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MEMOIRS

OF

HENRY HUNT, ESQ.

AS WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

IN HIS MAJESTY'S JAIL AT ILCHESTER,

IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET,

Volume 2

"Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In every work regard the Writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due."
POPE.

MEMOIRS OF HENRY HUNT.

Hunting, shooting, and fishing by day, and mixing in the thoughtless, gay, and giddy throng by night, soon, however, dispelled any unpleasant impression which this circumstance had made upon my mind. I every day became acquainted with new and more fashionable society than I had before associated with, and as my son was about to be christened, we were determined to give a sumptuous feast and a ball, at which upwards of forty friends sat down to dinner. When I recal to mind all those expensive and thoughtless proceedings, I can reflect with great satisfaction upon one circumstance; which is, that I

never forgot the poor. I always attended to their complaints, and ministered to their wants, when I could scarcely find time for any thing else. I never gave a feast that the poor did not partake of. Whether it were the celebration of a birth-day, or at a christening, they always came in for a share. I forgot to mention, that, when my son was born, I kept up the good ancient custom, which had been exercised with so much old English hospitality at my birth, by my father. Not only were toast and ale given to all my friends and neighbours, but my servants also had such a junketing as they will never forget. My birth-day, the 6th of November, I continued to celebrate as my father had done before his death; and I will here take leave to relate in what way I celebrated that event. I always had a party of private friends; but, while we were enjoying ourselves with every delicacy which the season afforded, the dinner generally consisting of different sorts of game of my own killing, dressed in various shapes—whilst me and my neighbouring friends and visitors were regaling ourselves, I was never unmindful of my poorer neighbours. Enford was a very extensive parish, containing a population of nearly seven hundred inhabitants. Amongst them there were a considerable number of old persons, for whom, after my father's death, I had successfully exerted myself, to procure them an increase of their miserable pittance of parish pay; which pay I had, as the reader will remember, raised from half-a-crown to three shillings and sixpence each per week. All these old people of the parish, of the age of sixty-three and upwards, I invited annually, without any distinction, to come and partake of the feast on the sixth of November. The servants' hall was appropriated to their use on that day; and as there were seldom less than twenty above this age, we always had as large a party as the house would well contain. There were about equal numbers of men and women, but several of the latter were the oldest, some of them being nearly ninety years of age, and many of them above eighty. As this parish consisted of eight hamlets, some parts of it, where the old persons resided, were at a distance of nearly two miles; and as, from their extreme old age, some of the poor creatures were unable to walk so far and back again, I always sent a cart and horse round to bring them. They had an excellent dinner of substantial meat and pudding, besides the dainties that went from my table, after which they regaled themselves with good old October or cyder. The day and night were always passed with the greatest hilarity, and I was never completely satisfied, unless I was an eye-witness that there was as much mirth and jollity amongst my old friends in the hall, as there was amongst my other friends in the dining and drawing rooms. To bring these poor old creatures together, and to make them once a year happy in each other's company, was to me a source of inexpressible delight. The very first year I assembled them after my father's death, several of them had never seen each other for eight or ten years, in consequence of their inability to leave their homes. They were overjoyed at meeting each other again, as it was a pleasure which they had long since banished from their hopes. One or two of them, who had never been a hundred yards from their own humble sheds for years before, and who had resigned all thoughts of ever going so far from their homes again, till they were carried to their last long home in the church-yard, were now inspired with new hopes, and appeared to enjoy new life; and they actually met their old workfellows and acquaintances, and spent a pleasant day with them on the 6th of November, in the hall at Chisenbury House, for eight or ten years afterwards, where they never failed to recount all the events of their youthful days. They were all full of the tales of former times, and of the anecdotes of my forefathers, of which they had been eye-witnesses. One gave a narrative of a feast of which he had partaken, another had danced at my grandfather's wedding, a third had nursed my father, and all of them were past their prime when I was born. To listen to their garrulity, and to witness the pleasure they felt in describing and recalling to each other's recollection, the scenes of years long gone by, and their opinion respecting the alteration in the times, was to me a source of indescribable delight. An old man and woman, who were each of them above eighty years of age, always sung with great glee a particular duet, which they had sung together, at my grandfather's home-harvest, upwards of sixty years before. Two women and a man, all above eighty, regularly danced a reel. Each individual sung a song, or told a story, and, to finish the evening, a tremendous milk-pail, full of humming *toast and ale*, wound up the annual feast, which set the old boys' and girls' heads singing again. Then, each heart being made full glad, care was taken that no accident or inconvenience should happen to such old and infirm people, by their being obliged to hobble home in the dark. A steady carter, Thomas Cannings, and an able assistant, loaded them all up in a waggon, in which they were drawn to their respective homes, and deposited there in perfect safety, where they enjoyed a second pleasure in recounting to their neighbours the merry scenes that passed on the squire's birthday. It will easily be believed by the reader, that they looked forward to the Christmas treat, of the same sort, and from thence to the next birth-day, with as much anxiety as the country lads and lasses look forward to the annual wake or fair.

