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L E T T E R S

O N

EXCESSIVE TAXATION.

F R O M

PHILANTHROPHIST,

To His Royal Highness

GEORGE Prince of WALES,

The Right Honourable

W I L L I A M P I T T,

FIRST LORD of the TREASURY,

A N D

Chancellor of his Majesty's EXCHEQUER;

A N D

SEVERAL OTHER NOBLEMEN OF

The First Distinction:

W I T H

An ADDRESS to the PEOPLE of
G R E A T - B R I T A I N.

*You take my HOUSE when you do take the PROP
That doth sustain my HOUSE—You take my LIFE
When you do take the MEANS, whereby I live.*

SHAKESPEAR.

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L O N D O N :

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Country.

M,DCC,LXXXV.

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A N
A D D R E S S

To the P E O P L E of
G R E A T - B R I T A I N .

Gentlemen and Fellow Countrymen,

P E R H A P S there never was a period since the existence of your country that required the exercise of genius, and the exertion of abilities more than at this juncture; was it not a matter of the highest consequence to your future happiness and prosperity as a people, I should conceive this an unwarrantable liberty: but as we are all so materially interested in the removal of a burthen too ponderous to be borne, that if some speedy remedy is not applied it must inevitably crush you as a flourishing nation, when your best efforts shall cease to furnish the means of existence, and despair and
B indigence

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indigence be the constant companions in our dwellings, where gloomy horrors, and the most anxious cares shall supplant that hospitality and good faith that only renders life worthy your notice.

To take a retrospective view of the sufferings of this country for near twenty years past, through a want of sound policy and able financing, is too shocking to relate, its melancholy recital I shall at present pass over, and only look forward to redemption, which I have with some pains and assiduity discovered, and will answer for its effectually relieving you, or I should tacitly bear with fortitude and resignation the oppression, and consider myself highly culpable in addressing you.

If to possess the principles of philanthropy, and a zealous attachment to your country can be construed a crime, I stand in the predicament of reprehension and persecution, which the best intentions too often suffer; be that as it may, I shall not experience much worse than I have already, confident of the justness and necessity of the cause in which I engage, I willingly hazard all, and, regardless of any consequence, embark a volunteer in your service.

Whether I have your protection or not in the accomplishment of this great business, which is of more real importance than any proposition ever yet made you, I shall study to deserve it, and use my best endeavours for its attainment; if I have plan'd with some care, circumspection, and ingenuity, a measure that will remove the
accumulated

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accumulated evils that surround you, and dispel that load of anxiety that such excessive taxation must entail on you, which I am well convinced is beyond your ability, and was the only inducement that led me to the means of alleviation, and to draw from your haunted houses those dunning tax collectors, or at least to lessen their demands, so as to render it tolerable.

If I am patronised by you I will bind myself, under the severest penalty, to find resources that shall remove every obnoxious tax, diminish the enormous debt, and establish a system that will prevent in future its accumulation, even in war. Incredible as this may appear, I will answer for its success; I neither require honor or emolument, I only ask your support; my presumption in attempting to remove an evil of such magnitude will, no doubt, be treated with scorn and derision by every pedant witling, and modern financier, who have hitherto rack'd their brains to draw the wealth of the nation into the coffers of state, regardless of any consequence or distress they may bring on the people, whose importance to the nation they seem not to consider. They attempt to heal an ignoble part, and leave a sting behind that throws the vitals into a rapid decline; superficial in their judgment and experience, they consult but the present moment, like an unskilful physician, applying violent antidotes, which instead of eradicating renders the disease incurable: in fact all their measures have been futile, and their taxes rapacious; they have

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only served to increase your burden. As they never contributed to your relief, but some have added to your misery, they are by no means intitled to your attention; I am aware of their attacks; as to me, they will throw their shafts in vain, mercenary hirelings or malignant assassins are beneath my notice; my intentions and my conscience render me invulnerable. I am indifferent to every thing but my God, my country, and the duty I owe my fellow creatures. Their faculties are too often prostituted to explain away truth, reason, and the rights of mankind.—I caution you, believe them not, but conjure you by all that is good and sacred not to let this opportunity pass away unnoticed, but embrace the critical moment with unanimity and manly firmness, and you will soon be convinced of its practicability: You are to a man interested in the great cause, your country, yourselves, and your posterity demands your lawful exertions, nor shall any measure of mine lead you from your duty to your sovereign, and the laws of your country; my plan requires not the smallest offence to the laws or constitution: I would not solicit your protection if it was not in strict conformity to every duty you owe your country as good subjects. As the general good of the whole kingdom is consulted in this plan, I cannot but think it claims your attention and support; if you neglect this opportunity to stop the growing evil, a very short time will demonstrate the ill consequence, when poverty, famine, and its threadbare attendants will be your poor, but only,

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only, consolation: Then may you seek in vain—the day is past—you sink to rise no more—the precariousness in the means of existence will impede matrimony, your men may become mendicants or worse, your women prostitutes, or pine away in misery; or, like dejected Israelites, scattered here and there in other countries seeking for refuge; the fallacy of the present mode of taxation beggars all description; the Housekeepers in trade (which are by far the majority) are by the commutation bill and shop tax loaded beyond their ability: but what is still more absurd and ridiculous, the tax on women servants, whom they are rendering you incapable to keep. To find language that would draw a just picture of the weakness, impolicy, futility, and ill consequences that must accompany so fatal a system, would fill a volume too tedious for you to peruse. To avoid prolixity, I have given you as brief a description as possible, considering the enlightened people I am addressing, I conceive a hint sufficient; as a lawful and constitutional remedy will be put in your hands, if you omit to embrace it, its failure can only be attributed to your timid supineness and instability; which, should you descend to, you after this have not the smallest cause of complaint, but must with resignation seal your fate, and with it the glory of the empire.

My faith and confidence of success you will see in my letters to the minister, by the penalty I am ready to suffer on non-performance, if I am supported; nor will that support be attended with

with any difficulty or consequence worthy of mention; since nothing is required of you but what is lawful, just, and reasonable, devoid of evil, or leading you into inconveniency, you are enjoined to pay some respect to this admonition.

I shall therefore leave you to judge within yourselves, which is most reasonable or advantageous, either to remain in a situation equal to the servilest beast of burthen, or be what your Creator intended you—MEN—to command brutes—not to abuse the power you have over them—your present burthens will teach you a sympathetic lesson how to treat them. It is here submitted to your determination, whether you will, or will not, be eased of your burthen; on which depends the patronage or suppression of my endeavours. I have only to hope you will judge me according to my intentions; since my justification or condemnation rest on an impartial and generous public, I am perfectly resigned to their decision, be it what it will.

I must beg leave to remind you, the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; nor are the great and learned the most ingenious. I am sorry to say their lofty ideas too often carry them beyond what would render them more intelligent; there is a certain pride and self-sufficiency inhabits some men, who would rather a whole kingdom should fall than give countenance to a measure they are not the projectors of: Like Jonah by Nineveh, who would rather threescore thousand people should have

have perished, than his credit as a prophet should have failed; remember he is called the type of Christ: We may have men at the helm equally perfect, yet they are but meer men, and may inherit his depravities; nor do I mean to insinuate infallibility, yet if I succeed in obtaining your protection, I shall do you much good, if not, I will do you no injury. My plan is not tinged with any thing obnoxious; it is safe and eligible: which urges me to an earnest solicitation for your confidence and support in the prosecution of it, as it will remove that languor which is the dearth of trade, give eclat to your manufactories, enable you to send your goods to foreign markets at a price that will rival other nations, give a spur to emulation in your executive capacity, which you already excel in, and be the only means of ascertaining your greatness as a kingdom; since every thing that is desirable will derive from your concurrence and protection, I have only to hope for your countenance and support, as long as I may be found worthy of it.

