed. The King replied that the office had been given under very peculiar circumstances, and that he had promised

never to take it away while he lived. Grenville was obstinate, and the King, with a very bad grace, yielded.

The session of Parliament was over. The triumph of the ministers was complete. The King was

The ministers triumph. almost as much a prisoner as Charles the First had been, when in the Isle of Wight. Such were the fruits of the policy which, only a few months before, was represented as having for ever secured the throne against the dictation of insolent subjects.

His Majesty's natural resentment showed itself in every look and word. In his extremity, he looked wistfully towards that Whig connection, once the object of his dread and hatred. The Duke of Devonshire, who had been treated with such unjustifiable harshness, had lately died, and had been succeeded by his son, who was still a boy. The King condescended to express his regret for what had passed, and to invite the young Duke to court. The noble youth came, attended by his uncles, and was received with marked graciousness.

This and many other symptoms of the same kind irritated the ministers. They had still in store for their sovereign an

The ministers' remonstrance. insult which would have provoked his grandfather to kick them out of the

room. Grenville and Bedford demanded an audience of him, and read him a remonstrance of many pages, which they had drawn up with great care. His Majesty was accused of breaking his word, and of treating his advisers with gross unfairness. The Princess was mentioned in language by no means eulogistic. Hints were thrown out that Bute's head was in danger. The King was plainly told that he must not continue to show, as he had done, that he disliked the situation in which he was placed; that he must frown upon the opposition, that he must carry it fair towards his ministers in public. He several times interrupted the reading, by declaring that he had ceased to hold any communication with Bute. But the ministers, disregarding his denial, went on; and the King listened in silence, almost choked by rage. When they ceased to read, he merely made a gesture expressive of his wish to be left alone. He afterwards owned that he thought he should have gone into a fit.

Driven to despair, he again had recourse to the Duke of Cumberland; and the Duke of Cumberland again had

recourse to Pitt. Pitt was really desirous to undertake the direction of affairs, and owned, with many dutiful expressions, that the terms offered by the King were all that any subject could desire. But Temple was impracticable; and Pitt, with great regret, declared that he could not, without the concurrence of his brother-in-law, undertake the administration.

The Duke now saw only one way of delivering his nephew. An administration must be formed of the Whigs in opposition, without Pitt's help. The difficulties seemed almost insuperable. Death and desertion had grievously thinned the ranks of the party lately supreme in the state. Those among whom the Duke's choice lay might be divided into two classes, men too old for important offices, and men who had never been in any important office before. The cabinet must be composed of broken invalids or of raw recruits.

This was an evil, yet not an unmixed evil. If the new Whig statesmen had little experience in business and debate, they were, on the other hand,

New Whig Statesmen. pure from the taint of that political immorality which had deeply infected their predecessors. Long prosperity had corrupted that great party which had expelled the Stuarts, limited the prerogatives of the Crown, and curbed the intolerance of the Hierarchy. Adversity had already produced a salutary effect. On the day of the accession of George the Third, the ascendancy of the Whig party terminated; and on that day the purification of the Whig party began. The rising chiefs of that party were men of a very different sort from Sandys and Winnington, from Sir William Younge and Henry Fox. They were men worthy to have charged by the side of Hampden at Chalgrove, or to have exchanged the last embrace with Russell on the scaffold in Lincoln's-Inn Fields. They carried into politics the same high principles of virtue which regulated their private dealings, nor would they stoop to promote even the noblest and most salutary ends by means which honour and probity condemn. Such men were Lord John Cavendish, Sir George Savile, and others whom we hold in honour as the second founders of the Whig party, as the restorers of its pristine health and

energy after half a century of degeneracy.

The chief of this respectable band was the Marquis of Rockingham, a man of splendid fortune, excellent sense, and stainless character. He was indeed nervous to such a degree, that, to the very close of his life, he never rose without great reluctance and embarrassment to address the House of Lords. But, though not a great orator, he had in a high degree some of the qualities of a statesman. He chose his friends well; and he had, in an extraordinary degree, the art of attaching them to him by ties of the most honourable kind. The cheerful fidelity with which they adhered to him through many years of almost hopeless opposition, was less admirable than the disinterestedness and delicacy which they showed when he rose to power.

We are inclined to think that the use and the abuse of party cannot be better illustrated than by a parallel between two powerful connections of that time, the Rockinghams and the Bedfords. The Rockingham party was, in our view, exactly what a party should be. It consisted of men bound together by common opinions, by common public objects, by mutual esteem. That they desired to obtain, by honest and constitutional means, the direction of affairs, they openly avowed. But, though often invited to accept the honours and emoluments of office, they steadily refused to do so on any conditions inconsistent with their principles. The Bedford party, as a party, had, as far as we can discover, no principle whatever. Rigby and Sandwich wanted public money, and thought that they should fetch a higher price jointly than singly. They therefore acted in concert, and prevailed on a much more important and a much better man than themselves to act with them.

It was to Rockingham that the Duke of Cumberland now had recourse. The Marquis consented to take the treasury. Newcastle, so long the recognized chief of the Whigs, could not well be excluded from the ministry. He was appointed keeper of the privy seal. A very honest clear-headed country gentleman, of the name of Dowdeswell, became chancellor of the exchequer. General Conway, who had served under the Duke of Cumberland,

and was strongly attached to his royal highness, was made secretary of state, with the lead in the House of Commons. A great Whig nobleman, in the prime of manhood, from whom much was at that time expected, Augustus Duke of Grafton, was the other secretary.

The oldest man living could remember no government so weak in oratorical talents and in official experience. The general opinion was, that the ministers might hold office during the recess, but that the first day of debate in Parliament would be the last day of their power. Charles Townshend was asked what he thought of the new administration. "It is," said he, "mere lutestring: pretty summer wear. It will never do for the winter."

At this conjuncture Lord Rockingham had the wisdom to discern the value, and secure the aid of an ally, who, to eloquence surpassing the eloquence of Pitt, and to industry which shamed the industry of Grenville, united an amplitude of comprehension to which neither Pitt nor Grenville could lay claim. A young Irishman had, some time before, come over to push his fortune in London. He had written much for the booksellers; but he was best known by a little treatise, in which the style and reasoning of Bolingbroke were mimicked with exquisite skill, and by a theory, of more ingenuity than soundness, touching the pleasures which we receive from the objects of taste. He had also attained a high reputation as a talker, and was regarded by the men of letters who supped together at the Turk's Head as the only match in conversation for Dr. Johnson. He now became private secretary to Lord Rockingham, and was brought into Parliament by his patron's influence. These arrangements, indeed, were not made without some difficulty. The Duke of Newcastle, who was always meddling and chattering, adjured the first lord of the treasury to be on his guard against this adventurer, whose real name was O'Bourke, and whom his Grace knew to be a wild Irishman, a Jacobite, a Papist, a concealed Jesuit. Lord Rockingham treated the calumny as it deserved; and the Whig party was strengthened and adorned by the accession of Edmund Burke.

The party, indeed, stood in need of accessions; for it sustained about this

time an almost irreparable loss. The Duke of Cumberland had formed the government, and was its main support. His exalted rank and great name in some degree balanced the fame of Pitt. As mediator between the Whigs and the court, he held a place which no other person could fill. The strength of his character supplied that which was the chief defect of the new ministry. Conway, in particular, who, with excellent intentions and respectable talents, was the most dependent and irresolute of human beings, drew from the counsels of that masculine mind a determination not his own. Before the meeting of Parliament the Duke suddenly died.

Death of the Duke of Cumberland. His death was generally regarded as the signal of great troubles, and on this

account, as well as from respect for his personal qualities, was greatly lamented. It was remarked that the mourning in London was the most general ever known, and was both deeper and longer than the Gazette had prescribed.

In the mean time, every mail from America brought alarming tidings. The crop which Grenville had sown, his successors had now to reap.

The state of the colonies. The colonies were in a state bordering on rebellion. The stamps were burned. The revenue officers were tarred and feathered. All traffic between the discontented provinces and the mother country was interrupted. The Exchange of London was in dismay. Half the firms of Bristol and Liverpool were threatened with bankruptcy. In Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, it was said that three artisans out of every ten had been turned adrift. Civil war seemed to be at hand; and it could not be doubted, that, if once the British nation were divided against itself, France and Spain would soon take part in the quarrel.

Three courses were open to the ministers. The first was to enforce the Stamp Act by the sword. This was the course

The King and Grenville. on which the King, and Grenville, whom the King

hated beyond all living men, were alike bent. The natures of both were arbitrary and stubborn. They resembled each other so much that they could never be friends; but they resembled each other also so much, that they saw almost all important practical questions in the same point of view. Neither of them would bear to be governed by

the other; but they perfectly agreed as to the best way of governing the people.

Another course was that which Pitt recommended. He held that the British Parliament was not constitutionally competent to pass a law for taxing the colonies. He therefore considered the Stamp Act as a nullity, as a document of no more validity than Charles's writ of ship-money, or James's proclamation dispensing with the penal laws. This doctrine seems to us, we must own, to be altogether untenable.

Between these extreme courses lay a third way. The opinion of the most judicious and temperate statesmen of those times was, that the British constitution had set no limit whatever to the legislative power of the British King, Lords, and Commons, over the whole British Empire. Parliament, they held, was legally competent to tax America, as Parliament was legally competent to commit any other act of folly or wickedness, to confiscate the property of all the merchants in Lombard Street, or to attain any man in the kingdom of high treason, without examining witnesses against him, or hearing him in his own defence. The most atrocious act of confiscation or of attainder is just as valid an act as the Toleration Act or the Habeas Corpus Act. But from acts of confiscation and acts of attainder, lawgivers are bound, by every obligation of morality, systematically to refrain. In the same manner ought the British legislature to refrain from taxing the American Colonies. The Stamp Act was indefensible, not because it was

The Stamp Act indefensible.

beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile of discontents. These sound doctrines were adopted by Lord Rockingham and his colleagues, and were, during a long course of years, inculcated by Burke, in orations, some of which will last as long as the English language.

The winter came; the Parliament met; and the state of the colonies instantly became the subject of fierce contention. Pitt, whose health had been somewhat restored by the waters of Bath, appeared in the House of Commons, and, with ardent and pathetic eloquence, not only condemned the Stamp Act, but applauded the resistance of Massachu-

setts and Virginia; and vehemently maintained, in defiance, we must say, of all reason and of all authority, that, according to the British constitution, the supreme legislative power does not include the power to tax. The language of Grenville, on the other hand, was such as Strafford might have used at the council-table of Charles the First, when news came of the resistance to the liturgy at Edinburgh. The colonists were traitors; those who excused them were little better. Frigates, mortars, bayonets, sabres, were the proper remedies for such distempers.