The oldest woman in the parish had, all the year round, an invitation to a Sunday's dinner; and, what is very remarkable, Hannah Rumbold, who was the first Sunday's pensioner of mine, commenced it at the age of *seventy-four*, and regularly continued it till she was eighty-three; scarcely ever missing a dinner, from accident or illness, the whole time, and never from illness, without the dinner being sent to her own home. This, by some, may be called ostentation—be it so; it was the way in which I discovered my pride; and I trust, at all events, that it was equally laudable with the generous boon of our reverend doctor and justice, of the "*Old Alderney Cow*." What a history have I heard of this beneficent, generous, humane, *chaste*, and *pious* parson, in consequence of the story of the Old Cow;

but, as some of the anecdotes require confirmation, without which they are almost incredible, I must pause till the next Number, before I hand them down, together with the doctor and the old cow, to posterity. I had now made an engagement to go with some brother sportsmen to Wales, on a grouse shooting party. Our dogs and guns having been sent on before with our servants, we started, two of us, in my curricle, and the third person met us at the New Passage, near Bristol. Unfortunately, we arrived there too late for the tide; there was only one more boat could pass over the Severn that night, and that boat was already hired, and waiting to take over the old Marquis of Lansdown. This was a heavy disappointment to us, as our dogs were on this side of the water, and would, the next day, have between twenty and thirty miles to travel, to Pontypool, where we were going to shoot. The twelfth of August, which was the first day for grouse-shooting, was on the following day, and therefore our dogs ought to have gone on some part of the way that very evening, that they might be fit for the field, or rather the hills, as soon as the shooting commenced. What was to be done? There was no contending against the tide. At last I made up my mind to ask the old Marquis to allow the dogs and a servant to pass over with him. My companions declined joining in the application, as they were fearful that he would take it as an insult; and, at all events, there was little chance of his compliance, as the boat was but a small one, and he had his servants and a considerable portion of luggage to carry, the whole being nearly enough to fill the boat. I, however, wrote a note and requested an audience, which was instantly granted: the noble Marquis, on my entering the room, politely asking me whether there was any thing he could do to oblige me? I related to him our unfortunate case, which I represented as most forlorn; and which, by the bye, none but sportsmen can comprehend. On his perceiving my anxiety, he laughed heartily, and said, "Make yourself easy, Mr. Hunt; I will with great pleasure take you and your dogs over with me in my boat, and I shall be most happy to have your company." I thanked him warmly, but hinted that I had two companions, which would be too many for the boat. "Come, come," said he, "we will talk to the boatman. It certainly will not do to overload; but if he should think there will be too many, I will, nevertheless, so manage as to set you at ease upon the subject; for I shall feel great pleasure in having it in my power to facilitate your sport. As my immediately crossing the river is of little consequence to me, I will remain on this side till the morning, and you shall go in the boat, upon condition that, you and your friends will occupy the beds and eat the supper that I have bespoken at the Black Rock, on the other side. I expressed my grateful sense of his polite attention; but, as the boatman had now arrived, and assured him that he could take us all in his boat with great safety, it was arranged that we should go together.