I must beg leave to advise you to select one man out of every county, of the greatest honor and property, and such as you can place confidence in, when I will lay the plan before them, convince them of its practicability, and prove to a certainty its answering all the purposes described in this Address to you. By pursuing this method I am confident you cannot fail of success, as it will give you a union of strength, wealth, consequence, and stability equal to the task, which I will make easy, safe, and clear to them.

them. I will take the laborious part, and devote every moment of my existence to its prosecution and accomplishment; I would abstemiously live, and intensely labour; there is not any wordly pleasure or ease I would not sacrifice to its attainment, so confident am I of rising superior to every difficulty, and materially benefitting every gentleman's estate in the kingdom, particularly those whose fortunes consist in houses; what an object would the removal of the shop tax and commutation bill be to them, those taxes being so very excessive, they are nearly a second house rent! can you expect your tenants to pay you while you are thus burthened? Does it not too clearly demonstrate that a momentary production hath been preferred to the sacrificing of the people? Shall I not hope for your support in so essential a matter? Which, should you honor me with, I will pledge my life and every thing that is dear for its performance: a moments reflection will tell you, you are bound by every duty that should do credit to you as human beings, your own immediate interest, your childrens and your countrys: sure you will not be deaf to a measure that so nearly concerns you, as it is strictly consistent with the laws and constitution, and requires not an act of parliament; you are competent to establish it, as it is calculated to remove the greatest national evil this country ever experienced: this being the intention, you will most naturally have the approbation of the king, parliament, and every one who are not professed enemies to this kingdom: I
appeal

appeal to your candour and good sense, whether the reduction of a debt that will swallow up all your property and reduce you to extreme indigence (which the present mode of taxation cannot fail to effect) is not of all things the most worthy of your serious attention, and claims the exertions of your most vigorous efforts. If you will act in this very important business, becoming what you ever have been, a brave, loyal, discerning and indefatigable people, you may not doubt accomplishing a speedy relief, and acquire what after-ages will view with the highest respect and veneration; as it will establish the most permanent system, be a tower of strength against your enemies, and an everlasting monument of fame to yourselves, by which you will secure that liberty indigence would impair.

If you should disapprove chusing one out of every county, I will point out a certain number of noblemen and gentlemen, who shall answer every requisite in facilitating this plan, (should they be inclined thus far to serve you) I flatter myself we are not so barren of real patriots, but that we shall find a sufficient number ready to stand forth the saviours of their country; the gentlemen I have addressed I conceive competent to this business, the letters to whom you will see annexed to this address, as to the choice of them, your superior wisdom will direct you. I shall therefore leave you a short time to contemplate on this subject, and most humbly exhort you to be as expeditious as possible; I shall be always ready
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to attend whomever you shall appoint to lay the plan before, and must intreat you to excuse its being given here, as I have very particular reasons for it, and such as will fully satisfy you hereafter. I conclude with my most fervent prayers for your speedy and unanimous determination in a measure wherein you are all of you so materially interested, and am,

GENTLEMEN,

And Fellow Countrymen,

Yours to command,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

My Address will be
at the Publishers,
and, by a Line, attended to.

N. B. It cannot injure you to enquire into the merits of this proposition, by appointing proper people to attend me; if my advice is adhered to, I will engage to accomplish every thing that could reasonably be wished for, respecting the debt and taxes; you shall not find me shrink from my proposal to you at the expence of my life. Since an offer is made you consistent with the laws and constitution, devoid of sordid views, or unattended with hazard; (in which you will acquire profit, reduction and

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and alleviation) you must be the most timid mortals that ever disgraced the annals of record not to embrace it, and give it that countenance and support that may facilitate its success.

The necessity of which leads me to advert to some recent observations made at the convention of a Common Hall, held in the City of LONDON, 4th Nov. 1785. Calculations were then made of the taxes amounting to fourteen and sixteen shillings in the pound; an evil of such enormity sure will awake you from your lethargy, and fully convince you it is your most indispensable duty to concur with me in the prosecution of a plan that leads to the salvation of your Country.

Exclusive of the shop-tax, you see by calculations made in the City of London, the taxes amount to near sixteen shillings in the pound; and if you advert to KEARSLY'S tax tables, which give an account of the different imposts lately laid on you, it will clearly shew you how excessive your trade is cramped: to take them in the aggregate, it must astonish every thinking mind how you exist as a nation, and demonstrates the great waste of public treasure, abuse of power, and want of sound policy, in suffering the debt to accumulate to so enormous an amount. It is clear to me it originates from weakness or wickedness, and exhibits the most melancholy picture of the situation

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tion of this country. Ten minutes investigation will fully inform you, I am justified in my endeavours, which demands your united efforts in the means to make a rapid reduction, as a languid one will do you no good.

In the present mode of taxation you will be ruined in your trade, by the money being drawn out of your hands before any suitable reduction can be made, when it will require a world of ages to reinstate you. As you are invited to aid and assist in a plan of reduction, devoid of taxation, and such as will effectually relieve you, in the present state of things, I am confident you will concur with me, though in so unpleasant a matter, that the aspect of this country is sufficient to deter any men possessed of a shadow of understanding from settling here; and to drive the most discerning and valuable part from us.

Whatever machinations or specious pretext may be held to the contrary, to defeat the best concerted plan ever studied or contrived for your relief, by the self-interested, impolitic, and imperious part of the creation, as by deluding you they find it to their account, and rather exult in your oppression than study to ease you; though some of them, the very beings who wallow in luxury at your expence; vitiated in their principles, and divested of that sympathy that should lead them to exert their endeavours to make tenable your lives and situations; instead of which, when the national treasure is exhausted, they study new imposts, insensible of the consequence, or how the sums have

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have been expended; and the answer to the complaints of the people is, "it falls on the consumer." Contracted in their understanding as in their feelings, they know no want, and are deprived of the sense of commiseration; so that if resources can be found at any rate they will be indifferent to your wants and necessities: which is, I should hope, sufficient to guard you against any artful insinuations that may be calculated to damp the prosecution of this plan; as you have the fullest conviction of every thing here asserted, and an offer is made you to remove so poignant a dilemma, I cannot doubt but you will cheerfully assist, and fully countenance a measure that will restore you to your wonted greatness and prosperity, which will operate with much greater celerity than you, at present, can imagine.

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T O

His Royal Highness,
G E O R G E,
P R I N C E of W A L E S.

May it please your Royal Highness,

WITH all humility, and after a considerable conflict whether I should or not address your Highness, the situation of your country hath rose superior to my diffidence, and stimulates me to a liberty I otherwise should not presume; as your Highness is heir apparent to these realms, and by heaven decreed to sway the royal sceptre, and hold a paternal influence over a brave, loyal, and indefatigable people, your concern for their happiness and prosperity cannot be doubted, as a flourishing nation reflects the greatest lustre, and is the brightest jewel of the crown you are to succeed to.

Arrived as we are to the highest degree of perfection in arts, sciences, and every branch of trade, that gives wealth, power, and consequence to a nation, though we are the most perfe-

persevering people, and capable of rising superior to almost every difficulty, and though through the various trials against the combined enemies of your country, we have demonstrated more loyalty, fortitude, and manly exertion than is to be found in any other people on earth, yet overwhelmed as we are by excessive and partial taxation, bearing so rapidly on us, through the enormous national debt, a want of sound policy, and able financing, which have mutilated the empire, wasted its treasure, and now the remnant is on the rack; we find, with all our customary exertions and perseverance, the burthen is infinitely beyond our strength, and must very shortly reduce us to a most miserable and languid state of indigence and despair; when, instead of a brave and loyal people, we shall soon be reduced to a nation of mendicants; when you may have the consolation of reigning unenvy'd.