The ministers occupied an intermediate position; they proposed to declare that the legislative authority of the British Parliament over the whole Empire was in all cases supreme; and they proposed,

Repeal of the Stamp Act.

at the same time, to repeal the Stamp Act. To the former measure Pitt objected; but it was carried with scarcely a dissentient voice. The repeal of the Stamp Act Pitt strongly supported; but against the government was arrayed a formidable assemblage of opponents. Grenville and the Bedfords were furious. Temple, who had now allied himself closely with his brother, and separated himself from Pitt, was no despicable enemy. This, however, was not the worst. The ministry was without its natural strength. It had to struggle, not only against its avowed enemies, but against the insidious hostility of the King, and of a set of persons who, about this time, began to be designated as the King's friends.

The character of this faction has been drawn by Burke with even more than his usual force and vivacity. Those who know how strongly, through his whole life, his judgment was biassed by his passions, may not unnaturally suspect that he has left us rather a caricature than a likeness; and yet there is scarcely, in the whole portrait, a single touch of which the fidelity is not proved by facts of unquestionable authenticity.

The public generally regarded the King's friends as a body of which Bute was the directing soul.

Public opinion of Bute's power.

It was to no purpose that the Earl professed to have done with politics, that he absented himself year after year from the levée and the drawing-room, that he went to the north, that he went to Rome. The notion, that, in some inexplicable manner,

he dictated all the measures of the court, was fixed in the minds, not only of the multitude, but of some who had good opportunities of obtaining information, and who ought to have been superior to vulgar prejudices. Our own belief is that these suspicions were unfounded, and that he ceased to have any communication with the King on political matters some time before the dismissal of George Grenville. The supposition of Bute's influence is, indeed, by no means necessary to explain the phenomena. The King, in 1765, was no longer the ignorant and inexperienced boy who had, in 1760, been managed by his mother and his groom of the stole. He had, during several years, observed the struggles of parties, and conferred daily on high questions of state with able and experienced politicians. His way of life had developed his understanding and character. He was now no longer a puppet, but had very decided opinions both of men and things. Nothing could be more natural than that he should have high notions of his own prerogatives, should be impatient of opposition, and should wish all public men to be detached from each other and dependent on himself alone; nor could anything be more natural than that, in the state in which the political world then was, he should find instruments for his purposes.

Thus sprang into existence and into note a reptile species of politicians never before and never since known in our country.

A reptile species.

These men disclaimed all political ties, except those which bound them to the throne. They were willing to coalesce with any party, to abandon any party, to undermine any party, to assault any party, at a moment's notice. To them, all administrations and all oppositions were the same. They regarded Bute, Grenville, Rockingham, Pitt, without one sentiment either of predilection or of aversion. They were the King's friends. It is to be observed that this friendship implied no personal intimacy. These people had never lived with their master, as Dodington at one time lived with his father, or as Sheridan afterwards lived with his son. They never hunted with him in the morning, or played cards with him in the evening; never shared his mutton or walked with him among his turnips. Only one or two of them ever saw his face, except on public days. The whole band, however,

always had early and accurate information as to his personal inclinations. None of these people were high in the administration. They were generally to be found in places of much emolument, little labour, and no responsibility; and these places they continued to occupy securely while the cabinet was six or seven times reconstructed. Their peculiar business was not to support the ministry against the opposition, but to support the King against the ministry. Whenever his Majesty was induced to give a reluctant assent to the introduction of some bill which his constitutional advisers regarded as necessary, his friends in the House of Commons were sure to speak against it, to vote against it, to throw in its way every obstruction compatible with the forms of Parliament. If his Majesty found it necessary to admit into his closet a secretary of state or a first lord of the treasury whom he disliked, his friends were sure to miss no opportunity of thwarting and humbling the obnoxious minister. In return for these services, the King covered them with his protection. It was to no purpose that his responsible servants complained to him that they were daily betrayed and impeded by men who were eating the bread of the government. He sometimes justified the offenders, sometimes excused them, sometimes owned that they were to blame, but said that he must take time to consider whether he could part with them. He never would turn them out; and, while everything else in the state was constantly changing, these sycophants seemed to have a life-estate in their offices.

It was well known to the King's friends, that though his Majesty had consented to the repeal of the Stamp Act, he had consented with a very bad grace, and that

The King and the Whigs. though he had eagerly welcomed the Whigs,

when, in his extreme need and at his earnest entreaty, they had undertaken to free him from an insupportable yoke, he had by no means got over his early prejudices against his deliverers. The ministers soon found that, while they were encountered in front by the whole force of a strong opposition, their rear was assailed by a large body of those whom they had regarded as auxiliaries.

Nevertheless, Lord Rockingham and his adherents went on resolutely with the bill for repealing the Stamp Act.

They had on their side all the manufacturing and commercial interests of the realm. In the debates the government was powerfully supported. Two great orators and statesmen, belonging to two different generations, repeatedly put forth all their powers in defence of the bill. The House of Commons heard Pitt for the last time, and Burke for the first time, and was in doubt to which of them the palm of eloquence should be assigned. It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn.

For a time the event seemed doubtful. In several divisions the ministers were hard pressed. On one occasion, not less than twelve of the King's friends, all men in office, voted against the government. It was to no purpose that Lord Rockingham remonstrated with the King. His Majesty confessed that there was ground for complaint, but hoped that gentle means would bring the mutineers to a better mind. If they persisted in their misconduct, he would dismiss them.

At length the decisive day arrived. The gallery, the lobby, the Court of Requests, the staircases, were crowded with merchants from all the great ports of the island. The debate lasted till long after midnight. On the division, the ministers had a great majority. The dread of civil war, and the outcry of all the trading towns of the kingdom, had been too strong for the combined strength of the court and the opposition.

It was in the first dim twilight of a February morning that the doors were thrown open, and that the chiefs of the hostile parties showed themselves to the multitude. Conway was received with loud applause. But when Pitt appeared, all eyes were fixed on him alone. All hats were in the air.

Loud and long huzzas accompanied him to his chair, and a train of admirers escorted him all the way to his home. Then came forth Grenville. As soon as he was recognized, a storm of hisses and curses broke forth. He turned fiercely on the crowd, and caught one man by the throat. The bystanders were in great alarm. If a scuffle began, none could say how it might end. Fortunately the person who had been collared only said,

Bill for repealing the Stamp Act.

The ministers hard pressed.

A decisive debate.

The rival chiefs applauded.

"If I may not hiss, sir, I hope I may laugh," and laughed in Grenville's face.

The majority had been so decisive, that all the opponents of the ministry, save one, were disposed to let the bill pass without any further contention. But solicitation and expostulation were thrown away on Grenville. His indomitable spirit rose up stronger and stronger under the load of public hatred. He fought out the battle obstinately to the end. On the last reading he had a

Sharp altercation.

sharp altercation with his brother-in-law, the last of their many sharp altercations. Pitt thundered in his loftiest tones against the man who had wished to dip the ermine of a British King in the blood of the British people. Grenville replied with his wonted intrepidity and asperity. "If the tax," he said, "were still to be laid on, I would lay it on. For the evils which it may produce my accuser is answerable. His profusion made it necessary. His declarations against the constitutional powers of King, Lords, and Commons, have made it doubly necessary. I do not envy him the huzza. I glory in the hiss. If it were to be done again, I would do it."

The repeal of the Stamp Act was the chief measure of Lord Rockingham's government. But that government is entitled to the praise of having put a stop to two oppressive practices, which, in Wilkes's case, had attracted the notice and excited the just indignation of the public. The House of Commons was induced by the ministers to pass a resolution,

Resolutions. condemning the use of general warrants, and another resolution, condemning the seizure of papers in cases of libel.

It must be added, to the lasting honour of Lord Rockingham, that his administration

A courageous administration.

was the first which, during a long course of years, had the courage and the virtue to refrain from bribing members of Parliament. His enemies accused him and his friends of weakness, of haughtiness, of party spirit; but calumny itself never dared to couple his name with corruption.

Unhappily his government, though one of the best that has ever existed in our country, was also one of the weakest. The King's friends assailed and obstructed the ministers at every turn. To appeal to the King was only to draw

forth new promises and new evasions. His Majesty was sure that there must be some misunderstanding.

Lord Rockingham had better speak to the gentlemen. **A weak government.**

They should be dismissed on the next fault. The next fault was soon committed, and his Majesty still continued to shuffle. It was too bad. It was quite abominable; but it mattered less as the prorogation was at hand. He would give the delinquents one more chance. If they did not alter their conduct next session, he should not have one word to say for them. He had already resolved that, long before the commencement of the next session, Lord Rockingham should cease to be minister.

We have now come to a part of our story which, admiring as we do the genius and the many noble qualities of Pitt, we cannot relate without much pain. We believe that, at this conjuncture, he had it in his power to give the victory either to the Whigs or to the King's friends. If he had allied himself closely with Lord Rockingham, what could the court have done? There

would have been only one **Only one alternative.** alternative, the Whigs or Grenville; and there could be no doubt what the King's choice would be. He still remembered, as well he might, with the utmost bitterness, the thralldom from which his uncle had freed him, and said about this time, with great vehemence, that he would sooner see the devil come into his closet than Grenville.

And what was there to prevent Pitt from allying himself with Lord Rockingham? On all the most important questions their views were the same. They had agreed in condemning the peace, the Stamp Act, the general warrants, the seizure of papers. The points in which they differed were few and unimportant. **Few points of difference.**

In integrity, in disinterestedness, in hatred of corruption, they resembled each other. Their personal interests could not clash. They sat in different Houses, and Pitt had always declared that nothing should induce him to be first lord of the treasury.

If the opportunity of forming a coalition beneficial to the state, and honourable to all concerned, was suffered to escape, the fault was not with the Whig ministers. They behaved towards Pitt with an obsequiousness which, had it not been the effect of sincere admiration and

of anxiety for the public interests, might have been justly called servile. They

Obsequious-
ness of the
Whig
ministers.

repeatedly gave him to understand that, if he chose to join their ranks, they were ready to receive him, not as an associate, but as a leader. They had proved their respect for him by bestowing a peerage on the person who, at that time, enjoyed the largest share of his confidence, Chief-Justice Pratt. What then was there to divide Pitt from the Whigs? What, on the other hand, was there in common between him and the King's friends, that he should lend himself to their purposes—he who had never owed anything to flattery or intrigue, he whose eloquence and independent spirit had overawed two generations of slaves and jobbers, he who had twice been forced by the enthusiasm of an admiring nation on a reluctant Prince?