The Marquis having finished his tea, we all embarked. He had his housekeeper and his valet, and we had myself and two friends, with our servant, and two brace of pointers. The old Marquis of Lansdown, the father of the present Marquis, was not only one of the most accomplished gentlemen and profound statesmen of the age, but his liberality and hospitality were truly characteristic of the old English nobility. He knew who and what I was, perfectly well, although we were never before personally acquainted; and he remarked, that my situation in life rendered me one of the most independent men in the kingdom. He dwelt upon the talents of Lord Henry Petty, who was his second and favourite son; and he prognosticated, that he would be an eminent politician, and that some day he would shine at the head of the English Government. He, however, emphatically said, that, after all, his son's situation would never be so independent as mine was, because he would always be bound in the trammels of party. He invited me to Bow-wood, upon his return, for which I politely thanked him, informing him, at the same time, that as I had some friends out of Berkshire staying at my house, I meant, with his permission, to take them some day to see the house, gardens, and park, at Bow-wood. To this he replied, that he hoped he should be at home when we came; that he should feel the greatest pleasure in shewing it to us himself; but that, go whenever we would, he should be very happy for his people to shew it me and my friends, although they did not in general make a practice of doing it. "You will find it," said he, "Mr. Hunt, a comfortable residence for a country gentleman. It is small, but comfortable."

I had two or three days good sport, in grouse shooting, though my friends, who were too delicate sportsmen to encounter, with success, the difficulties and dangers of the Welsh mountains, returned, without having killed a single bird. It was, however, altogether, a pleasant excursion, and as we returned we spent a day or two at the Fish-ponds, near Bristol, with Dr. Fox, who had recently paid me a visit at Chisenbury, as a friend of one of the shooting party. As we were on our way home, the Marquis of Lansdown's polite and gentlemanly conduct became the subject of conversation; and as one of my friends, who came out of Berkshire, expressed a wish, as we passed by Bow-wood, the seat of the Marquis, to see the place, before he went home, we fixed a day, and made a party, determined to accept the offer of the Noble Marquis, to visit his seat, and see the beautiful pleasure-grounds, park, and cascade, which surround the mansion, and likewise view the fine paintings which it contained. I fell in with this plan the more readily, because my Berkshire friend rather hoaxed me, for professing to believe that the Marquis was sincere. He said he was a fine old courtier, and it cost him nothing to be polite; but, with regard to what he said about the pleasure he would feel at skewing us Bow-wood, they were mere words of course, and he would think no more of them afterwards; and if we went to see it, we should be treated the same as we were when we went to see Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of

Marlborough, which was, we had to pay about *thirty shillings* to the different servants that showed us over the house, gardens, and grounds, at which, considering it was built for the great Duke of Marlborough, at the *public expense*, I had expressed my disapprobation. I contended, that we should be treated in a different manner, and that the old Marquis would not allow his servants to behave so shabbily. I was, however, laughed at, for expecting that a Nobleman would take the pains to write home from Wales, to his servants, to give them any directions about the matter. The day was, nevertheless, fixed for the 24th of August, 1801.