Since the happiness, comfort, and prosperity of a whole kingdom depends on the removal of a burthen too ponderous to be borne, and require the exertion of all the ability and ingenuity of the nation; if I, as an individual, have by much pains, circumspection, and study, with care, and the minutest investigation, plan'd a measure that will effectually remove the load of debt, and every obnoxious tax that militates against the very existence of the people, and the glory of the crown, a plan that will, if properly put in execution, not only reduce the debt, and alleviate the people, but prevent in future its accumulation, even in war; though

of such magnitude and national benefit, it is inoffensive in its nature, and in strict conformity to the law and constitution, nor is there that difficulty in its prosecution your Highness may imagine; I hope your Highness will pardon my not inclosing the plan, it would be inexpedient, as it must remain a secret at present: if I am patronised, I will bind myself, under the severest penalty, to prove its practicability, and be answerable for its success; nor nor am I actuated by any principles abstracted from the general good of the nation; I rather consider this my duty as a good subject, than any merit in me. I should hold myself highly reprehensible to complain, had I not a remedy to propose, and deserve some persecution in presuming to address your Royal Highness; but as your Highness is most interested in this great and important business, I hope my intentions will plead my justification, and lead me to the patronage, support, and protection of your Royal Highness,

May it please your Royal Highness,

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble and most

Devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

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N. B

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N. B. Should your Royal Highness patronise the plan, and be instrumental to the dispelling so much calamity, give comfort and prosperity to the nation, with what adoration would a loyal and grateful people behold you! and, as a modern Alfred, consider you the saviour of your country, and record your illustrious name the highest in the annals of your nation; nor is it in the power of language to describe the inestimable blessings and benefits that would flow to every individual from your countenancing it.

T O

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T O

The Right Honourable
WILLIAM PITT,

Right Honourable Sir, *October 9, 1785.*

BY the inclosed, which was the major part wrote prior to the honor of receiving yours, you will see what the mind feels from being treated with inattention or disrespect, especially when it has a justification within devoid of vain sordid or mercenary views, together with an earnest desire to prosecute a measure to the good of mankind.

Though your kindness in permitting me to communicate to you in writing any thing that in my ability may render my country service, hath done away every cause of complaint or request (except one) yet I conceive it necessary to trouble you with this, as you will see the natural man as well as the innate disposition of him you have given that permission to: you have received eight propositions from me, seven before any notice was taken, which occasioned my writing the inclosed. I find myself

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moved

moved by a kind of inspiration to this liberty; something whispers 'tis my duty, nor can I rest till I have discharged it; I shall therefore rely on your good sense to view it with a dispassionate, liberal, and unprejudiced eye.

As the intention is good, I hope it cannot constitute a crime in future, I shall only advert to the matter in question, and in as brief a manner as I am capable of, and hope my zeal will apologize for,

Right Honourable Sir,

Your most humble, obedient,

And devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

T O

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT,

Right Honourable Sir,

I Should hold myself highly reprehensible in troubling you, was I not fully convinced of the dreadful consequence that must ensue from the present mode of taxation, so fraught with mischief, so partial, oppressive, and extravagant in its nature, that it ought to awaken every sensible, intelligent, and ingenious mind, to the means of alleviation.

From the purest impulse of humanity, a love for my country, the happiness and prosperity of its people, I am constrained to this liberty with you, and the exercise of my faculties in a cause, I flatter myself, meritorious, and of the greatest national importance: I have every way turned my thoughts to the removal of an evil that is become so burthenfome, intolerable, and obnoxious, that if some wholesome remedy is not speedily applied, it must end in ruin and desolation.

The means I have happily discovered, and will answer for its success, if I am patronised by

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by you, or men in power, without expence to the nation, or property being vested in my hands.

I request neither honour, emolument, or consequence, I only ask for confidence; which, should I obtain, so sensible am I of its being salutary, and productive of the most desirable purposes, that I will bind myself for its performance in a penalty equal to Antonio with Shylock.

The goodness of your intention cannot be doubted, to raise the credit of your country, yet the sacrifice you make of the most essential part of the people, will be ultimately more injurious than the total loss of national credit, the extension of which hath only served to involve us in ruinous and impolitic wars, which now recoils on the innocent inhabitants. In the middling or lower walks of life, better information is to be got of its effects than in the higher, as by far the majority are in that situation, on which account I have the advantage of you; as I can judge how it will operate with millions, you can scarcely that of hundreds; in elevation their affluence removes the effect: from these considerations I am solicitous in a measure—not of taxation, but salvation—not oppression but alleviation—had it been the former, I would not have troubled you with it. Taxation is a word so trite and offensive to a British ear, that I am seeking the means to bury it in oblivion, or remove its indigestion. The measure is consistent; it cannot cost an individual a sigh, nor will the nation in the smallest degree

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be injured, yet its debt shall be diminished; and the people eased of their burthen. Interested as I am, with the rest of my fellow creatures, in the prosecution of so great and necessary a business, obliges me to use every means to attract your attention, which I must confess I despair of; yet I am determined to discharge my duty, which I conceive to be an indispensable one, I owe myself, my rising family, and the nation at large.

Whether I am attended to or not, I will deserve it; and have wherewithal to satisfy an honest mind, I have done my utmost.

I should consider myself highly culpable to complain, if there was no alternative; and deserve some persecution for having presumed to address my superiors respecting a grievance I could find no remedy for.

As I wish not to aggrandize myself, but merely in an humble state to serve my country, agreeable to the plan I have suggested, the honor shall be my patroniser's, the profits the nation's, the labour mine is all I claim.—I cannot but think a requisition so liberal ought to have some weight with you, and more particularly so as it will demonstrate that burthening the people is unnecessary.

I have troubled you with some things that would have been productive; devoid of partiality or oppression, I likewise requested in a note a little time since, permission to speak a few words to you of the greatest national profit and consequence, all which have been treated with inattention. This I expect to share the same fate;

fate ; which must originate from your attention being drawn another way, through multiplicity of business, or from depravities of this description—pride, arrogance, self-sufficiency, and contempt—, these are the companions of a vain and superficial mind, and must, in a sensible and humane man, rather excite pity than resentment : such treatment shall not damp my pursuit, in a measure I have deliberately and maturely weighed in all its various circumstances ; so laudable, necessary, and justifiable, that on its accomplishment the peace and happiness of millions depend. Therefore should I fail of your patronage ; if there are any men of consequence that are real patriots, that have their country's interest at heart, I shall solicit their support in the prosecution of this plan :

Which obliges me to animadvert on your inattention and contempt, and must beg leave to ask you, what injury your condescension would have done to your consequence, in permitting me to speak a few words, which I must own is not within the compass of my ability to describe ?

I only value men for their superior worth, virtue, and abilities, not for their titles, exalted station, wealth, or family-blood ; no farther than the laws of subordination require, which are essential to good government.

Divested of all vain ideas, I must beg leave to draw a line respecting superiority—suppose you are immaculate ; are you sure there is but one ? I cannot think your supernatural ability gives you any confirmation you are the only one.

ne. Should you inherit infinite wisdom, could you presume you are the infinite Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ? Would you engross the omnipotence of the Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, and centre the infinite wisdom of the whole Godhead in your single breast ? You must concur with me, so vain a presumption could not be admitted of. Since it is allowed there are three in heaven, what authority have you to circumscribe them to one on earth ? Solomon says, there is wisdom in many ; I wish to do justice to your extraordinary abilities, therefore shall suppose you Solomon the second. Can you expect to see the queen of the East come to pay her adoration to you, for stripping your people of the means of existence ? Will she admire complaining in your streets, and your houses filled with mourning ? as heaven, earth, and Solomon the first admitted of the plural, I cannot see how you are justified in your contempt of me ; which naturally must lead me to some farther comparative observations. First respecting the infatuation of the other side of the Tweed—high-blood—yours in elevation far exceed, yet may not be more pure—your predecessors had an opportunity of enjoying ease and intemperance, which occasions disease—mine were laborious and abstemious, which is instrumental to purity—so that in a physical sense you have little cause for exultation, I for envy—you have the advantage of education—I experience—you theory—I practice—you have studied languages and books—I books and men—you have been upwards of

E

twenty

twenty years on the theatre of the world—I more than forty—you was born to fortune and friends—I to indigence, and by industry must acquire what I get.