Unhappily the court had gained Pitt, not, it is true, by those ignoble means which were employed when such men as Rigby and Wedderburn were to be won, but by allurements suited to a nature noble even in its aberrations. The King set himself to seduce the one man who could turn the Whigs out without letting Grenville in. Praise, Pitt praised by the court. caresses, promises, were lavished on the idol of

the nation. He, and he alone, could put an end to faction, could bid defiance to all the powerful connections in the land united, Whigs and Tories, Rockinghams, Bedfords, and Grenvilles. These blandishments produced a great effect. For though Pitt's spirit was high and manly, though his eloquence was often exerted with formidable effect against the court, and though his theory of government had been learned in the school of Locke and Sidney, he had always regarded the person of the sovereign with profound veneration. As soon as he was brought face to face with royalty, his imagination and sensibility became too strong for his principles. His Whiggism thawed and disappeared; and he became, for the time, a Tory of the old Ormond pattern. Nor was he by any means unwilling to assist in the work of dissolving all political connections. His own weight in the state was wholly independent of such connections. He was therefore inclined to look on them with dislike, and made far too little distinction between gangs of knaves associated for the

mere purpose of robbing the public, and confederacies of honourable men for the promotion of great public objects. Nor had he the sagacity to perceive that the strenuous efforts which he made to annihilate all parties tended only to establish the ascendancy of one party, and that the basest and most hateful of all.

It may be doubted whether he would have been thus misled, if his mind had been in full health and vigour. But the truth is, that he had for some time been in an unnatural state of excitement. No suspicion of this sort had yet got

Unnatural
excitement.

abroad. His eloquence had never shone with more splendour than during the recent debates. But people afterwards called to mind many things which ought to have roused their apprehensions. His habits were gradually becoming more and more eccentric. A horror of all loud sounds, such as is

Growing
eccentricity of
habits.

said to have been one of the many oddities of Wallenstein, grew upon him. Though the most affectionate of fathers, he could not at this time bear to hear the voices of his own children, and laid out great sums at Hayes in buying up houses contiguous to his own, merely that he might have no neighbours to disturb him with their noise. He then sold Hayes, and took possession of a villa at Hampstead, where he again began to purchase houses to right and left. In expense, indeed, he vied, during this part of his life, with the wealthiest of the conquerors of Bengal and Tanjore. At Burton Pynsent, he ordered a great extent of ground to be planted with cedars. Cedars enough for the purpose were not to be found in Somersetshire. They were therefore collected in London, and sent down by land carriage. Relays of labourers were hired; and the work went on all night by torchlight. No man could be more abstemious than Pitt; yet the profusion of his kitchen was a wonder even to epicures. Several dinners were always dressing; for his appetite was capricious and fanciful; and at whatever moment he felt inclined to eat, he expected a meal to be instantly on the table. Other circumstances might be mentioned, such as separately are of little moment, but such as, when taken together, and when viewed in connection with the strange events which followed, justify us in believing that his mind was already in a morbid state.

Soon after the close of the session of Parliament, Lord Rockingham received his dismissal. He retired, accompanied by a firm body of friends, whose consistency and uprightness enmity itself was forced to admit. None of them had asked or obtained any pension or any sinecure, either in possession or in reversion. Such disinterestedness was then rare among politicians. Their chief, though not a man of brilliant talents, had won for himself an honourable fame, which he kept pure to the last. He had, in spite of difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable, removed great abuses and averted a civil war. Sixteen years later, in a dark and terrible day, he was again called upon to save the state, brought to the very brink of ruin by the same perfidy and obstinacy which had embarrassed, and at length overthrown, his first administration.

Pitt was planting in Somersetshire when he was summoned to court by a letter written with the royal hand. He instantly hastened to London. The irritability of his mind and body were increased by the rapidity with which he travelled; and when he reached his journey's end he was suffering from fever. Ill as he was, he saw the King at Richmond, and undertook to form an administration.

Pitt was scarcely in the state in which a man should be who has to conduct delicate and arduous negotiations. In his letters to his wife, he complained that the conferences in which it was necessary for him to bear a part heated his blood and accelerated his pulse. From other sources of information we learn, that his language, even to those whose co-operation he wished to engage, was strangely peremptory and despotic. Some of his notes written at this time have been preserved, and are in a style which Louis the Fourteenth would have been too well bred to employ in addressing any French gentleman.

In the attempt to dissolve all parties, Pitt met with some difficulties. Some Whigs, whom the court would gladly have detached from Lord Rockingham, rejected all offers. The Bedfords were perfectly willing to break with Grenville; but Pitt would not come up to their terms. Temple, whom Pitt at first meant to place at the head of the trea-

sury, proved intractable. A coldness indeed had, during some months, been fast growing between the brothers-in-law, so long and so closely allied in politics. Pitt was angry with Temple for opposing the repeal of the Stamp Act. Temple was angry with Pitt for refusing to accede to that family league which was now the favourite plan at Stowe. At length the Earl proposed an equal partition of power and patronage, and offered, on this condition, to give up his brother George. Pitt thought the demand exorbitant, and positively refused compliance. A bitter quarrel followed. Each of the kinsmen was true to his character. Temple's soul festered with spite, and Pitt's swelled into contempt. Temple represented Pitt as the most odious of hypocrites and traitors. Pitt held a different, and perhaps a more provoking tone. Temple was a good sort of man enough, whose single title to distinction was, that he had a large garden, with a large piece of water, and a great many pavilions and summer-houses. To his fortunate connection with a great orator and statesman he was indebted for an importance in the state which his own talents could never have gained for him. That importance had turned his head. He had begun to fancy that he could form administrations, and govern Empires. It was piteous to see a well-meaning man under such a delusion.

In spite of all these difficulties, a ministry was made such as the King wished to see, a ministry in which all his Majesty's friends were comfortably accommodated, and which, with the exception of his Majesty's friends, contained no four persons who had ever in their lives been in the habit of acting together. Men who had never concurred in a single vote found themselves seated at the same board. The office of paymaster was divided between two persons who had never exchanged a word. Most of the chief posts were filled either by personal adherents of Pitt, or by members of the late ministry, who had been induced to remain in place after the dismissal of Lord Rockingham. To the former class belonged Pratt, now Lord Camden, who accepted the great seal, and Lord Shelburne, who was made one of the secretaries of state. To the latter class belonged the Duke of Grafton, who

Quarrel
between Tem-
ple and Pitt.

A ministry
that pleased
the King.

became first lord of the treasury, and Conway, who kept his old position both in the government and in the House of Commons. Charles Townshend, who had belonged to every party, and cared for none, was chancellor of the exchequer.

Pitt created Earl of Chatham. Pitt himself was declared prime minister, but refused to take any laborious office.

He was created Earl of Chatham, and the privy seal was delivered to him.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the failure, the complete and disgraceful

Fault and failure.

failure, of this arrangement, is not to be ascribed to any want of talents in the persons whom we have named. None of them were deficient in abilities; and four of them, Pitt himself, Shelburne, Camden, and Townshend, were men of high intellectual eminence. The fault was not in the materials, but in the principle on which the materials were put together. Pitt had mixed up these conflicting elements, in the full confidence that he should be able to keep them all in perfect subordination to himself, and in perfect harmony with each other. We shall soon see how the experiment succeeded.

On the very day on which the new prime minister kissed hands, three-fourths of that popularity which he had long enjoyed without a rival, and to which he owed the greater part of his authority, departed from him. A

Outcry against Pitt.

violent outcry was raised, not against that part of his conduct which really deserved severe condemnation, but against a step in which we can see nothing to censure. His acceptance of a peerage produced a general burst of indignation. Yet surely no peerage had ever been better earned; nor was there ever a statesman who more needed the repose of the Upper House. Pitt was now growing old. He was much older in constitution than in years. It was with imminent risk to his life that he had, on some important occasions, attended his duty in Parliament. During the session of 1764, he had not been able to take part in a single debate. It was impossible that he should go through the nightly labour of conducting the business of the government in the House of Commons. His wish to be transferred, under such circumstances, to a less busy and a less turbulent assembly, was natural and reasonable. The nation, however, over-

looked all these considerations. Those who had most loved and honoured the great Commoner, were loudest in invective against the new-made lord. London had hitherto been true to him through every vicissitude. When the citizens learned that he had been sent for from Somersetshire, that he had been closeted with the King at Richmond, and that he was to be first minister, they had been in transports of joy. Preparations were made for a grand entertainment, and for a general illumination. The lamps had actually been placed round the Monument, when the Gazette announced that the object of all their enthusiasm was an Earl. Instantly the feast was countermanded. The lamps were taken down. The newspapers raised the roar of obloquy. Pamphlets, made up of calumny and scurrility, filled the shops of all the booksellers; and of those pamphlets, the most galling were written under the direction of the malignant Temple. It was now the fashion to compare the two Williams, William Pulteney and William Pitt. Both, it is said, had, by eloquence and simulated patriotism, acquired a great ascendancy in the House of Commons and in the country. Both had been entrusted with the office of reforming the government. Both had, when at the height of power and popularity, been seduced by the splendour of the coronet. Both had been made earls, and both had in a moment become objects of aversion and scorn to the nation, which a few hours before had regarded them with affection and veneration.

The clamour against Pitt appears to have had a serious effect on the foreign relations of the country. His name had till now acted like a spell at Versailles and Saint Ildefonso. English travellers on the Continent had remarked, that nothing more **Feeling on the Continent.** was necessary to silence a whole room-full of boasting Frenchmen, than to drop a hint of the probability that Mr. Pitt would return to power. In an instant there was deep silence: all shoulders rose, and all faces were lengthened. Now, unhappily, every foreign court in learning that he was recalled to office, learned also that he no longer possessed the hearts of his countrymen. Ceasing to be loved at home, he ceased to be feared abroad. The name of Pitt had been a charmed name. Our envoys tried in vain to conjure with the name of Chatham.

The difficulties which beset Chatham were daily increased by the despotic manner in which he treated all around him. Lord Rockingham had, at the time of the change of ministry, acted with great moderation, had expressed a hope that the new government would act on the principles of the late government, and had even interfered to prevent many of his friends from quitting office. Thus Saunders and Keppel, two naval commanders of great eminence, had been induced to remain at the Admiralty, where their services were much needed. The Duke of Portland was still lord-chamberlain, and Lord Besborough postmaster. But within a quarter of a year, Lord Chatham had so effectually disgusted these men, that they all retired in deep disgust. In truth, his tone, submissive in the closet, was at this time insupportably tyrannical in the cabinet. His colleagues were merely his clerks for naval, financial, and diplomatic business. Conway, meek as he was, was on one occasion provoked into declaring that such language as Lord Chatham's had never been heard west of Constantinople, and was with difficulty prevented by Horace Walpole from resigning, and rejoining the standard of Lord Rockingham.