I shall relate the circumstances of our visit, to shew what sort of a character the first Marquis of Lansdown was. We appointed to meet at Devizes, and the party proceeded together to Bow-wood, which is about six miles from that town. We were six in number, three ladies and three gentlemen; myself and Mrs. Hunt in our curricule, and our friends two in a chariot, and two in a gig; each of us attended by a servant. It was a lovely day, and when we entered the lodge, as we drove down the park, a distance of about a mile before we came to the house, we drew up and looked around us. The picturesque views were enchanting, and the sublime grandeur of the beautiful oaks was most striking. We had been travelling in Wales, where we had been delighted with the most romantic scenery; but this park at Bow-wood possessed a richness and a luxuriance such as we all declared we had never seen before; and the gravel road, the whole of the mile through the park, was more like the neatest gravel walk in a garden than a public carriage road. There was not a pebble the size of a marble, not a leaf, a straw, or a blade of grass, the whole way; every thing was kept up in the neatest and most perfect style that I ever saw. We remarked to each other, as we passed along, that the Marquis must have returned, as no servants would take such pains with a place in a master's absence.

At length we drove up to the door, and upon inquiring of the porter whether the Marquis was at home, he answered, "No;" that he was gone into Wales, and not expected back for a month. We asked if we could see the house? The answer was, that it was never shown to any one but the Marquis's friends. My Berkshire friend smiled, and looking very significantly said, "Well, Hunt, we have had a very pleasant drive, but I told you how it would be; we may, therefore, as well turn round and drive back again." I was about to put some other question to the porter, when the housekeeper approached; an elegant, handsomely dressed matron, who inquired, "Pray, Sir, is your name Hunt?" I, of course, answered her in the affirmative; upon which she begged we would alight. She then rang a bell, and desired the porter and another servant to take the carriages round the yard, and put the horses in the stable, and take care of them. She then informed us, that the Marquis had written home, to desire that, if I came with my friends, we should be shewn the house, gardens, grounds, cascade, and every thing at Bow-wood.

Having led us into a large room, the walls of which were hung with paintings, the good lady politely requested that we would amuse ourselves for a few minutes, while she made some preparations, and she would return and shew us the whole of the house. As soon as she had retired, my friend admitted that he had done the Noble Marquis great injustice, and he was now full of praises for his true nobility of character. The housekeeper now returned, and, after pointing out some beauties in the paintings, and the particular views from the windows, she led us into an adjoining room, in the centre of which stood a table, covered with wines of various sorts, and the most superb desert of fruit I ever beheld, consisting of pines, hot-house grapes, and various other fruits, in the greatest perfection, as well as profusion. We looked at each other with some surprise, when she invited the ladies to be seated, and the gentlemen to assist them to refreshments, before we proceeded any further; and, addressing herself to me, she said, this is a letter I received on the fourteenth of August. It was written by the Marquis, on the twelfth, from the Black Rock Inn, on the other side of the New Passage. It commences as follows:—"I expect Mr. Hunt, of Chisenbury House, to visit Bow-wood, to see the house and gardens, with his friends. If they should arrive before my return, you will take care that they receive that attention which I always wish to be shewn to my friends, when they do me the honour to visit Bow-wood." "Now," continued the housekeeper, "I understand the wish of the Marquis well. I know nothing will afford him greater pleasure than to hear that you, Sir, and your friends, make yourselves as welcome as he would have made you, had he been at home." She had, she said, orders to dress us a dinner, which she should do, while we were walking round the gardens and pleasure grounds, and viewing the cascade. She had sent a servant, she told us, to get some fish out of the store, and there was a haunch of venison just fit to dress; and she would have dinner ready for us at any hour we would fix. As we had a previous engagement, we declined the invitation to dinner, but we did ample justice to the pines and grapes. We were then shewn over the house, and afterwards we went round the gardens, consisting of five acres of the highest cultivated soil, and the walls clothed with the choicest fruit trees in full bearing. One fact worth recording the gardener told me, which was, that the Marquis, being particularly fond of pears, they were cultivated in this garden to the highest perfection, and he had a different plate of pears to be put upon the table for every day in the year. The pleasure grounds and every thing at Bow-wood bespoke the residence of one who was a nobleman by nature as well as by title.

