

210-17



HALF AN HOUR'S  
ADVICE  
TO  
NOBODY  
KNOWS WHO.

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L O N D O N:  
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T O

N O B O D Y

K N O W S   W H O .



S, by His Majesty's pleasure, you are soon to be appointed to the high office of Chief Counsellor, for the benefit of Prince and people, and to direct the weighty and important affairs of this kingdom, permit me to request of you, that, for their sakes, as well as your own,

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you

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you will make use of the experience of the actions of the several late Ministers, who have been able Financiers, with that judgment and integrity I will suppose you to possess, and to be actuated by; and that you will be resolved, with fortitude, to stand independent of any, even of yourself.

To do that which is right in itself, because it is right, is that just maxim you ought to pursue with a truly British spirit, as the only rule to be regarded for the public weal.

If experience is to assist, consider the days of Walpole. He kept the credit of the nation steady; rais'd the Sinking Fund; paid off now and then a million; kept the monied men, or creditors, quiet and contented; at the same time eased the land of that heavy

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heavy burthen so laudably and so long borne by the possessors. Excises on wine and tobacco were proposed by him: they were dropt. Experience has, perhaps, convinced us that measure was right; as, indeed, they are in all cases of public or wholesale trade; in regard to private houses, baneful. He might, with Sir John Barnard, have made a farther reduction of interest of the funds in 1738, if he would have consented to have taken off taxes on coals, &c. to a like amount of value. Opposition ran high. He liked not the terms. Two great and good measures were lost.

The debt then about fifty millions, war broke out. Unwilling to increase it, he retired. Mr. Pelham soon came on, he having knowledge of past transactions; and agreeing with and

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supported by Sir John Barnard, he went on with the war, and raised large sums annually, on funds created and granted for such loans, preserving the Sinking Fund entire and untouched. This just and wise conduct kept up the credit of the nation, in a war by no means so glorious or advantageous as that which succeeded, and enabled him, though the debt was then increased thirty millions, to reduce the interest of the annuities one per cent. by one half per cent. for seven years, the other half at the end of that term, by which near six hundred thousand pounds per annum is added for ever to the Sinking Fund for the service of the public. The peace lasted six years. The land tax was reduced.

That great and wise measure was taken, the ships of the enemy were seized, their sailors taken; war began  
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to spread itself into all quarters of the world; Mr. Pitt soon took the lead; success attended every where; Mr. Legge became Financier, assisted by Sir John Barnard; the people granted cheerfully sums almost incredible; funds were created and granted for the very large sums so borrowed; and the debt of the nation increased to about one hundred and forty millions; a sum by former times deemed insupportable, but which has now been said to be beneficial in a commercial nation, as so much new property acquired for gainers in trade to vest their fortunes in.

This account in general is sufficient, and do you make your observation and improvement: I will only add, that we are now in peace; it will be your part to keep us so; not by diminishing the naval power at present,

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but by lessening every other expence, to oblige our enemies to keep the treaties, or shew them you are ready to vindicate the breach of them, the only method to reap those fruits of peace, which the people may expect to enjoy: that taxes laid on necessaries be taken off in time of peace, only to be understood (as I dare say they will be chearfully borne) to be renewed in time of war.

The late conduct, in regard to the land-tax, seems to conclude, that the landed interest will, for the future, determine for themselves what subsidy they will give, and prevent you the trouble of that branch: be it so, they will, I have not the least doubt, always be ready and generous when wanted, and you will look well to the separate funds.

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To regulate the finances, to wind up the bottom of a most expensive war, to ease the labourer, to take taxes off necessaries in time of Peace, to lay new taxes on every degree or kind of luxury, be yours: to make excess and extravagance pay largely, and the luxurious consumer contribute towards the public service.