The breach which had been made in the government by the defection of so many of the Rockinghams, Chatham hoped to supply by the help of the Bedfords. But with the Bedfords he could not deal as he had dealt with other parties. It was to no purpose that he bade high for one or two members of the faction, in the hope of detaching them from the rest. They were to be had; but they were to be had only in the lot. There was indeed for a moment some wavering and some disputing among them. But at length the counsels of the shrewd and resolute Rigby prevailed. They determined to stand firmly together, and plainly intimated to Chatham that he must take them all, or that he should get none of them. The event proved that they were wiser in their generation than any other connection in the state. In a few months they were able to dictate their own terms.

The most important public measure of Lord Chatham's administration was his celebrated interference with the corn-trade. The harvest had been bad; the

price of food was high; and he thought it necessary to take on himself the responsibility of laying an embargo on the exportation of grain. When Parliament met, this proceeding was attacked by the opposition as unconstitutional, and defended by the ministers as indispensably necessary. At last, an act was passed to indemnify all who had been concerned in the embargo.

Embargo on
exportation
of grain.

The first words uttered by Chatham, in the House of Lords, were in defence of his conduct on this occasion. He spoke with a calmness, sobriety, and dignity, well suited to the audience which he was addressing.

Chatham's
first speech
in the House
of Lords.

A subsequent speech which he made on the same subject was less successful. He bade defiance to aristocratical connections, with a superciliousness to which the Peers were not accustomed, and with tones and gestures better suited to a large and stormy assembly than to the body of which he was now a member. A short altercation followed, and he was told very plainly that he should not be suffered to browbeat the old nobility of England.

It gradually became clearer and clearer that he was in a distempered state of mind. His attention had been drawn to the territorial acquisitions of the

A distempered
state of mind.

East India Company, and he determined to bring the whole of that great subject before Parliament. He would not, however, confer on the subject with any of his colleagues. It was in vain that Conway, who was charged with the conduct of business in the House of Commons, and Charles Townshend, who was responsible for the direction of the finances, begged for some glimpse of light as to what was in contemplation. Chatham's answers were sullen and mysterious. He must decline any discussion with them; he did not want their assistance; he had fixed on a person to take charge of his measure in the House of Commons. This person was a member who was not connected with the government, and who neither had, nor deserved to have, the ear of the House—a noisy, purseproud, illiterate demagogue, whose Cockney English and scraps of mispronounced Latin were the jest of the newspapers, Alderman Beckford. It may well be supposed that these strange proceedings produced a ferment through the whole political world.

The city was in commotion. The East India Company invoked the faith of

Alderman Beckford. charters. Burke thundered against the ministers. The ministers looked at each

other, and knew not what to say. In the midst of the confusion, Lord Chatham proclaimed himself gouty, and retired to Bath. It was announced, after some time, that he was better, that he would shortly return, that he would soon put everything in order. A day was fixed for his arrival in London. But when he

Chatham at Marlborough. reached the Castle inn at Marlborough, he stopped, shut himself up in his room, and remained there some weeks.

Everybody who travelled that road was amazed by the number of his attendants. Footmen and grooms, dressed in his family livery, filled the whole inn, though one of the largest in England, and swarmed in the streets of the little town. The truth was, that the invalid had insisted that, during his stay, all the waiters and stable-boys of the Castle should wear his livery.

His colleagues were in despair. The Duke of Grafton proposed to go down to Marlborough in order to consult the oracle. But he was informed that Lord Chatham must decline all conversation on business. In the meantime, all the parties which were out of office, Bedfords, Grenvilles, and Rockinghams, joined to oppose the distracted government on the vote for the land-tax. They were reinforced by almost all the country members, and had a considerable majority. This was the

The ministry beaten. first time that a ministry had been beaten on an important division in the

House of Commons since the fall of Sir Robert Walpole. The administration, thus furiously assailed from without, was torn by internal dissensions. It had been formed on no principle whatever. From the very first, nothing but Chatham's authority had prevented the hostile contingents which made up his ranks from going to blows with each other. That authority was now withdrawn, and every thing was in commotion. Conway, a brave soldier, but in civil affairs the most timid and irresolute of men, afraid of disobliging the King, afraid of being abused in the newspapers, afraid of being thought factious if he went out, afraid of being thought interested if he stayed in, afraid of everything, and afraid of being known to be afraid of anything, was beaten

backwards and forwards like a shuttlecock between Horace Walpole who wished to make him prime minister, and Lord John Cavendish who wished to draw him into opposition. Charles Townshend, a man of splendid talents, of lax principles, and of boundless vanity and presumption, would submit to no control. The full extent of his parts, of his ambition, and of his arrogance, had not yet been made manifest; for he had always quailed before the genius and the lofty character of Pitt. But now that Pitt had quitted the House of Commons, and seemed to have abdicated the part of chief minister, Townshend broke loose from all restraint.

While things were in this state, Chatham at length returned to London. He might as well have remained at Marlborough.

Chatham returns to London.

He would see nobody. He would give no opinion on any public matter. The Duke of Grafton begged piteously for an interview, for an hour, for half an hour, for five minutes. The answer was, that it was impossible. The King himself repeatedly condescended to expostulate and implore. "Your duty," he wrote, "your own honour, require you to make an effort." The answers to these appeals were commonly written in Lady Chatham's hand, from her lord's dictation; for he had not energy even to use a pen. He flings himself at the King's feet. He is penetrated by the royal goodness, so signally shown to the most unhappy of men. He implores a little more indulgence. He cannot as yet transact business. He cannot see his colleagues. Least of all can he bear the excitement of an interview with majesty.

Some were half inclined to suspect that he was, to use a military phrase, malingering. He had made, they said, a great blunder, and had found it out. His immense popularity, his high reputation for statesmanship, were gone for ever. Intoxicated by pride, he had undertaken a task beyond his abilities. He now saw nothing before him but distresses and humiliations; and he had therefore simulated illness, in order to escape from vexations which he had not fortitude to meet. This suspicion, though it derived some colour from that weakness which was the most striking blemish of his character, was certainly unfounded.

Unfounded suspicion.

His mind, before he became first minister, had been, as we have said, in an unsound

state; and physical and moral causes now concurred to make the derangement of his faculties complete. The gout, which had been the torment of his whole life, had been suppressed by strong remedies. For the first time since he was a boy at Oxford, he passed several months without a twinge. But his hand and foot

State of health and nerves. had been relieved at the expense of his nerves. He became melancholy, fanciful, irritable. The embarrassing state of public affairs, the grave responsibility which lay on him, the consciousness of his errors, the disputes of his colleagues, the savage clamours raised by his detractors, bewildered his enfeebled mind. One thing alone, he said, could save him. He must repurchase Hayes. The unwilling consent of the new occupant was extorted by Lady Chatham's entreaties and tears; and her lord was somewhat easier. But if business were mentioned to him, he, once the proudest and boldest of mankind, behaved like a hysterical girl, trembled from head to foot, and burst into a flood of tears.

His colleagues for a time continued to entertain the expectation that his health would soon be restored, and that he would emerge from his retirement. But month followed month, and still he remained

Mysterious seclusion. hidden in mysterious seclusion, and sunk, as far as they could learn, in the deepest dejection of spirits. They at length ceased to hope or to fear anything from him; and though he was still nominally Prime Minister, took without scruple steps which they knew to be diametrically opposed to all his opinions and feelings, allied themselves with those whom he had proscribed, disgraced those whom he most esteemed, and laid taxes on the colonies, in the face of the strong declarations which he had recently made.

When he had passed about a year and three quarters in gloomy privacy, the King received a few lines in Lady Chatham's hand. They contained a request,

Resignation of the Privy Seal. dictated by her lord, that he might be permitted to resign the privy seal. After some civil show of reluctance, the resignation was accepted. Indeed Chatham was, by this time, almost as much forgotten as if he had already been lying in Westminster Abbey.

At length the clouds which had gathered over his mind broke and passed away. His gout returned, and freed him from a

more cruel malady. His nerves were newly braced. His spirits became buoyant. He woke as from a sickly dream. It was a strange recovery. Men had been in the habit of talking of him as of one dead, and, when he first showed himself at the King's levee, started as if they had seen a ghost. It was more than two years and a half since he had appeared in public.

He, too, had cause for wonder. The world which he now entered was not the world which he had quitted. The administration which he had formed had never been, at any one moment, entirely changed. But there had been so many losses and so many accessions, that he

Changes. could scarcely recognise his own work. Charles Townshend was dead. Lord Shelburne had been dismissed. Conway had sunk into utter insignificance. The Duke of Grafton had fallen into the hands of the Bedfords. The Bedfords had deserted Grenville, had made their peace with the King and the King's friends, and had been admitted to office. Lord North was chancellor of the exchequer, and was rising fast in importance. Corsica had been given up to France without a struggle. The disputes with the American colonies had been revived. A general election had taken place. Wilkes had returned from exile, and, outlaw as he was, had been chosen knight of the shire for Middlesex. The multitude was on his side. The court was obstinately bent on ruining him, and was prepared to shake the very foundations of the constitution for the sake of a paltry revenge. The House of Commons, assuming to itself an authority which of right belongs only to the whole legislature, had declared Wilkes incapable of sitting in Parliament. Nor had it been thought sufficient to keep him out. Another must be brought in. Since the freeholders of Middlesex had obstinately refused to choose a member acceptable to the court, the House had chosen a member for them. This was not the only instance, perhaps not the most disgraceful instance, of the inveterate malignity of the court. Exasperated by the steady opposition of the Rockingham party, the King's friends had tried to rob a distinguished Whig nobleman of his private estate, and had persisted in their mean wickedness till their own servile majority had revolted from mere disgust and shame. Discontent had spread throughout the nation,

and was kept up by stimulants such as had rarely been applied to the public mind. Junius had taken the field, had trampled Sir William Draper in the dust, had wellnigh broken the heart of Blackstone, and had so mangled the reputation of the Duke of Grafton that his grace had become sick of office, and was beginning

Violated principles. to look wistfully towards the shades of Euston. Every principle of foreign, domestic, and colonial policy which was dear to the heart of Chatham, had, during the eclipse of his genius, been violated by the government which he had formed.

The remaining years of his life were spent in vainly struggling against that

Vain struggles. fatal policy which, at the moment when he might have given it a death-blow, he had been induced to take under his protection. His exertions redeemed his own fame, but they effected little for his country.