After having spent a most agreeable morning, and had a second edition of the desert and wine, we prepared to depart, all much delighted with what we had seen, and more gratified with the polite and handsome conduct of the noble owner. Just as I was about to offer a present, the housekeeper called me aside. She took the liberty, she said, to request that I would not offer any of the servants any money. As the servants of the Marquis had all of them most liberal wages, he never suffered them to take any vails of his friends who visited him.

In addition to the attention which had been shewn to us, our servants had also been handsomely regaled, and the horses well taken care of in the stables; and, as we contemplated the munificent treatment we experienced at Bow-wood, we could not refrain from drawing a most unfavourable contrast of the treatment we had experienced about a month before, when we had made a party to visit Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, at Woodstock, near Oxford. There we were turned over from one servant to another, each having his department, and demanding a certain sum before we were handed into the custody of his companion. Thus is this splendid testimony of national gratitude to the Great Duke of Marlborough made a show of for the emolument of the servants of the establishment; each of them demanding his fee as regularly as a showman of wild beasts at a fair demands a shilling at the entrance. This is considered by foreigners as a disgrace to the British character, and it is justly considered so.

We must now return to politics.—Lord Nelson bombarded the French flotilla at Boulogne, disabled ten vessels, and sunk five; but upon his making another attempt on it, he was repulsed with great loss. I cannot describe this eventful period better than it is described in the "*Chronology of Public Events, within the last fifty years;*" a most useful and entertaining work published by Sir Richard Phillips, Bride Court, Bridge Street. The passage is as follows, under the head of "*Great Britain.*" "This year, 1801, commenced by exhibiting the effects of eight years war; the national debt had been doubled, and internal distress had become general; the poor were in a state bordering on starvation, and commerce had the prospect of having every foreign port shut against it. The people busied themselves to meet the threatened French invasion; and after a long watch for encroachment, the English themselves became assailants, by an attack upon Boulogne, which did little injury, and a second attack took place, under Lord Nelson, which failed with loss." This certainly is a correct description of the state of the country, in the ninth year of the war against French liberty, waged to prevent a Reform of the Parliament at home.

I shall now state how I was employed upon this occasion. Pitt's alarmists still disseminated throughout the country, a general terror of invasion. The various Lords Lieutenants of counties were kept actively at work, to support the delusion; for nothing but the immediate dread of invasion could have induced the people to pay the immense drains that were made upon their pockets by taxation; nothing less than the dread of having their property annihilated, their wives and daughters violated, and their children bayoneted before their faces, could have made them submit to the burthens which they bore.

Our Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Lord Pembroke, had caused circular letters to be written to the clergymen, churchwardens and overseers of every parish, to return an account of all the moveable property, live and dead stock, that there was in their several parishes; and also to require every farmer to give in a list of his stock of grain, horses, waggons and cattle; and at the end of it to state what he would voluntarily place at the disposal of the government, in case of an actual invasion; he was also to declare whether he was employed in any volunteer corps, and if not, whether he would place himself under the Lord Lieutenant and act as pioneer, driver, &c. In the parish of Enford, a public meeting was called, which was held at the Inn. Being much the largest farmer in the parish, I was called to the chair. Having opened the business of the day by reading the circular of the Lord Lieutenant, and explained as well as I could the object of the meeting, I urged those who were present, which was every farmer of the parish, by all the power of eloquence that I possessed, to come forward manfully and devotedly, to resist the common enemy with their property and their lives, in case they should dare to set a foot upon English ground. As it was then my practice, and which it has ever continued to be to this day, I told them that I should feel myself a disgrace to human nature, if I could be capable of urging or exciting my fellow countrymen to any act, in the danger of which I would not stand forward personally to participate. I would, therefore, in the first instance, write down fairly and honestly a true account of all the stock, live and dead, that I possessed, and conceal nothing whatever. It was as follows: Wheat, sixteen hundred sacks—barley, fifteen hundred quarters—oats, four hundred quarters—hay, two hundred and fifty ton—cart horses, thirty, value from thirty to seventy guineas each—draught oxen, ten—cows, twenty—sheep, four thousand two hundred—pigs, fifty—two broad-wheel and eight narrow-wheel waggons, eight carts, &c. &c. &c. all in excellent condition, and fit for active service. Each farmer in succession followed my example, in giving a full and faithful account of the whole of his stock; I having urged the necessity, nay, the policy, of this; because, in case the enemy were to land, and the cattle and stock were to be driven off, no one could afterwards claim compensation for more than he