The tax on malt ought to be taken off for the same reasons with that on cyder: those on coals, candles, salt, soap, leather, and windows of cottages, be exchanged for taxes to be laid on servants and horses, above two in number; on wine, spirituous liquors, all exotic consumption, and wearers of lace and embroidery; not by excise, \* but by assessment, as the land-

\* Taxes collected by assessment, as the Stock, Land tax, &c. are brought in for 2l. 10s. per cent. those by excise, customs, &c. cost the public ten or eleven per cent.

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land-tax, and by the same collector, and appeal to the same commissioners, as not only a much cheaper method, but more sure to come at the real consumption, and of course to come at the produce, as well as what ought to be always regarded, the method most agreeable to the constitution,

For these reasons :

“ The coach and plate tax should  
“ be levied by assessment, and would  
“ not fail to produce more, than by  
“ the voluntary excise they now are ;  
“ as not to enter is not to pay ; but as  
“ assessors live in the same parish, they  
“ can judge better what to rate their  
“ neighbours for ; and I will venture  
“ to affirm, that, for one excise-officer  
“ lost to the power of a minister, you  
“ will gain the hearts of ten good  
subjects.”

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But I mean to confine myself to generals ; which I throw out without any view to direct, nor will I give a loose to imagination, when I might do it impartially, as not knowing to whom I write. Tho' I may, perhaps surprise you by one assertion, that no pension should be granted for more than 300l. per annum, as advantages and acquisitions attending great exploits are always large ; and honours, with parliamentary rewards, if necessary, will not be wanting.

And, Sir, whoever you are to whom this is addressed, accept it with my earnest wishes, that a good king may have the best, ablest, and honestest counsellors ; then the prince will be truly great, because his people will be happy.

And

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This general sketch of the method for the management of the funds, shews how advantages may be gained on the funds mortgaged by reduction of interest: how the opportunities lost by former Financiers may be regained and improved; and how luxury may be made to answer a beneficial purpose of contributing to the expences of the public. And here, contrary to Mr. Locke's opinion, that the land ultimately pays all taxes, it is evident that the merchant and monied man pays for his separate luxurious consumption: as for instance; the more of foreign goods consumed, the more duty is paid to the crown. The merchant and monied man pays for his separate consumption; and if by gain in trade, or possessing a large fortune in the funds, he keeps one or more servant of state or ease, the land cannot

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cannot be better till'd for such servant, who might be useful at the plough or at sea. The opinion therefore of that great man will remain good in theory, but it cannot now be practical; indeed the nation is grown much richer, and more money is employed in trade, and more interest arises from the funds as they now stand, so as to make a considerable property distinct from that of the land, but subject to the same laws, and cherished by the same commonwealth; and it is by a right disposal of these three kinds of national property, the Financier (for he must be always the Minister) may provide funds sufficient to supply a naval war; and at the same time quash all Excise laws that affect private property, which are therefore unnatural; and if that moderation and regard be practised

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practised by him towards the liberty of his fellow subjects, as becomes a generous Briton, he will win the hearts of the people in general to the Crown, and may lead them into every reasonable design for its honour.

Let any one judge from our history of the disposition of the people of this island, from the year 1688 to 1709, and compare it with the former part of the seventeenth century, and the four years which succeeded that æra, till the accession of the Illustrious House of Hanover, and he will there see how they were led; for they had shewn before they could not be driven.

He will see, that in spite of all opposition from faction, they were led on and prevailed to destroy the arbitrary overbearing power of the enemies

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mies of their religion, liberty, and property; and see how he may always lead them to the support of those valuable blessings; and that by these sure means too he will always be able to support himself with them, if his plan be founded in that moderation and benevolence, which shews it is not his own, or the interest of his friends that he pursues, but the good of the whole: the whole then will not fail to be his friends, and thus supported, he will remain quieter than most of his predecessors.