You by fortune, friends, and situation, are sought after, flattered, and idolized—I from scanty circumstances am vilified, traduced, and misrepresented—reflect which has the advantage in acquiring wisdom; we need not, like Saul, resort to Endor, or raise the body of Samuel to solve that.

You, like the splendid sun-flower, with the appendages of state, may look down with scorn and indignation on a poor violet, that can scarcely raise its head above the surface of the earth, and drooping, bent by a load of bitter essence extracted from that preponderous flower, which has much the advantage to external appearance and magnitude, but as to its superiority, in fragrance or efficacy, to the disease in question, will admit of a doubt—I cannot think but there is some justice in the metaphor, and bears some analogy to your conduct as a minister.

I conceive it necessary to touch on the vicissitudes of life, which tends to render the understanding more perfect by its worldly experience.

I began the world with all its disadvantages, few friends and little property; embark'd in the casualties of trade, though less fortunate than many, I have reason to believe I was not less industrious or meritorious; I sustained more losses than came to my share, which I bore with

with resignation, nor did my debtors ever experience the iron hand of the law, or one single reproach from me to imbitter their adverse situation, The abuse of power, the derogation of authority, is what I ever had the utmost aversion to—tenacious of my neighbours reputation, which I ever held sacred as my own—I would to God they had acted so by me, then I should have escaped a world of unmerited persecution and misery.

In the hour of misfortune I experienced the reverse; insult on insult, persecution on persecution, calumny, depreciation and misrepresentation, were the constant attendants on my adverse state: think how much the balance is against a man who cannot descend to retaliations, so repugnant to a liberal mind; I married a woman I was passionately fond of circumstanced similar to myself; our mutual affection was productive of a numerous offspring—after ten years had elapsed in that state, I sustained insupportable losses, which originated from liberal principles—then it was I had the best opportunity of knowing the disposition of mankind—then saw I the difference in what I had dealt out to others, and what they were dealing out to me,—the moment my embarrassment was discovered, I was pursued with action on action, together with opprobrious language, representing me the worst of beings; while on my part I only solicited for time and patience, and I would pay them all, or give all I possessed into their hands: yet this they would not agree to, but seemed to delight

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in tormenting me; sometimes torn from my family, at others obliged to shelter myself from the vulture's paws, till I could find means to pay them—Children looking up to the parent with streaming eyes—the beloved and beautiful partner of my bed (for such she was) alternately weeping and fainting—full well she knew my persecutions were unmerited—nor did she long survive our accumulated evils—her frame was too delicate to bear the unrelenting hand of persecution.—The parent looking down on the offspring of mutual love, whom he was bound to shield from misery and want, and to all appearance deprived of the means,—suppressing the big tear with anguish unspeakable—not a friend I could rely on, and those that were indebted to me could not pay without distressing them to a degree and in a manner I could not descend to, and which my foul abhor'd—therefore could not permit my sufferings to recoil on those I had in my power—no hope but from industry, which my troubles had almost rendered abortive by impairing my health, which reduced me to a miserable and languid state in body and circumstances, with a large family of infant children to support—exposed to depredations, impositions and fallacious detractions—in fact every disadvantage attends an adverse state that language can describe—all this I had to surmount or must fall a victim—these are the tryals of the ordeal that demonstrate if a man has any sterling merit, virtue, or stability. I should not have drawn this rough but genuine picture of my experience, was it
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not descriptive of the afflictions the present system will bring on thousands; as there is scarce any thing I cannot rise superior to, nor have I ever attempted any thing but I found my genius equal to the task: nor do I fear the accomplishment of this business, great as it is, or doubt its practicability.

From conscientious principles, I cannot conclude without making some remarks that will describe the distressing effects of two Acts of Parliament in particular.

As money is the sinews of war, so it is the life and spirit of trade; by drawing it out of the hands of that description of people in so rapid and enormous a manner, as the Commutation Bill and Shop Tax enforces, must increase the number of failures to a degree: two thirds of the people being barely solvent (nay I have reason to believe the reverse) how then will the shop tax operate! is it not cruel beyond all description, and unjustifiable to all intents and purposes, to prosecute a measure that will bring distress and ruin on thousands of families, when other means are to be found that will not distress them at all? It shews a wanton inclination to alienate the affections of the people from government, who otherwise would cheerfully pay as long as their ability would admit of. They have no means of reimbursing themselves, like the taxing any given commodity; for, in that case, they have the authority of Parliament to justify them, therefore they suffer no partial oppression, but lay it on the consumer,

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sumer, and thus it becomes general, which should always be the case in taxation.

In the present system they will not be able to find money; the consequence in distraining will bring on speedy ruin, the effects of such distressed people will be an incumbrance, which will oblige you to build warehouses to deposit their goods in, and prisons for the reception of their persons, as those you have are already too much crowded; the failures of the shop-keepers will recoil on the manufacturers and wholesale dealers, and thus the evil will become so great that it is truly alarming, and shews the want of that humanity, which should embellish superior abilities.

Relative to the Commutation Bill, *mark its partiality*: the single and unincumber'd drinks tea at the already burthened housekeeper's expence; whether they use it or not, they must pay an enormous tax, which makes it partial and oppressive, in which you have added to the burthen of those that are already sinking, and eased others that needed it not, which inclines more to rapacity than justice; the merits of the Bill in suppressing smuggling must be acknowledged, yet the mode of levying the tax is impolitic and ruinous, and shews a want of able financing, as ease and production is preferred to the prosperity of the people. Had it been levied wisely, it would have been laid on commodities in general consumption; then all would have borne a part agreeable to their situations, in which there could have been

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been no just cause of complaint, and is the only constitutional mode of taxation. Sorry am I to say my country hath experienced, for some years, a fund of oratory, but dearth of sound wisdom; which obliges me to advert to a passage in a pamphlet I wrote eleven years ago. I have only to wish my prediction, like Jonah's by Nineveh, had failed; in that I gave them half a century to compleat the mischief they then began; but, to my mortification, they were much more expeditious than I expected: the passage runs thus:

“ When avarice and ambition triumph over
 “ religion and virtue, then our danger is near,
 “ our fall not far distant; we are now at the
 “ summit of our greatness, on the pinnacle, the
 “ verge of a lofty precipice: who that sincerely
 “ values his native home, can be unconcerned,
 “ or what a wretch must he be that can sleep
 “ or fiddle while the glorious foundation is on
 “ the eve of sinking, and only to leave some
 “ melancholy traces of its wonted greatness
 “ behind? What an example the Roman Em-
 “ pire! who that hath ideas, will not endea-
 “ vour to shun its dilemma, or guard against
 “ the baneful consequence? It is wisdom and
 “ virtue must be thy prop, avarice and ambi-
 “ tion can never shield thee. Unite together,
 “ let the hand and heart with the rudder move,
 “ and foreign powers shall still admire and
 “ envy thy greatness, nor shall contemptible
 “ pity reach thy shore: it is no language, but
 “ judicious measures, must be thy support.
 “ Rome

" Rome would never have fell if the powers of
 " oratory could have saved her: pursue the same
 " measure for half a century, you are pursuing,
 " like her you will dwindle, like her your ruins
 " might serve to demonstrate what your great-
 " ness was, and a future age, like a ruin'd
 " Roman, may in despair and indigence lament
 " your depravity. Corruption is almost be-
 " come general, the evil resulting from it
 " monstrous, and men seem to act as though
 " they were created for themselves alone."

