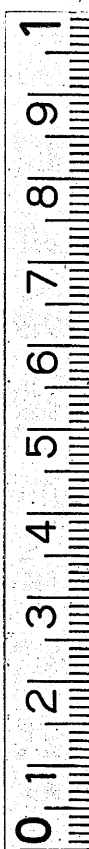


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Lord *STAIR*'s  
ADDRESS TO,  
AND  
EXPOSTULATION WITH,  
THE PUBLIC.

THE SECOND EDITION.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

0525

ADDRESS TO,  
AND  
EXPOSTULATION WITH  
THE PUBLIC.

By JOHN Earl of STAIR.

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O quantum est in rebus inane!

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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LONDON:

Printed for JOHN STOCKDALE, in Piccadilly.

MDCCLXXXIV.

A N

## A D D R E S S , &amp;c.

**T**HIS Address and Expostulation, now altered and adapted to the present bent and posture of affairs, were at first intended to have been offered to the public consideration after the Easter recess, had no Dissolution of Parliament intervened. This is mentioned only as an apology, if any parts of them should be less applicable to the present state of things; for, as to their great and capital objects, I hope I do not flatter myself when I conclude, that the present situation promises a much happier issue

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to them than they could probably have met with if published when originally intended. We then had but a cessation of hostilities : now, I rest assured, we have a firm and solid peace, and that all contest for the future will be no more than a generous rivalry, by the merit of great, unequivocal, and disinterested services, to stand foremost in the public favour.

I may therefore presume with confidence, that amongst the earliest luminous epochs of this bright æra will be found some solid, some efficient relief, some present comfort, some future grounds of security and hope for the public creditors of this country.

Bankruptcy, alas ! like Death, levels all conditions as well of nations as of individuals. The public necessities, if they have not thrown down every barrier of the Constitution, have at least rendered the two great equipoises of Privilege and Prerogative, viz. Denial of Supplies and  
 Dissolution

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Dissolution of Parliament, almost useless and inert. The terror of anarchy arising out of the pressure of the demands on the Public, not constitutional purity, not constitutional energy, for a long time governed the State. Under the cover of this confusion and distress, each Party proceeded to lengths unwarrantable, and supported bad acts by reasonings as bad. The public good, though still the theoretical deity of the idolatry of each, had no influence on, and did not make any part of the practical worship of, either party.

But I mean not to inflame ; I mean not to revive past violences, past errors, which both sides, for their honour, should suffer to remain buried in perpetual oblivion. They were questions that ought never to have been agitated, but,

Like other mysteries men adore,  
 Be hid, to be revered the more.

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All that I propose is, to evince that a State so pressed with necessities as ours is, only vainly boasts of a Constitution she does not, cannot enjoy: from which it follows of necessary consequence, that it is the duty of all Parties to join, to give or to restore to us our Constitution. Before this is done, it is surely a folly the most preposterous to fall a-wrangling about the proper exercise and administration of it. The Constitution, like all the rest we possess, like every other part of our effects, falls under, and is annihilated by, the statute of our Public Bankruptcy; for Bankrupts we certainly are, to every intent, purpose, and meaning of the word, if, in the second year of a Peace, good and sufficient Resources are not found to make our Incomes equal at least to our Expenditure: They ought, indeed, so far to exceed it as to leave a reasonable surplus for present or future emergencies.

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I cannot believe that Parties would contend with such unrelenting ferocity for the government of a State, from the administration of which, the moment it was obtained, they would be obliged to disqualify themselves, upon account of not being able to find the Resources necessary for the public service:

*Nec tibi regnandi veniat tam dira cupido.*

Surely nothing can be sought for with such unremitting assiduity, such zeal and passion, which if obtained could not be held with honour for a moment, nor long without it.

I therefore naturally suppose, that I have done even an acceptable service to the competitors for power by my humble, unambitious endeavours to adjust and ascertain the Incomes, and the Peace-Expenditure of the State; the first of which, in a former publication, I stated

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to amount to about Twelve Millions annually; and the latter, with an allowance of Five Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly for contingencies and accidental deficiencies, I estimated to amount to Sixteen Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly. And though, as to the last, I must beg leave to amend my account a little, on new lights and farther consideration; yet I hope I shall not bear too hard on the great abilities of the great men contending for power, if I make an Addition to the Public Unfunded Debt of Five Millions, with a corresponding Interest or Annuity; Three Millions of which I allot to the arrangement of the affairs, and to the support of the credit, of our East-India Company, and Two Millions as necessary to the expence of a new Silver Coinage, which is indispensably and immediately required.