The Financiers that have been appointed since the late peace, have existed so short a time, that they had it not in their power to use their abilities, or extend the use of their experience to the service. So far as this view extends; but as it is founded in experience, I heartily wish they had;



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had; and hope those who may be appointed and intrusted with the management will, and begin early with a general plan in time of peace, to make at once these advantages for the public, as the time when you are at peace abroad is, perhaps, the only time you can spare the tax on malt, \* &c. necessaries to the labourer, and the properest time too to tax luxury, when it is in its highest swell, its candles, leather, and windows, on the fullest growth: and who would take off the duties on malt, coals, salt, soap, houses which have less than six windows, (to be laid on again in time of war, with that on cyder, if necessary,) in this time of scarcity, and lay it on articles of luxury: I say, if he who would take such measures

at

\* When the duty on malt can be spared, the duty on ale, beer, &c. for sale may be laid on as usual, to the value of 7s. 6d. per barrel.

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at this time, he would be deemed by every reasonable man a blessing to the species.

Let this be the rule of your conduct: lay such plans before your master, who, tho' young, has always shewn his good disposition; though exalted, is humane; and has any thing been, or may be done, contrary to that good temper the impartial world will always lay it to the door of his adviser.

I have not dipt my pen in gall, tho' indeed there has been great room for it, as much as ever in this period, being a time of peace; nor will I use a satirical invective, wishing rather to see good advice and good conduct, to applaud, rather than to censure.

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I have thus offered a general plan, founded on experience and observation, to avail the public of a large revenue against a future time of war, equal to the support of any naval armament against all the maritime powers; to ease, in time of peace, the laborious; to tax luxury, and take off the excise on private consumers; to lay it only where necessary on the \* wholesale trader; to prevent frauds on the public, and selling liquor made in their own cellars, for wine which has paid duty.

If this plan be found right, use it, alter, improve, or neglect it, as best in your own judgment; for I have no partiality; only let all the alterations be made for the better, and shall very gladly embrace, admire, and applaud.

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The excise meant to be laid on dealers of wine and tobacco in the year 1732, to prevent frauds in the revenue, took rise from a calculation that the consumption of wine in London and Westminster only amounted to 200,000 hogheads yearly; and that of duty paid on 80,000 only in the whole kingdom, and that of tobacco likewise, came vastly short of the consumption; and which, tho' I doubt not the revenue may be doubled, yet it is almost impossible to prevent every fraud to the consumer, as that of increasing that sold for wine by mixture, and wetting tobacco that it may weigh heavier.

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Every

( 20 )

Every single gentleman  
of the age of twenty-five,  
to pay 20l. per cent. on  
his income, above the an-  
nual sum of 50l. }

Every single lady of  
twenty-one years ditto. }

The American provinces ought to  
produce some way or other, which  
may be most natural, a considerable  
revenue for the support of govern-  
ment, if they expect to be protected.

The East-India Company should  
give up the right of dominion to  
the Government, and should have a  
grant (supposing the revenue to be  
1,500,000l. or upwards) of an an-  
nuity of one million per year, and  
the charter renewed for fifty years  
for

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for their trade, and the revenue  
should be brought home by bills  
of exchange, or specie, diamonds,  
&c. as can settle it with that  
country, not in goods, as that would  
injure the company's present trade;  
and all trade of companies, or private  
merchants, should be supported, pro-  
moted, and in every way encouraged.

Every one who is assessed for any  
article of luxury, becomes voluntarily  
so, as he may, by refusing such ar-  
ticles, save the duty; or if he will  
abate of his consumption in the whole,  
or in part of any one article, will save  
more than the total sum of such duty.  
Any one assessed for six horses, six  
dogs, or six servants, if he will keep  
one less, he will save the duty on the  
rest he continues; and the same may  
be observed on other articles.