Affluence too often raises them above those
 fine feelings that should do honor to them as
 human beings, and obliterates that commiseration
 due to afflicted fellow creatures below
 them; by luxury they grow callous to the
 necessities of others, feeling none themselves.
 The finest sensations are deaden'd, for want of
 which they enact laws that render the lives of
 the people as miserable as an Egyptian bon-
 dage: loading them beyond their ability, is
 equally absurd with Pharaoh's order to make
 bricks without materials, which must damp the
 spirit of emulation, and give a vital stab to
 that trade and commerce which made us rich
 and powerful, and will tend to reduce us to
 impotence and contempt. When men find
 themselves so intolerably laden, they will natu-
 rally use every human invention to throw off
 the burden: by emigration or refractory dis-
 obedience to the laws, evils may accrue too
 horrid to mention—if you mean to govern
 wise and humanely, you must never take from
 the

the industrious the means of supporting them-
 selves and families by their labour: as hope and
 expectation stimulate men to be indefatigable
 in their vocation, if they are deprived of that
 hope, by their best efforts to better their cir-
 cumstance or furnish the necessaries of life,
 they will become indolent, regardless of any
 consequence, and lose sight of subordination
 to that government that have ceased to act
 with wisdom and humanity, or seek an asylum
 elsewhere.

Which brings to my mind an ocular demon-
 stration I had of a poor animal that was over-
 laden with sand by its merciless driver, by far
 the worst brute of the two; being a little de-
 tached from the burthen'd quadruped, when
 merely instinct informs, he was not bound by
 gratitude or justice to obey that master who
 held principles incompatible with both; though
 his burthen was fix'd with cords, yet he dexte-
 rously found means, by rolling on the ground,
 to disentangle himself, and contemptuously
 leave that governor, who was beneath the no-
 tice of a brute; if an ass was capable of this,
 can it be supposed men, who inherit both rea-
 son and instinct, will bear more?

The ill consequence I am apprehensive of,
 extorts from me these observations which led
 me to the remedy I in a former part propos'd;
 like the horse in the scripture, who seeth the
 battle afar off, would I anticipate its danger,
 and explode its effects.

An observation of your father's recurs to
 my mind, which I honour as I do his me-

F mory,

mory, wherein he says, "the voice of the people is the voice of God." There cannot be a more glorious or just observation, as they have no views abstracted from the general good, they are moved by a divine impulse. Take care you treat them not too negligently, but remember what they are: every thing that is dear to a nation, without which palaces would become desarts, your mansions, fields, and gardens one wide waste, when thorns, thistles, and briars would supplant the choicest fruits and delicacies; your tables undecked, your persons unadorned, and with it all distinction cease. Remember 'tis the people complains—the voice of the Creator—the every thing: let them not complain in vain. When the oracle of the age made that declaration, he did not think the voice of parliament the voice of the people, it was the voice of a diabolical: the consequence in not hearing him, or the people, was the loss of the Empire, blood and treasure. The days then were like the days of Balaam, the angels of the treasury taught the asses of the then parliament what language they pleased; it was then I, by accident, had an opportunity of knowing the contents of a noble Lord's letter in office, to a proprietor of a borough, and member for a city, on his soliciting for a post of consequence; wherein is demonstrated the influence of the treasury angels: in such influence the voice of parliament cannot be the voice of the people.

If

If it is a crime to be zealously attached to my country's welfare, I must confess myself a great sinner; if on the contrary, I am justified, which is the best apology I can make for the length of my epistle. My infatuation may lead me to a prolixity, which I hope you will pardon, and must beg leave to subscribe myself,

Right Honourable Sir,

Your most humble, obedient,

And devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

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T O

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T O
H I S G R A C E
T H E
DUKE of MARLBOROUGH.

My Lord Duke,

THE illustrious name you have the honor to bear is too well-known to need any encomiums from my humble pen, nor could any thing but the dreadful calamities that await my country, through its enormous debt and excessive taxation, which militates against the existence of the inhabitants, have induced me to this liberty with your Grace, which I hope will apologize for me.

The situation of your country my Lord calls aloud for the aid of those whom providence hath blest with dignity and affluence: the hour is at hand when your Grace may have an opportunity of rendering that name (if possible) more glorious, and be the means of delivering millions from distress and oppression, without injury to your fortune, or any other consequence,
except

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except recording your name above the rest of mankind.

The glory of the action will immortalize you, in having stood forth the patron of a plan the most beneficial that ever was agitated in this or any other country, which I have maturely weighed in all its circumstances by the minutest investigation, and much pains—a measure, my Lord, innocent and secure, and in strict conformity to law and liberty; salutary and productive, with ample security for every guinea you deposit, of which you shall have incontrovertible proof, to the satisfaction of yourself and confidential friends, with interest for the same: though it is perhaps a plan of the greatest magnitude and national benefit, yet, my Lord, there is not that difficulty in its prosecution your Grace may imagine, and devoid of any disagreeable incumbrance, notwithstanding it cannot fail to remove the insupportable burthen of taxes and load of debt, we at present groan under, and establish a system that will in future prevent such accumulation, even in war. Incredible, my Lord, as this may appear, I will answer for its practicability and success, under the severest penalty, if I am patronised.

Reflect, my Lord, what secret satisfaction a liberal mind must feel in having been instrumental to the relief, comfort, and prosperity of a whole kingdom! how, like the rising sun, will a grateful people adore your Grace, whose benignant soul was the means of easing them of a burthen too heavy to be borne! your vast
possessions

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possessions make you an interested member in this matter; as the land, and other taxes being reduced, may be an object to your Grace with the rest of mankind.

Therefore my Lord your fortune, your country and exalted name combine to draw your attention to this business; my letters to the minister will demonstrate I have no views abstracted from the general good of my country. The minister requests my plan in writing, which I have omitted to do; for very particular reasons, it is necessary it should at present remain a secret: when committed to paper, it may no longer be so. Those who are inclined to patronise me, will in future be fully convinced of the necessity of my acting in this manner; my wishes for the prosecution of this plan have only been communicated to your Grace, and the minister. On reflection, I conceive it more permanent in the hands of the people, as the change of ministry may affect the system: a patriotic association I should greatly prefer to that of administration. I shall confine my application at present to your Grace, and his Grace of Bedford; who, when in conjunction with your Grace, would form a unity of such dignity and fortune, that could not fail to give spirit and energy to its prosecution, and render its success beyond a doubt. If through the medium of your Grace this could be communicated to his Grace of Bedford, it may have a more agreeable effect than coming from me, which should your Grace approve, I shall feel myself highly honor'd.

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I have commun'd with the minister in several things, but not of the magnitude of this, though some of them of consequence, plans of which he has.

Should I find your Grace and some other gentlemen of distinction, whom I have applied to, inclining to patronise me, I shall lay the plan before them, and convince them of its practicability.

My Lord Duke, I have only to hope and pray forgiveness for thus trespassing on your Grace, and humbly beg leave to subscribe myself,

Your Grace's

Most humble,

Obedient, and

Devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

N. B. The Commutation Bill and Shop Tax, bearing so very heavy on the housekeeper, will most certainly reduce the major part to poverty and ruin; which will impede matrimony, and together with the tax on Maid Servants, be productive of an increase of prostitution, too horrid, my Lord, even to imagine. I have troubled your Grace with this by way of hint, fearing a prolixity, have more minutely pointed out the evil consequences in my letters to the minister.

T O

T O

H I S G R A C E

T H E

DUKE of BEDFORD.

My Lord Duke,

WITH extreme deference to your name and dignity, and after a considerable conflict whether I should or not address your Grace, my country rose superior to my diffidence, and stimulated me to a liberty I otherwise should not presume. Its situation calls aloud for the aid of those whom providence hath blessed with dignity and affluence; the immense debt, and the excessive taxation we labour under, militate against the very existence of the inhabitants; and will, my Lord, if not timely removed, be of much greater injury to this country, than any war or other calamity, we as a nation ever experienced; and which requires the exercise of all the ability and ingenuity the kingdom is capable of. If I, as an individual, have by some pains, investigation, and

and study, hit on a plan that will effectually remove every obnoxious tax, reduce the enormous debt, and prevent its accumulation even in war. I hold it not a merit, but an indispensable duty I owe myself, as well as my country, to use every means to attract the attention of those in whose power it may be to give spirit to its prosecution, which I hope will apologize for my thus troubling your Grace.