had actually entered. This being done, the next thing required was, for each person to enter in a column set apart for that purpose, how many quarters of grain, how many waggons and horses, how many oxen, sheep, &c. he would furnish gratuitously to the government in the event of an actual invasion; and, if he were not serving in any volunteer corps, whether he would become a pioneer or driver, or place himself at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant. I took the pen and wrote as follows:—"I, Henry Hunt, of Chisenbury House, in the county of Wilts, have given a true and faithful account of all the live and dead stock, cattle and grain, that I possessed; and I do hereby voluntarily tender the whole of it, without any reserve, to the government, to be at their disposal in case of an actual invasion and landing by the enemy. I also engage to find, at my own expence, able, careful, active and willing drivers for the teams, and shepherds to attend the cattle and flocks, to conduct them wherever they may be required. As for my own personal services, I having lately been dismissed from the Wiltshire yeomanry by Lord Bruce, the colonel, and having no confidence either in the courage or skill of the colonel or any of the officers belonging to that regiment, but having, by considerable pains and perseverance, obtained a pretty correct knowledge of military tactics, I hereby engage to enter myself and three servants, completely equipped, and mounted upon valuable hunters, as volunteers into the regiment of horse that shall make the first charge upon the enemy; unless the Lord Lieutenant should think that an active and zealous friend to his country, well mounted, and ready to perform any service, however desperate, accompanied by three servants, also well mounted, can serve the cause of his country better by placing himself at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant of the county."

My neighbours stared, and I believe some of them thought me mad with enthusiasm. And as well as I can recollect, so far were they from following my example, that they all contented themselves with offering some a waggon and four horses, some a cart and two horses, some a few quarters of corn; but no one went further than offering a waggon and four horses and a few quarters of oats. In fact, when the returns came to be examined, the offer that I had made exceeded that of all the farmers of the whole district, for many miles round. As soon as the meeting was concluded, not satisfied with writing my name down in the circular, and leaving it to find its way amongst others to head quarters, I sat down and wrote a letter, which I sent by my servant, to Lord Pembroke, explicitly stating the extent of the offer, and my readiness to carry it into execution. I received the following answer, which I have now before me.

"WILTON HOUSE, August 20th, 1801.

"SIR,

"I have been so overwhelmed for some days with business, resulting from the necessity of calling upon a part of this county to put itself in a state of military preparation, that it has not been in my power to send a more immediate answer to your letter of the sixteenth. As the part above alluded to does not extend to your residence, I conceive you will not be called upon to make any movement, except in the event of actual invasion, or of immediate threatening upon the coast; in which case the *offers* you make would be of *infinite service*; in which case also, as you ask my opinion, I think various lines of service might be pointed out, in which your *personal services*, attended by your servants, would be of much greater avail, and far more beneficial to the country, than as a volunteer in any regular regiment of cavalry, should those corps be permitted to receive volunteers.

"I am, Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"PEMBROKE.

"To Henry Hunt, Esq.

"Chisenbury House, Wilts."