These force me now to fix the proper Income of the State at Eighteen Millions yearly, which I proportion thus:—

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To the Creditors of the Public, after the above two articles are provided for, and allowing something for smaller omissions and demands, which I know to exist, but on which I can put no Estimate;—to the Creditors of the Public, I say, Ten Millions yearly, instead of the Nine Millions Six Hundred and Thirty Thousand Pounds I estimated their demands at:

The Civil List Establishment, the PRINCE of WALES included, the same with my former Estimate, One Million One Hundred Thousand Pounds:

The current Annual Peace-Establishments, Five Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly; being likewise the same as in my former Estimate:

To these I add, as the least proportional Sinking Fund for smaller contingencies, for great  
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civil emergencies, and for future Wars, One Million Four Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly.

RECAPITULATION.

|  |   |                      |
|--|---|----------------------|
| To the Creditors of the Public yearly,   | — | £. 10,000,000        |
| To the Civil List, ditto,                | } | 1,100,000            |
| PRINCE OF WALES's Establishment included |   |                      |
| Current Annual Peace Establishment,      | — | 5,500,000            |
| To a Sinking Fund,                       | — | 1,400,000            |
| Total Demand in years of Peace,          | — | <u>£. 18,000,000</u> |

Great as this sum may appear, I am very positive, that upon experiment a less one will be found inadequate; the public situation remaining with regard to its Foreign Dependencies as it does at present, and a decent security being provided for our domestic and foreign concerns, and a very moderate and scanty allowance being afforded

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afforded in satisfaction of those engagements to which the good faith and honour of the Nation stands pledged.

Having mentioned a new Silver Coinage, I shall here presume to advise (though it is something remote from the object which I am pursuing) that whenever it takes place, the value of the Crown be raised to five shillings and sixpence, which is consonant to the original Resolution of the Committee of the House of Commons, January 8, 1694, the year before the last general Silver Coinage took place. I know the arguments for the present Standard are fully as strong as those against it; but all the heavy Silver Coin having been carried out of the Kingdom, decides conclusively in favour of raising the Standard.

Since I wrote the above, I have received and perused the Eleventh Report of the Commissioners of Accounts. I shall set down here

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all I have to say on the subject of it, though part of it does not so strictly connect with my present pursuits.

I called upon the Commissioners, and they have now come forward with proper energy. They have proved themselves to be the men I ever took them for; their matter is now as good as their manner always was. The principles they proceed on are self-evident, solid, and incontrovertible, viz. *That it is the good of the State that gives existence to and governs every Public Office:---That the Officer has powers delegated to him necessary for the execution; but he has no other right than to the reward of his labour; and that if the good of the Community requires a diminution or annihilation of the business of his office, or the transferring it elsewhere, the Officer cannot oppose to the regulation the diminution or annihilation of his profits, because not the emolument of the Officer but the advantage of the Public was the object of the institution.*

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In compliance with a doctrine so sound, with maxims so solid, the Commissioners of Accounts have suggested a most proper and unexceptionable Reform, by which an Annual Saving will accrue to the Public of Twenty Thousand Pounds, created by the exempting from the jurisdiction of the Auditor (to which they are at present very uselessly subjected) the Annuities of the year 1751, and those that are transacted at the Bank of England.

Any Minister who does not admit the principle on which it proceeds, and does not give immediate effect to the Saving suggested, I shall esteem, whatever his professions may be, a mean temporizer, a timid respecter of persons, who shrinks back from his trust, and from the duty he owes to the Public.

The admission of the necessity of indiscriminate compensation is fatal to all Reform whatever. If you compensate those who do nothing,

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and pay those that do the business, the official regulation and arrangement may be made better; but the expence must be greater, which the state of the Public Finances cannot on any account allow of. Proceeding on the principles laid down, and proved conclusively by the Commissioners of Accounts, Oeconomy and Regulation may go hand in hand.