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The list to a substantial good trader, or monied man, may be supposed to stand nearly thus:

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
To French wine —	0	0	0
To wine on fort —	4	0	0
To one other fort —	1	0	0
To rum —	1	0	0
To tea —	4	0	0
To one other (coffee or chocolate) —	1	0	0
To a coach or four- wheel carriage —	4	0	0
To one horse (two being allowed) —	1	0	0
To three servants (ditto)	3	0	0
To two dogs —	0	10	0
To 400 oz. of plate —	1	0	6
To lace, embroider'd, &c. habits —			
To wearing a sword —			

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( 23 )

I here suppose six servants, horses, &c. by keeping one servant less, one horse less, and by using only two sorts of wine, spirits, and other beverage, the person paying as above will gain very greatly by such reduction of expence, besides a lower price on malt liquor, if the duty on it be taken off.

The assessment to a consumer of luxury in high life, or who imitates those who are, will stand thus:

*l. s. d.*

Every foreign domestic,  
100*l.* per annum.

To French wine — 10 0 0  
To

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To wine	—	4	0	0
To other sorts of wine		6	0	0
To rum	—	1	0	0
To arrack and brandy		2	0	0
To tea	—	4	0	0
To coffee	—	1	0	0
To chocolate	—	1	0	0
To four-wheel carriages		20	0	0
To 20 servants	—	20	0	0
To 20 horses	—	20	0	0
To dogs, hounds, &c.		5	0	0
To plate	—	10	0	0
To lace, embroider, &c.		2	0	0
To a sword (supposed qualified)	—	5		
		<hr/>		
		100	0	0

By reducing only one servant, horse, &c. in any of the above articles, may save double the assessment.

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The country gentleman, or farmer, holding a large farm, may very well afford to pay for such articles as they are profitable to him.

I have set the foreign Domestic so high, as it may be made appear, by their known extravagance, that any one who discharges a French cook, will save a thousand pounds a year in his family.

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# NOBODY KNOWS WHO.

**I**N my last I stated generally the great transactions of the able Financiers, Walpole, Pelham, and Legge, assisted by Sir John Barnard, with some few observations, pointing out the great opportunities, and how they were embraced; or how they slipp'd, and were lost to the public, requesting you, when you may

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( 28 )

may be appointed to the care of the finances, to take that experience which time affords with the judgment I doubt not you are possess'd of.

From whence you will easily see, that all excises laid on private persons or houses, are unnecessary and injurious; that those laid on wholesale dealers are necessary and profitable, and indeed to be used, because the only means of gathering that advantage the subject has a right to.

That taxes on private possession, or use, as coaches, plate, and all other indulgences, or luxuries in private life, should be laid and gathered by assessment only, as the rate for the duty on stock, land and windows have always been.

And

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And that it will well become the person in the high office of the treasury, to lay duties on every article of luxurious consumptions in this manner, and at this time, in order to take off, in time of peace only, the heavy burden on the land, and on malt, coals, salt, candles, soap, leather, and windows in houses which have fewer than six in number.

You will likewise see, that the opportunity of peace is not to be lost in restoring public credit to its former strength and spirit; for notwithstanding the great increase of the national debt, so long as you find funds for the payment of the interest, it is no otherwise a burden; and in this only by taking the fund from the consumer, and paying it for interest to the lender: and do not fail to avail

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avail yourself of its rise to par, or above it, to make a reduction of interest for the benefit of the public, either by appropriating such reduction to the annihilation of the debt, or to the sinking fund, as was proposed and effected in 1749, in the same year the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle took place; and when the annuities bearing three per cent. interest were at 102l. per cent. only, by Mr. Pelham, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, by which the public have had the advantage of 580,000l. per annum during the course of the last war, and for ever.

The like value of our funds must be again, when you have wound up the whole arrears, and go on with the current service in time of peace, without adding to the debt, by borrowing fresh money every year; and

as

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as one may fairly conclude, that time is approaching, if not arrived, the credit will revive, the annuities will rise to the former value, and be higher than par, as they were in the year 1738, when such reduction of interest was proposed, and in 1749, when it was again proposed, and actually took place.