He found two parties arrayed against the government, the party of his own brothers-in-law, the Grenvilles and Rockinghams. Lord Rockingham. On the question of the Middlesex election these parties were agreed. But on many other important questions they differed widely; and they were, in truth, not less hostile to each other than to the court. The Grenvilles had, during several years, annoyed the Rockinghams with a succession of acrimonious pamphlets. It was long before the Rockinghams could be induced to retaliate. But an ill-natured tract, written under Grenville's direction, and entitled a State of the Nation, was too much for their patience. Burke undertook to defend and avenge his friends, and executed the task with admirable skill and vigour. On every point he was victorious, and nowhere more completely victorious than when he joined issue on those dry and minute questions of statistical and financial detail in which the main strength of Grenville lay. The official drudge, even on his own chosen ground, was utterly unable to maintain the fight against the great orator and philosopher. When Chatham reappeared, Grenville was still writhing with the recent shame and smart of this well-merited chastisement. Cordial co-operation between the two sections of the opposition was impossible. Nor could Chatham easily connect himself with either. His feelings, in spite of many

affronts given and received, drew him towards the Grenvilles. For he had strong domestic affections; and his nature, which, though haughty, was by no means obdurate, had been softened by affliction. But from his kinsmen he was separated by a wide difference of opinion on the question of colonial taxation. A reconciliation, however, took place. He visited Stowe; he shook hands with George Grenville; and the Whig freeholders of Buckinghamshire, at their public dinners, drank many bumpers to the union of the three brothers.

In opinions, Chatham was much nearer to the Rockinghams than to his own relatives. But between him and the Rockinghams **Chatham and the Rockinghams.** there was a gulf not easily to be passed. He had deeply injured them, and, in injuring them, had deeply injured his country. When the balance was trembling between them and the court, he had thrown the whole weight of his genius, of his renown, of his popularity, into the scale of misgovernment. It must be added, that many eminent members of the party still retained a bitter recollection of the asperity and disdain with which they had been treated by him at the time when he assumed the direction of affairs. It is clear from Burke's pamphlets and speeches, and still more clear from his private letters, and from the language which he held in conversation, that he long regarded Chatham with a feeling not far removed from dislike. Chatham was undoubtedly conscious of his error, and desirous to atone for it. But his overtures of friendship, though made with earnestness, and even with unwonted humility, were at first received by Lord Rockingham with cold and austere reserve. Gradually the intercourse of the two statesmen became courteous and even amicable. But the past was never wholly forgotten.

Chatham did not, however, stand alone. Round him gathered a party, small in number, but strong in great and various talents. Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne, Colonel Barré, and Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, were the principal members of this connection.

There is no reason to believe that, from this time till within a few weeks of Chatham's death, his intellect suffered any decay. His eloquence was almost to the last heard with delight. But it was not exactly the eloquence of the House

of Lords. That lofty and passionate, but somewhat desultory declamation in which

Eloquence of Chatham. he excelled all men, and which was set off by looks, tones, and gestures, worthy of Garrick or Talma, was out of place in a small apartment where the audience often consisted of three or four drowsy prelates, three or four old judges, accustomed during many years to disregard rhetoric, and to look only at facts and arguments, and three or four listless and supercilious men of fashion, whom anything like enthusiasm moved to a sneer. In the House of Commons, a flash of his eye, a wave of his arm, had sometimes cowed Murray. But, in the House of Peers, his utmost vehemence and pathos produced less effect than the moderation, the reasonableness, the luminous order, and the serene dignity, which characterized the speeches of Lord Mansfield.

On the question of the Middlesex election, all the three divisions of the opposition acted in concert. No orator in either House defended what is now universally admitted to have been the constitutional cause with more ardour or eloquence than Chatham. Before this subject had ceased to occupy the public mind, George Grenville died. George Grenville died. His party rapidly melted away; and in a short time most of his adherents appeared on the ministerial benches.

Had George Grenville lived many months longer, the friendly ties which, after years of estrangement and hostility, had been renewed between him and his brother-in-law, would, in all probability, have been a second time violently dissolved. For now the quarrel between

North American Colonies. England and the North American colonies took a gloomy and terrible aspect. Oppression provoked resistance; resistance was made the pretext for fresh oppression. The warnings of all the greatest statesmen of the age were lost on an imperious court and a deluded nation. Soon a colonial senate confronted the British Parliament. Then the colonial militia crossed bayonets with the British regiments. At length the commonwealth was torn asunder. Two millions of Englishmen, who, fifteen years before, had been as loyal to their prince and as proud of their country as the people of Kent or Yorkshire, separated themselves by a solemn act from the

Empire. For a time it seemed that the insurgents would struggle to small purpose against the vast financial and military means of the mother country. But disasters, following one another in rapid succession, rapidly dispelled the illusions of national vanity. At length a great British force, exhausted, famished, harassed on every side by a hostile peasantry, was compelled to deliver up its arms. Those governments which England had, in the late war, so signally humbled, and which had during many years been sullenly brooding over the recollections of Quebec, of Minden, and of the Moro, now saw with exultation that the day of revenge was at hand. France recognized the independence of the United States; and there could be little doubt that the example would soon be followed by Spain.

Chatham and Rockingham had cordially concurred in opposing every part of the fatal policy which had brought the state into this dangerous situation. But their paths now diverged. Lord Rockingham thought, and, as the event proved, thought most justly, that the revolted colonies were separated from the Empire for ever, and that the only effect of prolonging the war on the American continent would be to divide resources which it was desirable to concentrate. If the hopeless attempt to subjugate Pennsylvania and Virginia were abandoned, war against the House of Bourbon might possibly be avoided, or, if inevitable, might be carried on with success and glory. We might even indemnify ourselves for part of what we had lost, at the expense of those foreign enemies who had hoped to profit by our domestic dissensions. Lord Rockingham, therefore, and those who acted with him, conceived that the wisest course now open to England, was to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and to turn her whole force against her European enemies.

Chatham, it should seem, ought to have taken the same side. Before France had taken any part in our quarrel with the colonies, he had repeatedly, and with great energy of language, declared that it was impossible to conquer America; and he could not without absurdity maintain that it was easier to conquer France and America together than America alone. But his passions overpowered his judgment, and

The Colonies separated from Europe.

Impossible to conquer America.

made him blind to his own inconsistency. The very circumstances which made the separation of the colonies inevitable, made it to him altogether insupportable. The dismemberment of the Empire seemed to him less ruinous and humiliating, when produced by domestic dissensions, than when produced by foreign interference. His blood boiled at the degradation of his country. Whatever lowered her among the nations of the earth, he felt as a personal outrage to himself. And the feeling was natural. He had made her so great. He had been so proud of her; and she had been so proud of him. He remembered how, more than twenty years before, in a day of gloom and dismay, when her possessions were torn from her, when her flag was dishonoured, she had called on him to save her. He remembered the sudden and glorious change which his energy had wrought, the long series of triumphs, the days of thanksgiving, the nights of illumination. Fired by such recollections, he determined to separate himself from those who advised that the independence of the colonies should be acknowledged. That he was in error, will scarcely, we think, be disputed by his warmest admirers. Indeed, the treaty by which, a few years later, the republic of the United States was recognized, was the work of his most attached adherents and of his favourite son.

The Duke of Richmond had given notice of an address to the throne, against the further prosecution of hostilities with America. Chatham had, during some time, absented himself from Parliament, in consequence of his growing infirmities. He determined to appear in his place on this occasion, and to declare that his opinions were decidedly at variance with those of the Rockingham party. He was in a state of great excitement. His medical attendants were uneasy, and strongly advised him to calm himself, and to remain at home. But he was not to be controlled. His son William, and his son-in-law Lord Mahon, accompanied him to Westminster. He rested himself in the chancellor's room till the debate commenced, and then, leaning on his two young relations, limped to his seat. The slightest particulars of that day were remembered, and have been carefully recorded. He bowed, it was remarked, with great courtliness to those peers who rose to

make way for him and his supporters. His crutch was in his hand. He wore, as was his fashion, a rich velvet coat. His legs were swathed in flannel. His wig was so large, and his face so emaciated, that none of his features could be discerned except the high curve of nose, and his eyes, which still retained a gleam of the old fire.

When the Duke of Richmond had spoken, Chatham rose. For some time his voice was inaudible. At length his tones became distinct and his action animated. Here and there his hearers caught a thought or an expression which reminded them of William Pitt. But it was clear that he was not himself. He lost the thread of his discourse, hesitated, repeated the same words several times, and was so confused, that in speaking of the Act of Settlement, he could not recall the name of the Electress Sophia. The House listened in solemn silence, and with the aspect of profound respect and compassion. The stillness was so deep that the dropping of a handkerchief would have been heard. The Duke of Richmond replied with great tenderness and courtesy; but, while he spoke, the old man was observed to be restless and irritable. The Duke sat down. Chatham stood up again, pressed his hand on his breast, and sank down in an apoplectic fit. Three or four lords who sat near him caught him in his fall. The House broke up in confusion. The dying man was carried to the residence of one of the officers of Parliament, and was so far restored as to be able to bear a journey to Hayes. At Hayes, after lingering a few weeks, he expired in his seventieth year. His bed was watched to the last, with anxious tenderness, by his wife and children; and he well deserved their care. Too often haughty and wayward to others, to them he had been almost effeminately kind. He had through life been dreaded by his political opponents, and regarded with more awe than love even by his political associates. But no fear seems to have mingled with the affection which his fondness, constantly overflowing in a thousand endearing forms, had inspired in the little circle at Hayes.

Last appearance of Chatham.

Death of Chatham.

Chatham, at the time of his decease, had not, in both Houses of Parliament, ten personal adherents. Half the public men of the age had been estranged from him by his errors, and the other half by

the exertions which he had made to repair his errors. His last speech had been an attack at once on the policy pursued by the government, and on the policy recommended by the opposition. But death at once restored him to his old place in the affection of his country. Who could hear unmoved of the fall of that which had been so great, and which had stood so long? The circumstances, too, seemed rather to belong to the tragic stage than to real life. A great statesman, full of years and honours, led forth to the senate-house by a son of rare hopes, and stricken down in full council while straining his feeble voice to rouse the drooping spirit of his country, could not but be remembered with peculiar veneration and tenderness. Detraction was overawed. The voice even of just and temperate censure was mute. Nothing was remembered but the lofty genius, the unsullied probity, the undisputed services, of him who was no more. For once, all

parties were agreed. A **Vote for a public funeral.** public funeral, a public monument, were eagerly voted. The debts of the deceased were paid. A provision was made for his family. The city of London requested that the remains of the great man whom she had so long loved and honoured might rest under the dome of her magnificent cathedral. But the petition came too late. Everything was already prepared for the interment in Westminster Abbey.

Though men of all parties had concurred in decreeing posthumous honours to Chatham, his corpse was attended to the grave almost exclusively by opponents of the government. The banner of the lordship of Chatham was borne by

Colonel Barré, attended by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Rockingham. Burke, Savile, and Dunning upheld the pall. Lord Camden was conspicuous in the procession. The chief mourner

was young William Pitt. **Young William Pitt.** After the lapse of more than twenty-seven years, in a season as dark and perilous, his own shattered frame and broken heart were laid, with the same pomp, in the same consecrated mould.