In the Eleventh Report I likewise find a very exact statement of what is paid annually by the Public, as Interest and Charges for the Debt that is funded, amounting in whole to Eight Millions One Hundred and Six Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-two Pounds. There is also subjoined a statement of certain parts and to certain periods of the unfunded Debt; I suppose as far as the Commissioners could authoritatively proceed on this subject. The amount of what these statements contain of the Unfunded Debt is Eighteen Millions Eight Hundred and Fifty-six Thousand Five Hundred and Forty-one Pounds

( 13 )

Pounds of Principal, and Five Hundred and Seventeen Thousand Five Hundred and Seventy-nine Pounds of Interest. But, alas! this is not all the Unfunded Debt: I doubt whether it is much more than the Half of it. The Debt of the Navy, which at the period of the 31st of October last (by Account No. 39, in the Appendix to the Eleventh Report of the Commissioners of Accounts) amounted only to Eleven Millions Seven-Hundred and Fifty-eight Thousand Six Hundred and Ninety-nine Pounds of Principal, and Three Hundred and Sixty-six Thousand Nine Hundred and Fourteen Pounds of Interest; on the 31st of the following December amounted, Principal and Interest, to Fourteen Millions Seven Hundred and Twenty-one Thousand Six Hundred and Ninety-four Pounds; and probably by this time has advanced to near to Sixteen Millions.

It is a science to find out in the business of the Unfunded Debt the very Heads under which the

the Public stands indebted. We have Debts that are liquidated, but not paid; Debts that are in part liquidated, in part paid; Debts that are neither liquidated nor paid in whole nor in part; Debts of probable, Debts of certain contingency; Debts of anticipation; Debts arising from defective Taxes; Debts proceeding from deficient Grants. We have Debts of Honour as well as Debts of Justice, and we have Debts that have not much of either, yet will be paid; Debts that can be averaged, Debts that can be estimated, Debts that can be neither; Debts that bear interest in whole, Debts that bear interest in part; Debts of Interest incurred on both, and we have Debts that bear no Interest. We have likewise Debts of which the Amount is voted, but no Fund provided for the Payment of it; Debts brought in, Debts to be brought in from the four quarters of the globe.

This is the best designation of the Heads of the Unfunded Debt I can make; and yet, ample

ple as it is, I do not doubt but that there are Omissions in it.

Upon the most deliberate view, and the best conjectural calculation I can make, I judge Twenty Millions and upwards of these Debts carry Interest; and I apprehend all these articles, when fully adjusted and satisfied, will amount, Principal and Interest, to something above Thirty-five Millions; and the Annuity and Charges, including a reasonable profit to Subscribers to the Loans, and assuming that the Three per Cents. do not rise above 60, will amount to nearly One Million Nine Hundred Thousand Pounds; which, added to the Eight Millions One Hundred and Six Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-two Pounds now paid by the Public for the Debts already Funded, will bring the Annual Demands on the Public from the Public Creditors to something above the Ten Millions I state them at.

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I tire the Public and I tire myself with too tedious details of this business; still hoping, still wishing, to discover some great and capital Error that I have committed. Surely if I am right, or near to right, in all the motley annals of the aberrations of the human mind from right reason, no infatuation so compleat, so extensive, so durable, both on the part of the Borrowers and on that of the Lenders, can be found.

I know I am accused of exaggeration: I fear the contrary will be found the truest. The current Annual Peace-Establishment I was thought to have overrated at Five Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly; yet this very year it will, I apprehend, amount to upwards of Six Millions, even after a reasonable allowance is made for the Remains of the War; for all of these Remains must not be deducted, as Parts of them will continue to swell our Peace-Establishment for years to come; probably till we shall  
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be either obliged to prepare for, or be engaged in a new war.

To constitute a proper and permanent System of Finance with absolute security for the present, and good and reasonable prospects for the future, there is no doubt but the statement I have made of Eighteen Millions net yearly, is a fair and just (and I wish I could say practicable to be complied with) demand on the Public, things continuing in the situation they are in.

But it being quite wild and absurd (at least it appearing so to me) to imagine that so large an addition as nearly Six Millions net yearly, over and above what they at present pay, can be wrung from the hands of the people of this Island; there seems to be a necessity of deviating from the paths of Certainty into those of Probability, of Speculation, of Hope, and even I fear of Possibility. In what follows of Estimate-kind,

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I do not pledge myself for the practicability of many things proposed, nor for the certain produce of any but that which will arise from the Duplication of the Land Tax, localled as it at present is.

The present Revenue having in the Year ended 10th of October 1782, (the latest period I have seen, but I believe 1783 is not very materially different) something exceeded Twelve Millions; and the Receipt-Tax being now I hope established, and better things being to be expected from the East-India Company after their affairs shall be put into order; I think the even, perhaps probable expectation of the Amount of the present Taxes may be carried to the length of Thirteen Millions net yearly.