If that time be attended to: if the occasions be taken to reduce when the market will, by the price warrant it (and which the public has a right to avail itself of, against the lender, as the lender does in time of war, when annuities are sunk in value, and he becomes purchaser at fifteen or twenty per cent. below par) a very large advantage will return to the public on the funds charged to pay such annuities.

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( 32 )

I will suppose the annuities bearing three per cent. are about one hundred millions, at the value in the market of 105l. per cent. at such time to give notice to pay off such sum, or permit the proprietors to subscribe them as a loan on the following terms :

To receive for one year after such notice, 3 per cent.

For two years after 2 3-4ths per cent. per annum.

For two years after 2 1-half per cent. per annum.

For two years after at 2 1-4th per cent. per annum.

\* And then to remain at 2 per cent. by which a saving of one million per year will be made to the public for ever.

You

\* The consequence will naturally be the reduction of national interest.

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You may ask how far off is such time?

I answer, Not farther than good management keeps it, as shewn by the example of 1749.

If such measures are pursued, and such ought to be, the sinking fund may be valued at three millions per annum; and if the duties taken off malt, &c. in time of peace only, be replaced, which they must be, and those on the luxurious consumer, how happy a state will this nation be in, in case of a war breaking out?

You will then again have good reason to lay on the duties on malt and coals, &c. and be at once in possession of

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( 34 )

1.	
A sinking fund	3,000,000
*Duty on malt, cy- der, coals, salt, soap, candles, leather, and windows, —	2,000,000
Affessment on luxu- rious consumers }	1,500,000
† Land-tax —	20 00,000
per annum — 8,500,000	

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\* Must not omit to observe, that as some of these duties are, at present, mortgaged, for payment of interest on certain loans, the deficiency at present can only be made up by a surplus on other funds, and by savings on pensions, places, &c. a frugality the public have a right to expect.

† Have not mentioned Excise on wine and tobacco (as designed in 1732) in this account, then

( 35 )

A sum, if well disposed of, sufficient to support a naval war against all the maritime powers in the world.

As I doubt not this computation of the sinking fund and national revenue, may be fairly so valued, I must conclude this nation may be safe and happy, the act of settlement strongly guarded; this land, in which the Protestant religion, the liberty and property of the subject, are main-

C 2 tained

then supposed equal to a clear revenue of 500,000l. per annum.

The duty on malt amounts to about three shillings per hoghead on strong and small beer, as drank in private families; and the cyder drinker ought to pay the same duty to the public.

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tained, or kept inviolable, can have no fear from its avowed or secret enemies.

By assessment on luxurious consumers, on every house, to be collected by the collector of the land tax ;

*per Annum.*

*l. s. d.*

The house where a coach is kept, for every wheel, as now by Excise — } 1 0 0

Drinking wine of one fort — } 4 0 0

French wine — 10 0 0

Any other fort or kind, }  
at 1*l.* each fort.

For

( 37 )

For every servant in any family, of the age of fourteen years, more than two (apprentices excepted) at 1*l.* each per annum.

Drinking tea — 4 0 3

Coffee — 1 0 0

Chocolate — 1 0 0

Arrack — 1 0 0

Brandy — 1 0 0

Rum — 1 0 0

Any other spirits in the same manner. }

For each horse kept more than two, 1*l.* for each,

For

( 38 )

For the use of plate,  
at 5s. per hundred ounces,  
as at present by the Ex-  
cise,

Any person wearing  
gold or silver lace, or or-  
nament — 2 0 9

Any person wearing a  
sword, not having a  
right by commission or  
tenure — 2 0 0

Public-Houses selling  
any of the above li-  
quors; or for servants,  
horses, plate, &c. to be  
rated in proportion by  
assessment as far as fix-  
times.

Every

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Every person wearing  
silks or velvet habit, or  
furniture, per annum — 2 0 0

More may be added, or  
these diminished, as better  
judges think fittest, pro-  
perest, and best.

F I N I S.

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