Chatham sleeps near the northern door of the church, in a spot which has ever since been appropriated to statesmen, as the other end of the same transept has long been to poets. Mansfield rests there, and the second William Pitt, and Fox, and Grattan, and Canning, and Wilberforce. In no other ceme-

tery do so many great **Tomb in Westminster Abbey.** citizens lie within so narrow a space. High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham, and from above, his own effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eagle face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer, and to hurl defiance at her foes. The generation which reared that memorial of him has disappeared. The time has come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments which his contemporaries passed on his character may be calmly revised by history. And history, while, for the warning of vehement, high, and daring natures, she notes his many errors, will yet deliberately pronounce, that, among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid name.

FRAGMENTS OF A ROMAN TALE.

(KNIGHT'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, JANUARY, 1823.)

* * * * *

It was an hour after noon. Ligarius was returning from the Campus Martius. He strolled through one of the streets which led to the forum, settling his gown, and calculating the odds on the gladiators who were to fence at the approaching Saturnalia. While thus occupied, he over-

took Flaminius, who, with a heavy step and a melancholy face, was sauntering in the same direction. The light-hearted young man plucked him by the sleeve.

"Good-day, Flaminius. Are you to be of Catiline's party this evening?"

"Not I."

"Why so? Your little Tarentine girl will break her heart."

"No matter. Catiline has the best cooks and the finest wine in Rome. There are charming women at his parties. But the twelve-line board and the dice-box pay for all. The gods confound me if I did not lose two millions of sesterces last night. My villa at Tibur, and all the statues that my father, the prætor, brought from Ephesus, must go to the auctioneer. That is a high price, you will acknowledge, even for Phœnicopters, Chian, and Callinice."

"High indeed, by Pollux."

"And that is not the worst. I saw several of the leading senators this morning. Strange things are whispered in the higher political circles."

"The gods confound the political circles. I have hated the name of politician ever since Sylla's proscription,

when I was within a moment of having my throat cut by a politician, who took me for another politician. While there is a cask of Falernian in Campania, or a girl in the Subarra, I shall be too well employed to think on the subject."

"You will do well," said Flaminius,

gravely, "to bestow some little consideration upon it at present. Otherwise, I fear, you will soon renew your acquaintance with the politicians, in a manner quite as unpleasant as that to which you allude."

"Averting gods! what do you mean?"

"I will tell you. There are rumours of conspiracy. The order of things established by Lucius Sylla has excited the disgust of the people, and of a large party of the nobles. Some violent convulsion is expected."

"What is that to me? I suppose that they will hardly proscribe the vintners and gladiators, or pass a law compelling every citizen to take a wife?"

"You do not understand. Catiline is supposed to be the author of the revolutionary schemes. You must have heard bold opinions at his table repeatedly."

"I never listen to any opinions upon such subjects, bold or timid."

"Look to it. Your name has been mentioned."

"Mine! good gods! I call Heaven to witness that I never had so much as mentioned Senate, Consul, or Comitia, in Catiline's house."

"Nobody suspects you of any participation in the inmost counsels of the party. But our great men surmise that you are among those whom he has bribed so high with beauty, or entangled so deeply in distress, that they are no longer their own masters. I shall never set foot within his threshold again. I have been solemnly warned by men who understand public affairs; and I advise you to be cautious."

The friends had now turned into the forum, which was thronged with the gay and elegant youth of Rome. "I can tell

Rumours of
conspiracy.

Suspicious of
Catiline.

Caution
advised.

you more," continued Flaminius; "somebody was remarking to the Consul yesterday how loosely a certain

A loose girdle. acquaintance of ours tied his girdle. 'Let him look to himself,' said Cicero, 'or the state may find a tighter girdle for his neck.'

"Good gods! who is it? You cannot surely mean——"

"There he is."

Flaminius pointed to a man who was pacing up and down the forum at a little distance from them. He was in the prime of manhood. His personal advantages were extremely striking, and were displayed with an extravagant but not ungraceful foppery. His gown waved in loose folds; his long dark curls were dressed with exquisite art, and shone and streamed with odours; his step and gesture exhibited an elegant and commanding figure in every posture of polite languor. But his countenance formed a singular contrast to the general appearance of his person. The high and

A Roman dandy.

imperial brow, the keen aquiline features, the compressed mouth, the penetrating eye, indicated the highest degree of ability and decision. He seemed absorbed in intense meditation. With eyes fixed on the ground, and lips working in thought, he sauntered round the arena, apparently unconscious how many of the young gallants of Rome were envying the taste of his dress, and the ease of his fashionable stagger.

"Good Heaven!" said Ligarius, "Caius Cæsar is as unlikely to be in a plot as I am."

"Not at all."

"He does nothing but game, feast, intrigue, read Greek, and write verses."

"You know nothing of Cæsar. Though he rarely addresses the Senate, he is considered as the finest speaker there, after the Consul. His influence

Caius Cæsar. with the multitude is immense. He will serve his rivals in public life as he served me last night at Catiline's. We were playing at the twelve lines.*—Immense stakes. He laughed all the time, chatted with Valeria over his shoulder, kissed her hand between every two moves, and scarcely looked at the board. I thought that I had him. All

* *Duodecim scripta*, a game of mixed chance and skill, which seems to have been very fashionable in the higher circles of Rome. The famous lawyer Mucius was renowned for his skill in it.—(Cic. *Orat.* 1, 50.)

at once I found my counters driven into the corner. Not a piece to move, by Hercules. It cost me two millions of sesterces. All the gods and goddesses confound him for it!"

"As to Valeria," said Ligarius, "I forgot to ask whether you have heard the news."

"Not a word. What?"

"I was told at the baths to-day that Cæsar escorted the lady home. Unfortunately old Quintus Lutatius had come back from his villa in Campania, in a whim of

A scandal.

jealousy. He was not expected for three days. There was a fine tumult. The old fool called for his sword and his slaves, cursed his wife, and swore that he would cut Cæsar's throat."

"And Cæsar?"

"He laughed, quoted Anacreon, trussed his gown round his left arm, closed with Quintus, flung him down, twisted his sword out of his hand, burst through the attendants, ran a freed-man through the shoulder, and was in the street in an instant."

Quintus disarmed.

"Well done! Here he comes. Good-day, Caius."

Cæsar lifted his head at the salutation. His air of deep abstraction vanished; and he extended a hand to each of the friends.

"How are you after your last night's exploit?"

"As well as possible," said Cæsar, laughing.

"In truth we should rather ask how Quintus Lutatius is."

"He, I understand, is as well as can be expected of a man with a faithless spouse and a broken head. His freed-man is most seriously hurt. Poor fellow! he

The successful rival.

shall have half of whatever I win to-night. Flaminius, you shall have your revenge at Catiline's."

"You are very kind. I do not intend to be at Catiline's till I wish to part with my town-house. My villa is gone already."

"Not at Catiline's, base spirit! You are not of his mind, my gallant Ligarius. Dice, Chian, and the loveliest Greek singing girl that was ever seen. Think of that, Ligarius. By Venus, she almost made

The Greek language.

me adore her, by telling me that I talked Greek with the most Attic accent that she had heard in Italy."

"I doubt she will not say the same of

me," replied Ligarius. "I am just as able to decipher an obelisk as to read a line of Homer."

"You barbarous Scythian, who had the care of your education?"

"An old fool,—a Greek pedant,—a Stoic. He told me that pain was no evil, and flogged me as if he thought so. At last one day, in the middle of a lecture, I set fire to his enormous filthy beard, singed his face, and sent him roaring out of the house. There ended my studies. From that time to this I have had as little to do with Greece as the wine that your poor old fool friend Lutatius calls his delicious Samian."

"Well done, Ligarius. I hate a Stoic. I wish Marcus Cato had a beard, that you might singe it for him. The fool talked his two hours in the Senate yesterday, without changing a muscle of his face. He looked as savage and as motionless as the mask in which Roscius acted Alecto. I detest everything connected with him."

Servilla. "Except his sister, Servilla."

"True. She is a lovely woman."

"They say that you have told her so, Caius."

"So I have."

"And that she was not angry."

"What woman is?"

"Aye—but they say——"

"No matter what they say. Common fame lies like a Greek rhetorician. You might know so much, Ligarius, without reading the philosophers. But come, I will introduce you to little dark-eyed Zoe."

"I tell you I can speak no Greek."

"More shame for you. It is high time that you should begin. You will never have such a charming instructress. Of what was your father thinking when he sent for an old Stoic with a long beard to teach you? There is no language-mistress like a handsome woman. When I was at Athens, I learnt more Greek from a pretty flower-girl in the Peiræus than from the Portico and the Academy. She was no Stoic, Heaven knows. But come along to Zoe. I will be your interpreter. Woo her in honest Latin, and I will turn it into elegant Greek between the throws of dice. I can make love and mind my game at once, as Flaminius can tell you."

"Well, then, to be plain, Cæsar, Flaminius has been talking to me about plots, and suspicions, and politicians. I never

plagued myself with such things since Sylla's and Marius's days; and then I never could see much difference between the parties. All that I am sure of is, that those who meddle with such affairs are generally stabbed or strangled. And, though I like Greek wine and handsome women, I Prudence. do not wish to risk my neck for them. Now, tell me as a friend, Caius—is there no danger?"

"Danger!" repeated Cæsar, with a short, fierce, disdainful laugh; "what danger do you apprehend?"

"That you should best know," said Flaminius; "you are far more intimate with Catiline than I. But I advise you to be cautious. The leading men entertain strong suspicions."

Cæsar drew up his figure from its ordinary state of graceful relaxation into an attitude of commanding dignity, and replied in a voice of which the deep and impassioned melody formed a strange contrast to the humorous and affected tone of his ordinary conversation. "Let them suspect. They suspect because they know what they have deserved. What have they Dangerous language. done for Rome?—what

for mankind? Ask the citizens—ask the provinces. Have they had any other object than to perpetuate their own exclusive power, and to keep us under the yoke of an oligarchical tyranny, which unites in itself the worst evils of every other system, and combines more than Athenian turbulence with more than Persian despotism?"

"Good gods! Cæsar. It is not safe for you to speak, or for us to listen to, such things, at such a crisis."

"Judge for yourselves what you will hear. I will judge for myself what I will speak. I was not twenty years old when I defied Lucius Sylla, surrounded by the spears of legionaries, and the daggers of assassins. Do you suppose that I stand in awe of his paltry successors, who have inherited a power which they never could have acquired; who would imitate his proscriptions, though they have never equalled his conquests?"

"Pompey is almost as little to be trifled with as Sylla. I heard a consular senator say that, in consequence of the present alarming state of affairs, Pompey and Sylla. he would probably be recalled from the command assigned to him by the Manilian law."

"Let him come,—the pupil of Sylla's butcheries,—the gleaner of Lucullus's trophies,—the thief-taker of the Senate."