The hour is at hand, when your Grace may have an opportunity of rendering the illustrious name you have the honor to bear (if possible) more glorious; and be the means of delivering millions from distress and oppression, without injury to your fortune, or any other consequence, except recording your name above the rest of mankind: it is not to be supposed that merely immortalizing your name, in having stood forth the patron of a measure, perhaps the best calculated to remove the intolerable weight of oppression we at present groan under, would be any inducement to your Grace, more than the eminent service you render your country, in being instrumental to its deliverance, in the moment of necessity. What secret satisfaction must a liberal mind feel, in having been the means of restoring comfort and prosperity to a whole kingdom! how, like the rising sun, will a grateful people adore your Grace, whose benignant soul was the means of easing them of a burthen too heavy to be borne; your vast possessions, your immense wealth, make you an interested member in this great and laudable

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undertaking, as the reduction of the land and other taxes, may be an object to your Grace, as well as the rest of mankind. My Lord, your youthful prime and vigor of life, your fortune, your country, and exalted name, combine to draw your attention to this business.

Incredible as this may appear, I will answer for the success under any penalty; nor will it be productive of hazard or danger in any respect; it is inoffensive in its nature, and in strict conformity to the laws and every branch of government, with ample security for every guinea that may be advanced, which your Grace will have incontrovertible proofs of, to your satisfaction, and that of your confidential friends. Though it is a plan of the greatest magnitude and national benefit, yet there is not that difficulty or incumbrance in its prosecution, your Grace may imagine, nor have I any views abstracted from the general good of my country. I have particular reasons for not communicating the plan, it is necessary it should remain a secret, till I can find proper people to patronise it.

Your Grace's elevation in life deprives you of the opportunity of knowing, like my humble situation, how those heavy taxes will operate on the by far major part of the people: it will draw all the money out of their hands, that should give spirit to trade and commerce, reduce our manufactures to a most miserable and languid state, prevent our sending goods to foreign markets at a price equal to other nations, and ruin us as a commercial state, which
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we owe our greatness to, when impotence and contempt will be our poor but only consolation. Should your Grace be inclined to pay some attention to my humble solicitation, I shall with the utmost care and fidelity, prevent any cause of regret, but the contrary, it would reflect the highest honor. As the reduction of the national debt is of all things the most desirable, and on which the future glory of the nation depends, that you, the pillar of the illustrious house of Bedford; may be the means of restoring to us such inestimable blessings, is the most fervent prayer of your Grace's most humble petitioner, in the behalf of himself and millions. Since the want of sound policy and able financing have reduced our Empire, and the present mode of taxation will render it still worse, it is time to look forward to redemption, if the remnant is to be saved; which justifies me in the part I am acting, and leads me rather to hope for approbation, than displeasure; therefore shall beg leave to subscribe myself,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's

Most humble,

Most obedient,

And devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

G 2

TO

T O

H I S G R A C E

T H E

D U K E

O F

DEVONSHIRE.

My Lord Duke,

THE patriotic spirit for which your illustrious family have ever been so justly famed, and the zealous attachment to the laws, liberty and constitution of this country, fully evinces the great obligation due from the people to the most noble house of Cavendish; nor have you been less conspicuous in your loyalty to the house of Brunswick, which realized to us the blessings of that liberty we at present enjoy: we have only to lament that the wise and wholesome councils of your virtuous house have not of late been treated with that respect they

they are so justly entitled to, which would have shielded us from the loss of empire, blood and treasure, and the accumulated evils of partial and excessive taxation that now overwhelm us, and will, if not timely removed, be ultimately our ruin. The stability that marks all your actions, renders you a most valuable acquisition to every thing that relates to the good of your country, which must fill every sensible mind with the most grateful acknowledgement and respect. I have only to regret it is beyond my ability to find language to pay a just tribute to the merits of so exalted a character, which moves me with all humility and deference to an application I otherwise should by no means presume.

It is the cause of your country which claims the interposition of every one whom providence hath blest with dignity, affluence and ability to remove the enormous debt we at present groan under, which militates against the very existence of its inhabitants; since it is a matter of such mighty consequence to every individual, in the removal of which the happiness and prosperity of a whole kingdom is so materially interested, your Grace's vast possessions makes the reduction of that debt and taxes a greater object to you than to those of inferior property; though, from your known liberality and humanity, it cannot be doubted but you would feel infinitely more pleasure in being instrumental to the relief of a whole nation, than any peculiar advantage

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advantage that may accrue to your Grace. As all national benefits are reciprocal, all are in duty bound to exercise their genius in the promotion of its welfare: if I, by some pains, study, and circumspection, have discovered the means of diminishing the vast debt and immense load of taxes, that are absolutely beyond our ability, and must inevitably reduce us to the most extreme indigence, and entail on us every evil language can describe, I hope it will not be deemed a crime in me to address your Grace, and solicit your support and countenance with other noblemen, in the prosecution of a plan, I am well convinced will remove all our difficulties, and establish a system, that will in future prevent its accumulation. Nor will it, my Lord, be productive of danger, hazard, or inconvenience: it is in strict conformity to the laws and constitution; nothing but the dreadful calamities that await your country, and the practicability of the plan I have in agitation, could have induced me to this liberty with your Grace. As my views are disinterested, and have only the general good of the country at heart, I hope it will apologize for me.

Though it is a plan of the greatest magnitude and consequence to this country, yet, my Lord, there is not that difficulty or incumbrance in its prosecution that may be imagined. If I am patronised, I will bind myself under the severest penalty for its success. I must intreat your Grace to pardon my not inclosing the plan, as
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it is necessary it should remain a secret, till I can find Gentlemen of consequence to countenance and support it.

With the most profound respect, humility, and diffidence, I must beg leave to subscribe myself,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's most obedient,

And devoted humble Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

T O

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T O

The RIGHT HONOURABLE

T H E

EARL of EGREMONT.

My Lord,

WAS it not on a most important matter, relative to the welfare of your country, in which you are more materially interested than the general part of mankind, on account of your immense estates, I should consider this an unwarrantable liberty; but as every individual is more or less concerned, and as all national benefits are reciprocal, every one is in duty bound to exert their abilities and ingenuity to its welfare, which I hope will apologize for the liberty I have taken in addressing your Lordship.

My Lord, the enormous national debt, with the partial and excessive taxes, is so exceedingly oppressive, that I am well convinced it is beyond the ability of the major part of the people; and, if not timely removed, will be productive

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ductive of more real injury to this nation than any other calamity it ever experienced. If, by exerting my abilities and ingenuity, I have discovered the means of stopping the growing evil, I hope I am justified in soliciting the patronage of those whom providence hath blest with dignity, affluence, and ability, as by their countenancing it I shall be able to bring it to a speedy maturity. Incredible, my Lord, as this may appear, on account of its weight and magnitude, I will under the most severe penalty answer for its being efficient—a plan which, if properly attended to, will not only reduce the immense debt and obnoxious taxes, but prevent its accumulation in future; nor will it be attended with danger, hazard, or inconveniency worthy of mention, and is consonant with the laws and constitution, as well as inoffensive in its nature.

My Lord, your vast possessions, your youthful prime, and vigour of life, may enable you to enjoy the advantages, and justly wear the laurels you would acquire, in having been instrumental to the erecting an everlasting monument of fame, in patronising a measure of such general and national utility. You will not only have the grateful acknowledgments of the people, but a very great advantage will accrue to your Lordship in the reduction of the land and other taxes, and be a considerable addition to your estate. Setting aside all pecuniary advantages, it cannot be doubted but your Lordship would feel infinitely more pleasure in contributing to the general good of your

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country, than any other consideration whatever.