The last Parliament had before them the consideration of the great sums lost to the Revenue by illicit Trade: this subject will undoubtedly

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be resumed by the next Parliament. Great and happy effects will, I hope, flow from their deliberations; and certainly some good will follow, if they attach themselves to the great and capital objects by which the Revenue suffers, and, above all, to Tea; and do not distract and fritter away their attention on trifles: though I am doubtful that the Sum pretended to be lost to the Revenue by Smuggling is considerably exaggerated. A clamour once raised, without any-body whose business it is to contradict it, but on the contrary, generally exceeds the truth. It is a vulgar saying, That more mischief than ought to be is laid to the charge of even the Devil himself. The best informations I can obtain from intelligent people of good abilities, though ill employed in this pernicious traffic, do not make the Sum sent out of the Kingdom for the purchase of Commodities to be smuggled into it, to have exceeded almost in any year Twelve Hundred Thousand Pounds, But taking it for granted, as it is stated in the

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Report to the House of Commons, that the loss to the Revenue amounts to Two Millions yearly; if you double the price by suppressing illicit trade, the consumption falls off in due proportion, and is brought to One Million; and as still some Smuggling must take place, I think Five Hundred Thousand Pounds of yearly addition to the Revenue from new parliamentary regulations is a fair concession.

I have stated my ideas on this subject in a former performance, and have allotted this sum as attainable by new regulations, particularly by a proper extension of the Excise Laws. Many very sensible, very intelligent people in subjects of this kind, with whom I have since conversed, have thought it too great an allowance: however, I am still of opinion, that if regulations of force and efficiency can be made with relation to Importations from Ireland, this, or even a somewhat larger addition may be procured to the Revenue.

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But matters with IRELAND are in a situation truly delicate and perilous. I fear Ireland was lost in America! All (if so much) that appears to me to remain is a choice, amongst difficult and dangerous expedients and hazardous alternatives.

The Navigation from Ireland can be performed during eight months of the year in open boats, in the space of the continuance of the darkness of a single night, to a very long and accessible-to-boats tract of the coast of Scotland, and to some parts, I believe, of that of Wales. This renders the illicit landing of goods from Ireland in these parts not to be prevented by any diligence or force whatever. Indeed, ships of force cost a great deal, and signify very little against Smugglers; and what is once brought in finds its way and circulation somehow or other in tolerable safety. The seizures on land are not very considerable.

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I must here observe, that there is one part of this subject, I mean that of the high Duties on Foreign Spirits, which merits the utmost attention of Parliament, and some alteration and very considerable diminution must, I think, be made in them; even supposing the Revenue should hazard to lose something pretty considerable. The consequence of the high Duties on Brandy and Rum has been a very great decrease of legal, and an increase to a great extent of illicit importation of these commodities.

But what still is infinitely of worse consequence, from the decrease in the inland parts of the country of the use of foreign spirits from their dearth, the use of those distilled from corn has increased, and the bread of the poor is thereby rendered dear and precarious. After a very great crop exceedingly well got in, the price of bread is not likely to be much lower this year than it was the last year, when the crop was both greatly deficient and ill preserved. In Ireland, under the

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the same circumstances, the poor are starving, and a Bill is brought into their Parliament for prohibiting for a time Distilling; and I see, by a laudable exertion of the Volunteers in the West of Ireland in suppressing illicit distillation, oatmeal, the staff of life of that country, is mentioned in the Papers to have fallen from 16s. to 13s. 6d. the hundred weight.

The bread of the poor is a consideration to which every other should give way. If this cannot be had in plenty, and at a reasonable price, tumult, dejection, and depopulation ensue. In the present state and consumption of corn by Distillation in this Kingdom, I apprehend bread will not be cheap in the most fruitful years; and in others it will be greatly too dear for the poor to purchase it in a quantity adequate to their necessity. And hence there will be a necessity often to suspend distilling altogether, which loads this part of our Revenues in their

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present situation with uncertainty, or with the other far more pernicious consequences already mentioned.

I should advise, therefore, to lower the Duties so as Rum could be sold at Eight Shillings a gallon, and Brandy about Nine Shillings. This would in a good measure prevent the smuggling of these liquors; and as they are more palatable than Malt Spirits, supposing they would be dearer, yet great quantities would be consumed, by which great benefit would be procured to, and the murmurs of our West India Islands would be silenced, and a due proportion necessary to keeping under the too great consumption of corn by distilling would be established. Wheat being a grain universally cultivated, and almost always to be had from some country or other, the price of it generally bears no just proportion to that of the inferior grains, which are for common greatly dearer than proportionally they ought to be, and the price of them is more immediately affected

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affected by distillation: yet from these, particularly from oats, the bread of the poor must be made in all Scotland, and in a great measure and extent in the Northern parts of England. Wheaten bread, where there is little or nothing of animal food to eat with it (and that is the case of the poor Northern labourers) does not give the same proper strength for labour that oaten bread does.