Now let the thinking reader look at this circumstance attentively, and having done so, and marked down the dates, what a field for reflection does this fact, this letter disclose!—It appears, by the date of this letter and its contents, that, on the SIXTEENTH OF AUGUST, *in the year 1801, I was acting as CHAIRMAN of a public parish meeting*, held at the Swan Inn, in the parish of Enford, in the county of Wilts, assembled in consequence of a circular letter, written by Earl Pembroke, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, in order to take into consideration and to adopt the most effectual means of affording assistance to the government, to resist and repel the invasion of a *foreign foe*. The very FIRST time in my life that I was ever called upon by my fellow-countrymen to *preside* at a public meeting, was on the SIXTEENTH OF AUGUST, 1801; and, for my zeal and devotion for the welfare and safety of my country on that day, I received the approbation of Lord Pembroke, the Lord Lieutenant of the county of Wilts. On the SIXTEENTH OF AUGUST, 1819, that day eighteen years afterwards, my readers all well know, and they will never forget it, that I was presiding at as peaceable, as laudable, and as constitutional a public meeting, held at Manchester, for the purpose of taking into consideration the best and *most legal* means of obtaining "a reform in the peoples' or Com- mons' House of Parliament." But, instead of then receiving the thanks of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, I was assaulted by a military force,

imprisoned, sentenced to be incarcerated in the worst, the most unwholesome, and the most infamous county gaol in the kingdom, for TWO YEARS and SIX MONTHS; while the butchers who murdered fifteen or sixteen, and maimed upwards of six hundred of their peaceable and unresisting fellow creatures, received the thanks of the King for their services.

This is a very extraordinary coincidence of circumstances, that the *first* and the *last* public meeting at which I ever presided, should have been on the SIXTEENTH OF AUGUST; and that they should have been attended by such different results is equally worthy of notice. I am quite sure, that I was actuated by the very same feeling, the same love of country, the same anxiety for the well being of my fellow countrymen, and the same self-devotion, at both these meetings; my great leading object being to promote, as far as my humble means would permit, the welfare, the freedom and the happiness of my fellow countrymen.

It will not, I think, be uninteresting to my friends, who honour me by reading these memoirs, to state how I came by this letter of Lord Pembroke's, written nearly twenty years ago. It would seem as if I had been a very wary person to preserve my papers so carefully. But this is not the fact; I have been quite the reverse; thousands of papers, letters from public men, which would have been most valuable to me now, and documents, have I incautiously and thoughtlessly burnt. I will, however, state how I came by *this* letter, which I have now here in this gaol. Soon after I came to Ilchester, I wrote home to my family, to collect from amongst my papers, all letters and papers containing votes of thanks that had been passed at public meetings all over the country, and sent to me from various places, from almost every part of the kingdom; particularly in the years 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819 and 1820. When these papers came to me here, in looking them over I discovered three from Lord Pembroke; and I was rather surprised at their being amongst the number sent, as I had quite forgotten what subjects they were upon. But, on opening them, I found that they all contained expressions of approbation and thanks, for various offers that I had made during the first French war, while an invasion was threatened. As soon as I had examined them, I put them by, and never thought of them again, till I came to write the account of my first offer. I was then going to state the substance of the Lord Lieutenant's answer, as far as my memory would serve me, but at that moment recollecting that I had some letters from Lord Pembroke, I looked for them, and the very first upon which I laid my hand was that which I have inserted above. Now, let the life and fortune men produce, if they can, one such instance amongst them, of patriotic and disinterested self-devotion as that which I evinced at that time. It will be seen that I was just the same sort of man on the 16th of August, 1801, as I was on the 16th of August, 1819; just the same sort of man that I am at this moment. In the first instance my country was in danger; she was threatened by the invasion of a foreign foe—that was enough; what was my conduct? I hurried to her assistance, and I made a voluntary tender of *all* I possessed—*corn, hay, horses, cows, oxen, sheep, pigs, waggons, carts, &c.* to the value of at least *twenty thousand pounds*, together with my own personal services, to perform any duty, however hazardous. I had suffered once for my zeal. I had been insulted by the colonel of the Wilts yeomanry, and for resisting it, I had been fined and imprisoned; but this did not extinguish, nor did it even slacken my zeal for what I conceived to be the safety and the liberty of any country. The liberal and patriotic offer which I had made was talked of all over the county by the rich and by the poor.