"For heaven's sake, Caius!—if you knew what the Counsel said——"

"Something about himself, no doubt. Pity that such talents should be coupled with such cowardice and coxcombry. He is the finest speaker living,—infinitely superior to what Hortensius was, in his best days;—a charming companion, except when he tells over for the twentieth time all the jokes that he made at Verres's trial. But he is the despicable tool of a despicable party."

"Your language, Caius, convinces me that the reports which have been circulated are not without foundation. I will venture to prophesy that within a few months the republic will pass through a whole Odyssey of strange adventures."

"I believe so; an Odyssey, of which Pompey will be the Polyphemus, and Cicero the Syren. I would have the state imitate Ulysses,—show no mercy to the former; but contrive, if it can be done, to listen to the enchanting voice of the other, without being seduced by it to destruction."

"But whom can your party produce as rivals to these two famous leaders?"

"Time will show. I would hope that there may arise a man whose genius to conquer, to conciliate, and to govern may unite in one cause an oppressed and divided people; may do all that Sylla should have done, and exhibit the magnificent spectacle of a great nation directed by a great mind."

"And where is such a man to be found?"

"Perhaps where you would least expect to find him. Perhaps he may be one whose powers have hitherto been concealed in domestic or literary retirement. Perhaps he may be one, who, while waiting for some adequate excitement, for some worthy opportunity, squanders or trifles a genius before which may yet be humbled the sword of Pompey and the gown of Cicero. Perhaps he may now be disputing with a sophist; perhaps prattling with a mistress; perhaps——" and, as he spoke, he turned away, and resumed his lounge, "strolling in the Forum."

* * * * *

It was almost midnight. The party had separated. Catiline and Cethegus were still conferring in the supper-room,

which was, as usual, the highest apartment of the house. It formed a cupola, from which windows opened on the flat roof that surrounded it. To this terrace Zoe had retired. With

Zoe.

eyes dimmed with fond and melancholy tears, she leaned over the balustrade, to catch the last glimpse of the departing form of Cæsar, as it grew more and more indistinct in the moonlight. Had he any thought of her? Any love for her? He, the favourite of the high-born beauties of Rome, the most splendid, the most graceful, the most eloquent of its nobles? It could not be. His voice had, indeed, been touchingly soft whenever he addressed her. There had been a fascinating tenderness even in the veracity of his look and conversation. But such were always the manners of Cæsar towards women.

Caius Cæsar and women.

He had wreathed a sprig of myrtle in her hair as she was singing. She took it from her dark ringlets, and kissed it, and wept over it, and thought of the sweet legends of her own dear Greece,—of youths and girls, who, pining away in hopeless love, had been transformed into flowers by the compassion of the gods; and she wished to become a flower, which Cæsar might sometimes touch, though he should touch it only to weave a crown for some prouder and happier mistress.

She was roused from her musings by the loud step and voice of Cethegus, who was pacing furiously up and down the supper-room.

"May all the gods confound me, if Cæsar be not the deepest traitor, or the most miserable idiot, that ever inter-meddled with a plot!"

Zoe shuddered. She drew nearer to the window. She stood concealed from observation by the curtain of fine network, which hung over the aperture, to exclude the annoying insects of the climate.

"And you too!" continued Cethegus, turning fiercely on his accomplice; "you to take his part against me!—you, who proposed the scheme yourself!"

"My dear Caius Cethegus, you will not understand me. I proposed the scheme; and I will join in executing it. But policy is as necessary to our plan as boldness. I did not wish to startle Cæsar—to lose his co-operation—perhaps to send him off with an information against us to Cicero and Catullus. He was so indignant at your suggestion that all

my dissimulation was scarcely sufficient to prevent a total rupture."

"Indignant! The gods confound him! —he prated about humanity, and generosity, and moderation. By Hercules, I have not heard such a lecture since I was with Xenochares at Rhodes."

"Cæsar is made up of inconsistencies. He has boundless ambition, unquestioned courage, admirable sagacity. Yet I have frequently observed in him a womanish weakness at the sight of pain. I remember that once one of his slaves was taken ill while carrying his litter. He alighted, put the fellow in his place and walked home in a fall of snow. I wonder that you could be so ill-advised as to talk to him of massacre, and pillage, and conflagration. You might have foreseen that such propositions would disgust a man of his temper."

"I do not know. I have not your self-command, Lucius. I hate such conspirators. What is the use of them? We must have blood—blood—hacking and tearing work—bloody work!"

"Do not grind your teeth, my dear Caius; and lay down the carving-knife. By Hercules, you have cut up all the stuffing of the couch."

"No matter; we shall have couches enough soon,—and down to stuff them with,—and purple to cover them,—and pretty women to loll on them,—unless this fool, and such as he, spoil our plans. I had something else to say. The essenced fop wishes to seduce Zoe from me."

"Impossible! You cannot misconstrue the ordinary gallantries which he is in the habit of paying to every handsome face."

"Curse on his ordinary gallantries, and his verses, and his compliments, and his sprigs of myrtle! If Cæsar should dare—by Hercules, I will tear him to pieces in the middle of the Forum."

"Trust his destruction to me. We must use his talents and influence—thrust him upon every danger—make him our instrument while we are contending—our peace-offering to the Senate if we fail—our first victim if we succeed."

"Hark! what noise was that?"

"Somebody in the terrace!—lend me your dagger."

Catiline rushed to the window. Zoe was standing in the shade. He stepped

out. She darted into the room—passed like a flash of lightning by the startled Cathegus—flew down the stairs—through the court —through the vestibule—through the street. Steps, voices, lights, came fast and confusedly behind her; but with the speed of love and terror she gained upon her pursuers. She fled through the wilderness of unknown and dusky streets, till she found herself, breathless and exhausted, in the midst of a crowd of gallants, who, with chaplets on their heads and torches in their hands, were reeling from the portico of a stately mansion.

The foremost of the throng was a youth whose slender figure and beautiful countenance seemed hardly consistent with his sex. But the feminine delicacy of his features rendered more frightful the mingled sensuality and ferocity of their expression. The libertine audacity of his stare, and the grotesque foppery of his apparel, seemed to indicate at least a partial insanity. Flinging one arm round Zoe, and tearing away her veil with the other, he disclosed to the gaze of his thronging companions the regular features and large dark eyes which characterize Athenian beauty.

"Clodius has all the luck to-night," cried Ligarius.

"Not so, by Hercules," said Marcus Cælius; "the girl is fairly our common prize: we will fling dice for her. The Venus* throw, as it ought to do, shall decide."

"Let me go—let me go, for Heaven's sake," cried Zoe, struggling with Clodius.

"What a charming Greek accent she has! Come into the house, my little Athenian night-
ingale." Insulted.

"Oh! what will become of me? If you have mothers—if you have sisters——"

"Clodius has a sister," muttered Ligarius, "or he is much belied."

"By Heaven, she is weeping," said Clodius.

"If she were not evidently a Greek, said Cælius, "I should take her for a vestal virgin."

"And if she were a vestal virgin," cried Clodius, fiercely, "it should not deter me. This way;—no struggling—no screaming."

"Struggling! screaming!" exclaimed

* Venus was the Roman term for the highest throw on the dice.

a gay and commanding voice; "you are making very ungentle love, Clodius."

The whole party started. Cæsar had mingled with them unperceived.

The sound of his voice thrilled through the very heart of Zoe. With a convulsive effort, she burst from the grasp of her

Saved by insolent admirer, flung herself at the feet of Cæsar, and clasped his knees. The

moon shone full on her agitated and imploring face; her lips moved: but she uttered no sound. He gazed at her for an instant—raised her—clasped her to his bosom. "Fear nothing, my sweet Zoe." Then, with folded arms, and a smile of placid defiance, he placed himself between her and Clodius.

Clodius staggered forward, flushed with wine and rage, and uttering alternately a curse and a hiccup.

"By Pollux, this passes a jest. Cæsar, how dare you insult me thus?"

"A jest! I am as serious as a Jew on the Sabbath. Insult you. For such a pair of eyes I would insult the whole consular bench, or I should be as insensible as King Psammis's mummy."

"Good gods, Cæsar!" said Marcus Cœlius, interposing; "you cannot think it worth while to get into a brawl for a little Greek girl!"

"Why not? The Greek girls have used me as well as those of Rome. Besides, the whole reputation of my gallantry is at stake. Give up such a lovely woman to that drunken boy! My character would be gone for ever. No more perfumed tablets, full of vows and raptures. No more toying with fingers at the circus. No more evening walks along the Tiber. No more hiding in chests or jumping from windows. I, the favoured suitor of half the white stoles in Rome, could never again aspire above a freed-woman. You a man of gallantry, and think of such a thing! For shame, my dear Cœlius! Do not let Clodia hear of it."

While Cæsar spoke he had been engaged in keeping Clodius at arm's length. The rage of the frantic libertine increased as the struggle continued. "Stand back, as you value your life," he cried; "I will pass."

"Not this way, sweet Clodius. I have too much regard for you to suffer you to make love at such disadvantage. You smell too much of Falernian at present. Would you stifle your mistress? By

Hercules, you are fit to kiss nobody now, except old Piso, when he is tumbling home in the morning from the vintners."*

Clodius plunged his hand into the bosom and drew a little dagger, the faithful companion of many desperate adventures.

"Oh, gods! he will be murdered!" cried Zoe.

The whole throng of revellers was in agitation. The street fluctuated with torches and lifted hands. It was but for a moment. Clodius

Cæsar watched with a steady eye the descending hand of Clodius, arrested the blow, seized his antagonist by the throat, and flung him against one of the pillars of the portico with such violence that he rolled, stunned and senseless, on the ground.

"He is killed," cried several voices.

"Fair self-defence, by Hercules!" said Marcus Cœlius. "Bear witness, you all saw him draw his dagger."

"He is not dead—he breathes," said Ligarius, "Carry him into the house; he is dreadfully bruised."

The rest of the party retired with Clodius. Cœlius turned to Cæsar.

"By all the gods, Caius! you have won your lady fairly. A splendid victory! You deserve a triumph."

"What a madman Clodius has become!"

"Intolerable. But come and sup with me on the Nones. You have no objection to meet the Consul?"

"Cicero? None at all. We need not talk politics. Our old dispute about Plato and Epicurus will furnish us with plenty of conversation. So reckon upon me, my dear Marcus, and farewell."

Cæsar and Zoe turned away. As soon as they were beyond hearing, she began in great agitation,—

"Cæsar, you are in danger. I know all. I overheard Catiline and Cethegus. You are engaged in a project which must lead to certain destruction."

"My beautiful Zoe, I live only for glory and pleasure. For these I have never hesitated to hazard an existence which they alone render valuable to me. In the present case, I can assure you that our scheme presents the fairest hopes of success."