I make no excuses for this detail: it needs none; for the poorest parts of the Community ought to be the primary objects of the care of every just and humane Legislature; for they are by far the most numerous, and by far the most useful.

To make it at all possible for the Public to go on, and to do justice to their Creditors, a further burthen must of necessity be laid on the Landed Property. I mentioned in a former work a Duplication of the Land Tax as (if universally or even generally practicable) the most easy, the

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most ascertained, and the least expensive in the collecting of any expedient I knew of; and I valued the net produce at One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly; and I am confident it would not produce less: and I still think there is no method of raising so considerable a sum to which fewer objections can be made; at least I know of none. I wonder much, that in all the negotiations for the union of Parties in which the Landed Interest so meritoriously distinguished themselves last winter at the St. Alban's, something of this kind, as an inducement and basis to such an union, was not mentioned. The allusion to the junction of rivers is a favourite and a fashionable one with the Public; I shall therefore, even in contempt of geography, make use of it, and suppose a junction of the Garonne, the Shannon, and my native Tweed. What would follow, but a noisy, roaring, rapid, foaming, frothy torrent, corroding and consuming the fertility of the land through which it flowed? Add

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the mud, the slime, the fatness of the Landed Interest of England, you turn the barren hungry stream into a fruitful Nile, who

From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,  
And broods o'er Britain with his wat'ry wings.

But to quit speaking in parables, what could have been expected towards the providing for the Public necessities from the junction of the Leaders of the two adverse Parties? Alas! they are the Younger Sons of Younger Brothers; they have nothing to give towards the public support, but words; and of these, God knows, they are not avaricious. What signify the over-grown rent-rolls ostentatiously drawn out on the side of each Competitor, if the possessors of them will not, in the Sporting language, back their favourite candidate with a single shilling? Whig *Rigorism* might perhaps have winked at some sympathizing and illegal Benevolence given to the Public from such enormous disproportioned wealth: but

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in this I fear both Parties will remain strictly constitutional. Be that as it may, Two Millions yearly, or near-hand to it, must be laid on the Landholders, or all is at an end. For on Trade and Consumption, Diminutions rather, on the general balance, than Additions must take place, or they will dwindle into nothing.

This new burthen on the Land, stated at One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds, included, the Whole levied on the Subject will, according to the present Scheme and Speculation, amount to Fifteen Millions Three Hundred Thousand Pounds net yearly; and, with the Expence of Management and Collecting, estimated at eight per cent. will make the gross sum raised annually on the Inhabitants of this Island to amount to upwards of Sixteen Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds; a greater sum than ever was known to be raised on a population so small in numbers as that of Britain in

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any country, except in part of the dominions of the Dutch Republic; and I believe nearly equal to what every individual is supposed to pay there, though there what forms the poorest and most numerous class of our people, viz. the Day-Labourers for agriculture and country purposes, is in a manner intirely wanting; those who here feed all the other classes; and by a most ungrateful return, alas! are but very poorly fed by them.

From the fact and reasoning premised, any Addition to our Incomes by Taxes beyond what is already established, or furnished and stated as possible, must appear totally absurd and impracticable. Oeconomy is an idle word, the stale profession of every Minister; but it goes no farther; nor, indeed, if fairly and honestly pursued, could it afford any relief that could almost be known or felt in the present accumulations of our distresses. There is nothing therefore, I apprehend,

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prehend, remains, that can relieve this Country to any useful extent and purpose, but the parting with some of our Foreign Possessions which cost the most to the Public, and bring the smallest returns of profit or of national consequence.

In this class CANADA stands the most prominent; a wide world of Wilderesses, with an unmeasurable Line of Frontier, pretended to be defended by Fortresses thinly spread along it, weak in themselves, too distant to support each other, or to be supported by or to support the Capital, ill placed at the extremity of the Line. The possession of this barren Wilderness costs the Nation, I imagine, Six Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly, and it will be an increasing expence. New Jealousies and new Jobs will beget new Fortresses, and new Fortresses will engender new Establishments; and I doubt not in a few years the expence will not be less than a Million yearly. It cost the French immense sums, and yet the Inhabitants

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tants were always murmuring that they did not get enough. The Establishments were ill-paid, and their whole transactions were nothing but Complaints, Confusion, and Litigation.