As my views are disinterested, I hope my intention will plead my justification, and lead me to your Lordship's patronage, protection, and support; which should I be honor'd with, I will lay my plan before your Lordship, and give incontrovertible proof of its answering all the purposes herein described.

And have only to hope and pray your Lordship's pardon, for my thus trespassing on you,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble,

Most obedient,

And devoted Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST

T O

T O

The RIGHT HONOURABLE
EARL LONSDALE.

My Lord,

WITH the most respectful awe, I am constrained to a liberty with your Lordship I should on no other occasion whatever presume; as it is on on a general subject, the cause of your country, I hope it will apologize for this assumption in one who has not the honor of being known to your Lordship. The situation of which claims the interposition of every individual, in a matter of the greatest consequence, but more particularly so to your Lordship, whose vast possessions and immense wealth, renders you an object of the first importance, and enables you to lend that assistance in the hour of necessity, that may tend to the salvation of a whole kingdom; in which depends the reduction of the immense debt and excessive taxation which militates against the very existence of the major part of the people, as it is infinitely beyond their ability, and will, if not timely removed, become a general

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fal evil. Seeing the approaching danger, I thought it my duty to exercise my abilities and study in the pursuit of a remedy which I have happily succeeded in, and after the minutest investigation I find it salutary and productive of every thing that could be wished for: as, in its prosecution, it is capable of considerably diminishing the enormous debt, and removing every obnoxious tax. So confident am I of its practicability, that I will bind myself under any penalty for its answering all the purposes described, and prevent its accumulation in future: though it is a plan of the utmost consequence, it is strictly consonant with the laws and constitution; it is inoffensive in its nature, and devoid of danger, hazard or inconveniency: yet the patronage of your Lordship would contribute greatly to its success, and give it consequence. What lustre would it reflect on your Lordship's name and dignity, to stand forth the saviour of your country at so critical a moment, when your Lordship would be the means of alleviating millions? what secret satisfaction must an exalted and liberal mind feel, from having been instrumental to so much good? with what gratitude would the people behold their illustrious deliverer?

In the middling walks of life better information is to be got of the operation of the present mode of taxation, than in the more elevated; which I am well convinced will be productive of more mischief, ruin and desolation than any war or other calamity this nation ever

ever experienced: which led me to the remedy, and solicitation of some of the most distinguished characters, in whose power it is to give spirit and energy to its prosecution.

As I have no views abstracted from the general good of the nation, I hope it will plead my justification, and lead me to your Lordship's patronage and support; which, should I be honor'd with, I will lay the plan before your Lordship, and give incontrovertible proof of its being efficient. I have only to hope your Lordship will pardon my thus trespassing on you,

And am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's,

Most humble,

Most obedient,

And most devoted,

Servant,

PHILANTHROPHIST.

T O

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM PITT.

LETTER I.

Right Honourable Sir, July 5, 1784.

AS there never was a time that your country required resources without burthening its inhabitants, more than at this juncture, I beg leave to propose a plan for an ANNUAL LOTTERY, by which government will have the whole use of the money from year to year, without one farthing expence, or any funded debt.

The PLAN.

Admitting the tickets are issued on *Lady-Day* 1784, and the last installment paid in by the latter end of *October* 1784, the lottery to finish drawing *January* 1785, the prizes to be paid the beginning of *November* 1785; the lottery being annually, government will receive the last installment for the second lottery, before

fore it will have occasion to pay the prizes for the first; so that it will have the use and Interest of the money for three quarters of a year or more; and, great part of the time, will have the money of two lotteries in possession before it pays the prizes of one: which will be considerably more than the whole sum of one lottery being given to government.

Comment. Though I am no advocate for lotteries, it is by far more constitutional than partial taxation, and less ruinous than the Commutation Bill or Shop Tax will be, which was enforced to enrich a mercantile company, at the expence of beggaring a whole kingdom, or at least the most valuable part of it. This brings to my mind an observation of a celebrated politician, "Merchants may grow rich while a nation grows poor."

LETTER

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L E T T E R II.

*To the same.**Right Honourable Sir, August 6, 1784.*

I in haste troubled you a few days ago with some remarks on the mode of raising some supplies by way of lottery; just as they occurred I sent them. To an intelligent mind like yours, I thought it needless more minutely to describe, or be prolixly troublesome; and, as my motives are merely to render my country service, I have too high an opinion of your ability and family-reputation, to doubt your concurrence with me, that much apology is needless.

I must now beg leave to trouble you with my apprehensions relative to the new tax to suppress smuggling.

The tax will be partial, and the oppression almost unsurmountable to the most valuable part of the people, from whom the most essential national resources derive; and cannot, in my opinion, fail to render you a very unpopular minister, which would give me some pain.

No doubt I shall be considered a vain man, when I tell you I have never been wrong in my conjectures respecting my countrys fate, from
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the moment your illustrious father was forced from the helm, to this unfortunate hour—'Twas then England lost a father, lost wisdom, lost virtue, lost empire, lost her wealth, and every thing but a load of debt: as we must groan under it, I hope the burthen will be made as general as possible, which I am persuaded is the only way to make it tolerable.

The memory of your father, Sir, gives you respect and confidence with the people; and be assured it must be preserved by wisdom, rectitude, and circumspection: remember the fable of the hatchet and oak, give not a handle to your enemies, nor let your shoulders be loaded with the curses of the housekeepers and owners, who are already too heavy laden. A short time will convince you your calculation is wrong respecting the lowering of tea; it will not be a saving to the housekeeper equal to the tax; few men have had more experience in the world than myself, nor perhaps greater difficulties to surmount, with every disadvantage; yet, by assiduity and perseverance, I have hitherto rose superior to every thing.

I am a housekeeper in that predicament who must feel the oppression of this tax, with many thousands who will be in a similar situation. I have five children, my family amounts to eight persons, yet the reduction on the tea will not above half pay my additional window tax: for a moment, Sir, reflect what a body of people the housekeepers are! it is by them the labouring oar is employed—it is by them your trade and manufactories are prosecuted—it is by
I them

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them resources are found—be careful how you oppress them too much, who are the major part already at rack rents, and taxed to the teeth.

Sir, I am sorry to observe that your proposed tax exhibits a melancholy picture of the feeble and impotent state of your country; not to be able in time of peace to suppress a few smugglers, without prosecuting a measure that will too justly alarm the people, and be productive of greater evils than you are aware of. Though I cannot boast of wealth, power or titles, yet as honey may be extracted from the most unbenevolent weed, it may perhaps do you no injury to pay some attention to my observations. Whether you concur with me in opinion or not, I shall frankly give mine; if a man inherits abilities, he cannot be insensible of it, on which account I shall not hypocritically plead my poor insignificant ability, but at once tell you I flatter myself I am capable of rendering my country some service, and point out some things that may suppress evils, furnish resources, and be a national security. If you find me worth your attention, you may command, &c.

N.B. Please, Sir, to advert to Gibbons's Roman History, vol. i. page 524. there you will find the melancholy effects of high and injudicious taxations.

L E T-

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L E T T E R III.

*To the Same.**Right Honourable Sir, May 17, 1785.*

PRIOR to the passing of the Commutation Bill, I took the liberty of troubling you relative to its operation, by which four pounds *per Annum* is imposed on me, while the saving on tea will not reimburse me ten shillings, and is perhaps the most extravagant and oppressive tax that ever was levied on one description of people. Not content with that, you are now levying another on the same class, which cannot fail to tax them beyond their ability, and will be productive of the worst of consequences.

I humbly beg'd you in my former letter, to advert to Gibbons's Roman History, vol. i. page 524. because it corresponds with my situation; having a large family, I must beg leave to inform you I always write and speak the language of my soul, and shall be found firmly attached to my country's welfare, and preservation of its credit, though I shall not make so great a sacrifice as the Romans did, by destroying my children, because they may militate against my complying with partial and extravagant

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vagant taxation, nor should I complain, was I not able to point out measures less oppressive, and equally productive. Therefore must beg you will so far condescend, as to give one thought to this proposition.