"So much the worse. You do not know—you do not understand me. I speak not of open peril, but of secret

* Cic. in Pis.

treachery. Catiline hates you;—Cæthegus hates you;—your destruction is resolved. If you survive the contest, you perish in the first hour of victory. They detest you for your moderation; they are eager for blood and plunder. I have risked my life to bring you this warning; but that is of little moment. Farewell!—Be happy.”

Cæsar stopped her. “Do you fly from my thanks, dear Zoe?”

“I wish not for your thanks, but for your safety;—I desire not to defraud Valeria or Servilia of one caress, extorted from gratitude or pity. Be my feelings what they may, I have learned in a fearful school to endure and suppress them. I have been taught to abuse a proud spirit to the claps and hisses of the vulgar;—to smile on suitors who united the insults of a despicable pride to the endearments of a loathsome fondness;—to affect sprightliness with an aching head, and eyes from which tears were ready to gush;—to feign love with curses on my lips, and madness in my brain. Who feels for me any esteem, any tenderness? Who will shed a tear over the nameless grave which will soon shelter from cruelty and scorn the broken heart of the poor Athenian girl? But you, who alone have addressed her in her degradation with a voice of kindness and respect, farewell. Sometimes think of me,—not with sorrow;—no; I could bear your ingratitude, but not your distress. Yet if it will not pain you too much, in distant days, when your lofty hopes and destinies are accomplished,—on the evening of some mighty victory,—in the chariot of some magnificent triumph,—

think on one who loved
Unselfish love. you with that exceeding love which only the miserable can feel. Think that, wherever her exhausted frame may have sunk beneath the sensibilities of a tortured spirit,—in whatever hovel or whatever vault she may have closed her eyes,—whatever strange scenes of horror and pollution may have surrounded her dying bed, your shape was the last that swam before her sight—your voice the last that was ringing in her ears. Yet turn your face to me, Cæsar. Let me carry away one last look of those features, and then——” He turned round. He looked at her. He hid his face on her bosom, and burst into tears. With sobs long and loud, and conclusive as those of a terrified child, he poured forth on her bosom the tribute of im-

petuous and uncontrollable emotion. He raised his head; but he in vain struggled to restore composure to the brow which had confronted the frown of Sylla, and the lips which had rivalled the eloquence of Cicero. He several times attempted to speak, but in vain; and his voice faltered with tenderness, when, after a pause of several minutes, he thus addressed her,—

“My own dear Zoe, your love has been bestowed on one who, if he cannot merit, can at least appreciate and adore you. Beings **Cæsar won.** of similar loveliness and similar devotedness of affection mingled, in all my boyish dreams of greatness, with visions of curule chairs and ivory cars, marshalled legions and laurelled fasces. Such I have endeavoured to find in the world; and, in their stead, I have met with selfishness, with vanity, with frivolity, with falsehood. The life which you have preserved is a boon less valuable than the affection——”

“Oh! Cæsar,” interrupted the blushing Zoe, “think only on your own security at present. If you feel as you speak,—but you are only mocking me,—or perhaps your compassion——”

“By Heaven!—by every oath that is binding——”

“Alas! alas! Cæsar, were not all the same oaths sworn yesterday to Valeria? But I will trust you, at least so far as to partake your present dangers. Flight may be necessary:—from your plans. Be they what they may, there is one who, in exile, in poverty, in peril, asks only to wander, to beg, to die with you.”

“My Zoe, I do not anticipate any such necessity. To renounce the conspiracy without renouncing the principles on which it was originally undertaken,—to elude the vengeance of the Senate without losing the confidence of the people,—is, indeed, an arduous, but not an impossible, task. I owe it to myself and to my country to make the attempt. There is still ample time for consideration. At present I am too happy in love to think of ambition or danger.”

They had reached the door of a stately palace. Cæsar struck it. It was instantly opened by a slave. Zoe found herself in a magnificent hall, surrounded by pillars of green marble, between which were ranged the statues of the long line of Julian nobles.

“Call Endymion,” said Cæsar.

The confidential freed-man made his appearance, not without a slight smile, which his patron's good nature emboldened him to hazard, at perceiving the beautiful Athenian.

"Arm my slaves, Endymion; there are reasons for precaution. Let them relieve each other on guard during the night. Zoe, my love, my preserver, why

are your cheeks so pale? Let me kiss some bloom into them. How you tremble! Endymion, a flask of Samian and some fruit. Bring them to my apartments. This way, my sweet Zoe."

Precaution
taken.

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ON WEST INDIAN SLAVERY.

(KNIGHT'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, JUNE, 1823.)

WE espouse no party. Zadig himself did not listen to the miserable controversy between Zoroaster and his griffins with more composure and impartiality than we hope to employ on most of the subjects which interest politicians. We

are neutrals — neutrals after San Miguel's own heart—desirous only to mitigate the evils which we cannot avert. If we ever descend into the field of battle, it will be with the feelings not of combatants but of Sisters of Charity. It will be our object, not to fight under the banners of either army, but to render the offices of humanity and courtesy to both.

On the question, however, which we are about to discuss, we think we may,

without inconsistency,
Question of slavery.

take a decided part. It is a question which does

not promote the objects, or rest upon the support of any faction. It is a question which has united men of all sects and parties ; which has combined Tories with Reformers, and Prelates with Field Preachers ; above all, it is a question which involves the interests of the most miserable and degraded race which ever existed in a civilized community. On all these grounds we shall, without hesitation, lend our strongest support to those principles of humanity and justice, which alone can constitute the substantial prosperity of states, and the durable glory of statesmen.

Sixteen years have elapsed since the abolition of the slave trade. During that

period, the friends of
Abolition of slave trade.

humanity and freedom have anxiously looked for

some alteration in the system of colonial bondage. It might have been supposed that the improvements which could not be expected from the mercy of the planter, would be at length produced by his cupidity, and that the cessation of the traffic in human flesh and blood, as it increased the value, would also increase

the comforts of the slave. It might, at least, have been imagined, that the planters would for the future abstain from all practices that might tend to diminish the number of those whom they could no longer replace by fresh importations. It is surely time to inquire whether those expectations have been fulfilled, or whether the abuses of our colonial system have become too deeply seated to be eradicated, even by the avarice which created them.

What, then, is the present state of the negroes in our West Indian Islands ?

They are compelled to labour without remuneration. Their master has the sole power of determining the nature, the degree, and the duration of their labour, and the amount of the pittance which is to prolong their wretched and hopeless existence.

They can acquire no property of any description. Whatever their own labour may produce, whatever the bounty of others may bestow, belongs to their master.

They may be sold at the pleasure of their owner, or at the suit of his creditors. The colonial codes consider them merely as the personal property of the planter ; who is, in consequence, always permitted, and often commanded, to separate them from all with whom they are connected by the ties of blood or friendship. As often as a blank is drawn in the precarious lottery of the West Indian sugar trade, this horrible transfer takes place. The nearest relatives, the dearest friends, are for ever torn asunder ; and the law itself interferes, to turn into the bitterness of death, the last consolation which the charities of human nature afford to the last extreme of human misery.

The slave can appeal to no court of law. He can bring no action. He can undertake no prosecution. He can bear no testimony against a white offender.

Present state
of negroes.

The law takes no cognizance of any crime perpetrated by a free person, unless it

Free persons
in the West
Indies. can be proved by the evidence of free witnesses. And in these colonies, be it remembered, the free

inhabitants form so small a proportion of the population, that such evidence can rarely be procured.

The person of the slave is almost wholly in the power of his master. He works under the lash. He is driven forward like a horse, scourged if he comes too late, scourged if he fall behind the line of his fellows. There is no exemption for the women, too often the sport of an unmanly cruelty, and an unrefined desire. Age, weakness, sickness, pregnancy, are excuses the overseer accepts or rejects at pleasure. The law universally recognizes the power to punish his bondsmen with the cart-whip or the stocks. From extreme outrage, from mutilation, and murder, it does, indeed, accord to these human chattels a nominal protection. But of what avail is this privilege? Neither the injured negro, nor any of his companions in servitude,

Courts of
justice.

can appear in a court of justice. A white prosecutor and white witness must be procured. Let us suppose all these difficulties surmounted; others more formidable still remain. Tyranny, when driven from the outworks with which the law surrounds her, takes refuge within the more impregnable rampart of depraved feelings and manners. The criminal is to be tried before men who, as the colleagues of his inordinate power, are not disposed to look with severity on its abuse, and who are generally prepossessed in his favour, by community of interest or of guilt.

The strength of this defensive league of oppression is best illustrated by examples. It is not long since the grand jury of one of the islands regarded the Governor as a nuisance, and this intolerable insult was offered to the representative of the king, to a most estimable man, (who has uniformly been mentioned with respect by persons of all opinions in England), solely because he interfered on behalf of some oppressed female slaves.

Hodge of
Tartola.

The case of Hodge of Tartola is sufficiently remarkable to become a concise recapitulation. That man put a slave to death with circumstances of hideous and ineffable cruelty. He con-

tinued after this event to mingle in society, without calling forth, as it appears, any strong expression of public detestation. A private quarrel induced some person to bring the case forward. It was proved by overwhelming evidence, that he had committed a murder as wanton and barbarous, we will venture to say, as any recorded in the annals of criminal jurisprudence. To acquit him was impossible. The jury recommended him to mercy. The Governor refused to listen to the recommendation. In England, it would have been difficult to protect such a monster against the rage of the people during his passage from the bar to the prison. But so deeply did the colonists resent the execution of one of their own body for so venial a trespass that it became necessary to proclaim martial law, in order to prevent a tumult and a rescue.

We will advert to one other case. A wretch named Huggins, in the public market-place of Nevis, ordered several negroes to be flogged with a barbarity which ruined the health of all; it was supposed to have occasioned the death of one of them. A pregnant woman was among the number; and that nothing might be wanting to this horrid outrage against human nature, the horrible office was performed by the brother of one of the sufferers. The law of the island assigns a limit to the number of lashes which a master may inflict at one time. This limit Huggins had far exceeded. He was brought to trial. The crime had been committed in open day—in the most public place in the colony. The defence was rested upon this principle, that the law had been passed solely to silence the clamours of the fanatics in England; that it was never meant to be obeyed, and that it would be unjust and impolitic to punish the violation of it. Huggins was acquitted; and probably while we are writing this narrative of his former exploits, he may be employed in flogging another slave to death.

But we will not multiply anecdotes of this painful description. We might, God knows, fill volumes with narratives of West Indian cruelty and injustice. It is sufficient to observe, that, where the greatest crimes so often elude justice, it must be easy to inflict, with impunity, every petty suffering and privation.

The condition of servitude in our colonies is perpetual. The master cannot