I remember, at the Peace before the last, the French felt with great sensibility the inferiority of the Terms in all other concessions and respects; but when the giving up of CANADA was mentioned, the invariable answer was, "*Grand bien leur fasse!* Much good may it do them!" Yet the French had a very material, very weighty object and reasons for keeping it, viz. the checking the growth of our American Colonies; at that time, alas! held the rising bulwark of the strength and prosperity of Britain.

To us I cannot see how the holding of CANADA at present can be of the least consequence or credit. The profits of the part we still possess of the Fur Trade, and the exports to it, can  
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surely be but a small compensation for the great expence this Country is put to by keeping possession of this dreary waste : I think, therefore, there can be no hesitation as to the propriety of abandoning it.

The next of our possessions in the line of great expence without a proportional return is GIBRALTAR. The expence of it, together with the necessary reparations, will, I dare say, for many years to come cost upwards of Five Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly. Besides, it has been often asserted, that SPAIN would purchase it at the price of Ten Millions : so here would be a double advantage; an Expence ceasing, and a Profit arising; and both together would, it is presumed, produce to the Public a benefit of One Million yearly.

In point of profit, I believe GIBRALTAR stands on no better footing than CANADA. But though I

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know and admit that national point of Honour is a valuable possession, and though I admire and do justice to the gallantry with which it was defended; yet I think in the present situation, in the present great want of Resources, and great need for them, a Minister would be honourably unpopular by disposing of GIBRALTAR to the best advantage.

These are all the possible Resources that I can discover. Let us therefore now see how these Schemes and Speculations would make up and correspond with the Annual National Demands of a Peace-Establishment.

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| R E C A P I T U L A T I O N .   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| The Taxes already established sup-<br>posed to advance so as to produce<br>yearly net,                                      | £.13,000,000       |
| Additional yearly from new Regula-<br>tions of Customs and Excise, net,   | 500,000            |
| Addition from a Duplication of the<br>present Land Tax, yearly net,   | 1,800,000          |
| Addition from the Dereliction of Ca-<br>nada yearly,  | 600,000            |
| Addition from the Cession of Gi-<br>braltar, the price being supposed<br>to be applied to the Extinction of<br>Debt yearly, | 1,000,000          |
| Total Annual Income,  | <u>16,900,000</u>  |
| Total Annual Demand,  | £.18,000,000       |
| Total Annual Income, by addition<br>of Income or Diminution of Ex-<br>which is in effect the same,                          | 16,900,000         |
| Balance wanting,  | <u>£.1,100,000</u> |

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By this account there appears, that there would still be wanting One Million One Hundred Thousand Pounds to make up the Eighteen Millions; but as One Million Four Hundred Thousand Pounds, part of the Eighteen Millions required, is a Surplus and Sinking Fund, and the net expence amounts to no more than Sixteen Millions Six Hundred Thousand Pounds; could these Speculations take place, and be as productive as we have stated, the National Expence would be answered, and a small Annual Surplus over of Three Hundred Thousand Pounds; and (with the benefit of a Lottery and issuing Exchequer Bills) it might be raised to Half a Million; with which, I think, we might go on, and make things no worse than what they are.

I am very sensible how crude and undigested these Speculations are; and I doubt not many greatly better, more certain, and infinitely less humiliating plans are in readiness to be produced

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by the contending Parties, so soon as they are established in power. Indeed, this matter presses with the force of irresistible necessity; for at present the situation of the Public Creditors is altogether deplorable: for if the present Annual Revenue does not exceed Twelve Millions, and there is no grounds or authority to state it at any thing that signifies more; and if the Annual Demand for the Debt Funded and Unfunded, and foreseen with certainty, shall amount to Ten Millions yearly (and from what I have substantiated, it cannot amount to materially less); and if the Civil List and current Peace-Establishment are nearly as I have stated them (and I apprehend the probability is, that they, particularly the last, will rather amount to more than less than I have estimated them at); these matters being so, the Public Account will stand as follows:

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|--|---|---------------|
| To the Creditors of the Public at<br>10s. in the pound         | - | £. 5,000,000  |
| To the Civil List, Prince of Wales's<br>Establishment included |   | 1,100,000     |
| To the current Annual Expence of<br>the Peace-Establishment    |   | 5,500,000     |
| Total Annual Expence   | - | £. 11,600,000 |