A temporary tax on all foreigners carrying on trade, and settled in business, by permitting them to be denizend at a certain sum, or any other tax respecting them your wisdom may suggest. I could say much more on this subject, but wish not to burthen your mind: though this country is arrived to the highest degree of perfection in arts, manufactures, and in every mechanical branch, in particular in the executive capacity, yet many foreigners settle here much to our injury, acquire fortunes through the infatuation of my country people, fancying something new in them, so great is their thirst for novelty; on which account I conceive them proper objects of taxation, and to an intelligent mind like yours I hope sufficient; precedents of which have been practised in several of our incorporated towns, and if wisely managed, would be very productive, remove the present disquiet, and add to your popularity—if my experience, with some natural ability, have furnished me with the requisites to serve my country, I shall never think it a crime to anticipate evils, and point out remedies, whether I am attended to or not.

A shocking and recent circumstance is imprinted on my mind; the consequence I then clearly saw, and now our shoulders must be loaded with the evils that resulted from the imperious

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imperious ignorance and arrogance of the men that influenced that unfortunate period.

Now Sir reflect what mischief accrued from these few words: **NO ANSWER WILL BE GIVEN TO THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THREE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE**; and yet those men flattered themselves they were all-wise and all-just, nor thought their contempt any crime: nor shall I think yours of me any, since I have learnt to make all things indifferent, but my God, my country, and my vocation to the support of my family—several other things I could propose that would be efficacious to my country's disease, but my time at present is much circumscribed.

TAX on PORTER.

The metropolis being cheaper supplied with malt liquor than the major part of the kingdom, the most indigent part already pay after the rate of fourpence *per* pot by the penny-worths, the farthing on the pint being little or no object.

This tax will be less oppressive and more constitutional, as it is by no means compulsive or partial, it falls on the consumer, you cannot lay a tax on any commodity in general consumption, that would be attended with half the mischief or distress of the Commutation Bill or Shop Tax.

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L E T T E R IV.

*To the Same.**Right Honourable Sir, May 20, 1785.*

THE regard I have for my country, stimulates me to the liberty of troubling you once more, which I hope will apologize for me.

I have inclosed you my thoughts on taxing the theatres, not doubting but it will meet with the approbation of the major part of the people, as it is by no means compulsive.

Authorize the managers to advance sixpence on each gallery, on the pit and boxes one shilling; my reasons for equalizing the two galleries is to avoid the inconveniency that may accrue in change of halfpence. To render the product neat, farm it with the managers (in the manner of Hyde-Park-Turnpike) to pay a certain sum in advance, which can be done without addition of revenue officers, or by tickets stamped, as your wisdom shall find meet. I mean to include all places of public diversion.

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The less compulsive taxes are, the more they will meet the approbation of the people, as they have it in their power to alleviate themselves, by œconomy or denial of pleasures: many of this description may be found, that would be very productive. The hint I conceive sufficient: circumscribed in my time exposes me to inaccuracy, which I hope you will pardon, &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R V.

To the Same.

Right Honourable Sir, May 25, 1785.

SHOULD not the tax on shops pass—A tax on a certain description of people hath just occurred to me, which I humbly beg leave to trouble you with; they are called Riders to merchants, traders and manufacturers; and, from the multiplicity of business they do, are more capable of bearing a license of 20 l. per Annum, than the pedlars, at the sum they now pay. I am well informed that the number is very considerable, as they are sent out from all the capital trading towns in the kingdom, and would be a very considerable addition to that tax should it not be revoked. I conceive it a duty I owe my country at this trying hour, to be thus officious; as it originates from principles of philanthropy, I cannot doubt but you will pardon me.

Though I am an enemy to all partial taxation yet I conceive this description of people more eligible than the poor pedlars.

L E T.

L E T T E R VI.

To the Same.

Right Honourable Sir, October 2, 1785.

THE very distinguished honour of yours I received, and must feel a most sensible pleasure in being permitted to communicate to you such things that may tend to my country's happiness and prosperity. I sent several proposals for raising supplies, some of them devoid of that partiality that is much complained of at present; the best plan, in my opinion, was that on buttons, as I have not a doubt but its product would be near one hundred thousand pounds per Annum. I am confident there must be near three million gross of buttons made, and may be bold to say, two million consumed, as
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there is about five million suits of cloaths made, exclusive of ladies riding dresses, which are very numerous, and will remain so, on account of their being so convenient. The quantity of cloaths I have described, with the present mode of wearing them, consumes three million, exclusive of exportation, which I do not mean to tax. The gold twist, and richest metal, will bear a much greater duty than the mohair or common twist: as I wish to take things within bounds, to realize a certain sum, I will estimate them at two million gross, averaged at one shilling *per* gross, which will give the sum of one hundred thousand pounds. The bags of twist and cards of metal to be stamp'd; the inferior sort may be taxed very light, and the balance thrown on the superior, which would fall on the consumer, and be little felt, nor merit complaint: my experience in this branch of business gives me reason to believe it will produce a much larger sum.

Fifty thousand pounds may be raised and paid into the treasury, in the course of the drawing the ensuing lottery, should you approve of it, as long as government continues lotteries, which is a species of gambling; the people in inferior stations will, with their spare money, try their fortunes, which is done by a mode of insuring in a smuggling way: as it cannot be suppressed, in my opinion, it would

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be highly necessary and justifiable to tax them, as it may operate similar to your Commutation Bill, and be more likely to suppress it than the penal laws. As long as government finds it necessary to have lotteries, they may as well make the most of it, or have none; which is the only effectual means to stop such kind of gambling.

My plan is to oblige every office-keeper that insures to take out a licence of twenty pounds each, and one or two penny on every guinea they insure, which I could undertake to farm at fifty thousand pounds, without expence to government, and find security for its performance. Whether this plan is put in execution or not, this mode of gambling will go on: the description of people who embark in this business, are mostly single and unincumbered; as it is a vice, why not tax it in preference to virtuous industry? If they were not to spend their superfluous money that way, they would some other that would be equally against them: I could shew reasons that would obviate every objection. You will please to observe, there is no sort of compulsion in raising money this way: my obligation respecting farming is to shew my confidence in its production, and hope you will pardon my prolixity in reasoning on the subject, and must beg leave, &c.

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N. B.

N. B. Neither of these is by any means equal to the plan I have in agitation, it is a thousand times of greater consequence to this country, and will be a most pleasing alleviation to the people, which must be prosecuted by me under your patronage. I cannot communicate it in writing: I want neither property vested in my hands, honor, emolument or consequence: confidence is all I ask, which should I obtain I shall treat it with the profoundest respect, fidelity and secrecy. I am, &c.

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LETTER VII.

To the Same.

Right Honourable Sir, October 8, 1785.

THE turnpike roads taken into the hands of government, and kept in repair by the army, would be a most excellent and productive plan.

At present it is an imposition on mankind, as a law still exists to oblige every parish to keep the roads good; through a supineness in that law crept in this imposition on the people. Since such is the case, it may as well be turned to the general benefit of the nation, as to remain in the hands of a few; though a partial injury may accrue of an inferior nature, it ought to give way to general good, as it differs materially from the present mode of taxation, which tends to general evil.

I am aware of some difficulty, as they are established by acts of parliament; I would by all means avoid a stretch of power, or perversion of the laws, and should hope it may be done by mutual consent; as the people whose money is lent on that account, would be equally satisfied with government security, as with what they

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they have, it may be compromised; the old laws remaining may be put in force, in case of war; as the most essential matter is in first making the roads, after which by proper attention, they are with ease kept in repair.

N. B. The plan I have the most sanguine hope of is by far more eligible, and may be put in practice without much difficulty, though I cannot communicate it in writing.

F I N I S