By this it appears, that the present Annual Income of the Nation, paying the Public Creditors only *Ten Shillings in the Pound*, exceeds in no more the Annual Expenditure than in Four Hundred Thousand Pounds; a surplus necessary to secure the punctual and regular payment of the Eleven Millions Six Hundred Thousand Pounds. Hence it follows, that in the present state of things, in time of Peace the Creditors of the Public can only be paid *Ten Shillings in the Pound*; and in time of War, when the Extraordinary Expences of the War shall amount to Five Millions Annually, or upwards, (and few Wars

Wars are carried on at so moderate an expence) they can receive nothing at all.

But fairer hopes, brighter prospects rise to view! The Public have now got a Minister the Offspring of their Addresses, the Child of their Prayers.

Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,  
Irrita perpetuâ solvent formidine terras.  
—Omnis feret omnia tellus,  
Non rastros patietur humus, non vinea falcem.

Till these poetical prophecies are accomplished, from Addresses so many and so warm, certainly something more will be expected; for certainly something more is meant than a few polished periods on the abstract points of Privilege and Prerogative, and a few hackneyed professions of Love and Loyalty to fill and figure away with in the Newspapers.

When RICHARD CROMWELL, once Lord Protector of the three Kingdoms of England, Scotland,  
land,

land, and Ireland, on the Restoration found himself under the necessity of leaving Britain, he shewed a particular anxiety for the safety of a little box he carried with him. Being asked what its contents were, he said, it contained the Lives and Fortunes of all the good People of England. Yet not a Shilling was spent, not a Sword was drawn in support of his cause.

Now, the case will be very different, indeed; and I shall under-rate the gratuitous contribution, in support of their favourite Minister, of the City of LONDON, in estimating it at no more than Ten Millions. To LONDON, the great emporium, the great center and repository of the wealth of the World, Ten Millions will never be missed out of its great and boundless circulation;—a single ream of paper more than supplies the want;—to the City of WESTMINSTER I assign Five Millions; to WESTMINSTER, that City of Palaces, the Seat and Temple of refined Luxury, where Pleasure is pushed to the very confines

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confines of its opposite, Pain. Something taken from their profusions will do no more than restore the zest of nature and simplicity to their enjoyments: by becoming less expensive they will become more pleasing. I let off the rest of the great and opulent Addressing Counties, Cities, Burghs, and Corporations, too cheaply for Fifteen Millions more.

This done, our young Minister will stand on something of a firm basis. With this aid, joined to a calm and firm resolution in the People to bear with patience and temper the heavy loads that still must be laid upon them, the public affairs may go on with some small degree of eclat, and with even a probability of redeeming and saving the State. But without something of this kind, some great spontaneous exertion, general and decisive on the part of the Public, the Ministerial life of our young Favourite must be as short as the natural one of his prototype the young Marcellus was:

Osten-

( 41 )

Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra  
Esse finent. Nimium vobis Romana propago  
Vifa potens, superi, propria hæc si dona fuissent.

Quis strepitus circa Comitum! quantum instar in ipso est!  
Sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra.

Believe me, without the Public support him by some great, decided, unprecedented acts of generosity, this all-praised Youth can no more continue Minister than I could; even I, who here resign the prize, and offer (if he will receive it from hands so mean) the Civic Crown of Financial Pre-eminence to any person who in the present state of things will on solid grounds of probability shew how he is to pay *Ten Shillings in the pound* to the Creditors of the Public in Years of Peace and in Years of War.

I come now to the serious moral of my tale, and will deviate no more into folly, if I can help it.

G

Addresse

( 42 )

Addresses at all times of an absurd exaggeration, if they mean nothing, are pernicious as well as foolish deceits; are false fires, that mislead to ruin the very Minister and System they pretend to support.

Without a generous, a great, and voluntary Contribution from the Public, Government cannot go on, at least with honour, and to any good effect and purpose, though Ministers may deceive, may procraftinate, may swindle a few Millions more from a deluded People. It is therefore wisdom, as well as virtue, to support the State, at the hazard of every inconvenience to ourselves as individuals. In its security, that of every thing we possess is involved.

The poor, even the middling, classes of our People can bear but little more. All that can be expected from Taxes on them is discontent. It is from the infinite multitude of rich individuals  
that

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that relief must come. They cannot distinctively be sufficiently reached by Taxes, and proportionally not at all. If they do any thing to purpose, it must be by the spontaneous effusions of true wisdom, true patriotism. One-twentieth of all they possess, given fairly to the use of the Public, would, I apprehend, go far to secure the remaining nineteen parts.

Though I scarce rank amongst the class of rich individuals, yet my contribution shall be paid at fight. The cold hand of neglect laid on me and mine does not chill the ardour of my more than empty protestations, my more than unavailing professions towards the support of the State. Yet I hope I do not presume too much (I flatter myself I do not) when I say, that a little attention shewn to me would have been some small pledge, some slight assurance to the Public, that all that was intended was fair, was honour-  
G 2 able,



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able, and within the bounds of rational practicability. Not that I by any means mean to insinuate, that any thing intended is otherwise.

As for my Plan, stated above, the human heart is too hard and interested, the wisdom of man is too narrow and contracted, to hope much success from it : but I do not know any other that is more likely to succeed. I wish to God I did !

The present Minister has my good wishes. From him personally I hope good things. He has moreover the good opinion of the few friends that I have, on whose political integrity I can, and on whose political sagacity I think I may rely. He will have their support in Parliament : he has their confidence already. My confidence, poor as it is, I will reserve freely and gratefully to bestow, when events shall call it forth, and shall justify it. Zeal without knowledge does credit to no Party. I do not perfectly under-

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understand the present System, which appears to me to labour under various palpable contradictions ; nor can I see how, from persons and principles so heterogeneous and discordant, a cordial, necessary harmony and union can arise.

If I am not impartial, I am nothing ; and to be so I must declare, that I think there is a strong bad family likeness and resemblance betwixt all Administrations. The second India Bill had many of the worst features, and wanted some of the best of the first. Forced consent and open violence are related to one another in no very remote degree. The Receipt Tax was not an unjust, but an unwise and impolitic measure ; for Taxes so universally unpopular never are productive, without fenced in by strong necessity (which this could not be) ; but the odium, partial and decided against the last Ministry, at any rate ought to have been common ; for it was generally supported by both Parties.

If the abettors of the American War were to make so considerable a part of the present System, the

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the selection of the first was certainly infinitely preferable to that of the second Coalition. The Reform in Parliamentary Representation does not appear to be the ruling passion of any Party when in power. Creating new Peerages to secure or promote influence in the Lower House of Parliament, seems reprobated only in theory. These are presumptions that give pause, but not proofs.

The object of this work, at least the principal one, is to lay before the Public the naked and undisguised state of the Public Situation and Distress; and to evince that general professions, if not substantiated by great and generous acts of benevolence towards the State, do no good, but, on the contrary, much harm. The idle exaggerations (which I have here endeavoured to repress) already published have done much hurt to the present Minister; for they have raised the public expectations far (I imagine) beyond his powers of gratifying them; far beyond the limits that truth and possibility admit of in our present difficult

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cult and embarrassed circumstances. For my part, if a proper attention is paid to the Liberty of the Subject, and if the Prerogatives of the Crown are not now attempted to be elevated too high, in proportion as they were before attempted to be too much depressed; if a will and power is manifested to do all practicable good, and if a plan of government is concerted and followed out by which we can go on, and in matters of Finance make things rather better than worse;—these events taking place, I shall, as I think myself in duty bound, give my warm assent and approbation to the present Minister. If he does more, my song of triumph, my shout of applause, shall attend on him. I most sincerely wish to be his friend; but I shall never become enough his enemy to be his flatterer.

In the mean time, I will not condemn an enthusiasm which I have felt, and of which I still feel a little. I will pass no censure on the public joy, on the public transports. I will not call them rash; I will not call them precipitate; I will not even call them premature. No;—they are the

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the just presentiments, the precious foretastes of the happiness that is to follow from the great, essential, and decisive services that are to be rendered to the Public.

In the political scale of justice and success, I am surely a man more sinned against than sinning; yet I conjure all to follow the example I mean to set. I intreat and implore All to sacrifice even their justest resentments to the Love of their Country. In this great principle let all meaner passions be absorbed and lost. Let us join, all of us, heart and hand to establish on a solid and permanent basis the Solvency of the State. Without Resources for Offence, without Resources for Defence; without Incomes adequate, or any thing near to adequate to even a Peace-Establishment; Constitution, Liberty, even Property itself, are but empty names. We are a Blank amongst the Nations of the Earth; we cease to be a People.

CULHORN, April 28, 1784.

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