At this period I was living in what was called great style; my mansion being generally full of company. But in the midst of this profligate course of life, for so it might, with great truth, be called, I was not unmindful of the wants and the privations of the poor, and I never failed to do every thing in my power to relieve their distresses, and at the same time protect them from oppression. Hunting and shooting were my great delight; but, fond as I was of these sports, I never neglected the call of a poor man or a poor woman, to attend on his or her behalf, at a justice meeting, to advocate their cause, and defend them against the arbitrary and cruel attacks of any little dirty tyrant, who might have premeditated to oppress them. For this conduct I was branded, behind my back, by the *quorum*, and all the *jacks* in office under them, as a *busy, meddling, officious fellow*; but this never deterred me from doing that which I believe to be, and which I had been taught to be, the duty of a good Christian, namely, my duty towards my neighbour. If the petty despots of the neighbourhood levelled their sneers at me behind my back, I was more than repaid, I was most amply rewarded, for this indignity, by a self-approving conscience, and by the grateful thanks and blessings of the poor, whenever I came in contact with them. They were not only civil and respectful towards me and my family, but they were always ready to fly to do me any act of kindness within their power. Whenever any particular exertion was required in my farming business, it was only for me to hint my wish, and it was not only set about without expostulation or grumbling, but it was sure to be executed and accomplished with alacrity and cheerfulness; for they never had any doubt of my punctuality in repaying them with an equitable and a liberal hand. This was a delightful state of society; each we would act otherwise than we did, is the weakness of folly; for if we were placed in the very same situation, at the same age, with the same inexperience, and impelled by the same impetuous youthful passions; under similar circumstances, depend upon it we should commit the self-same errors that we have now to regret. As for myself,

instead of indulging in this sort of weakness, I look back upon my past errors with a sort of awful reverence for the benignity of the divine will of my Maker; and, when I prostrate myself before God, and offer up a silent, although an ardent thanksgiving for all his goodness to me, an insignificant human being, I never forget to pour out my most grateful and unbounded acknowledgments to him for his having permitted me to pass through life hitherto *so well as I have done*, without having committed any premeditated or deadly sin, such as would bear down and oppress my soul with conscious guilt, and place me in that deplorable situation which is so beautifully expressed by a sublime author: "of all mortals, those are the most exquisitely miserable, who groan beneath the pressure of a melancholy mind, or labour under the stings of a guilty conscience; a slave confined to the galleys, or an exile to punish—living and labouring for the mutual benefit and happiness of the whole.

Many of my readers will be surprised, and will exclaim, "how was it possible that Mr. Hunt, surrounded with so many blessings, and appearing so much to enjoy such a rational, desirable, delightful occupation, should have been led away, should have been betrayed into the guilt of dissipation?" Ah, my friends! how easy is it, in looking back upon past events, upon lost time, how easy is it for us to say, and what a common expression it is, in the mouth of almost every reflecting person, "*If my time were to come over again, how very differently would I act!*" But this sort of reasoning is very fallacious, it is unworthy a philosopher. When a person reflects upon particular events of his life, where his objects had failed for want of foresight, or for want of prudence, it may be excusable in him to express a wish, nay, it is almost impossible for any one to suppress an inward wish, that he had acted with more caution, discretion or prudence; but even a hankering wish of this sort is a weakness, although it may be an amiable and an excusable weakness. To wish at all for an impossibility, such as the recalling of time that is irretrievably gone by, must be a weakness. But, even if we could recall it, to assert that [—illegible—] is in perfect paradise compared with these."

The reader will be careful to recollect, that I am not endeavoring to screen those sins that I know I have committed. As I feel that they will come under the denomination of *venial*, and not deadly sins, I shall not shrink from the task which I have imposed upon myself, of recording them as often as they occur at the different periods of my history. I am not insensible of my errors, faults, or frailties; I know that we are all poor frail mortals; but, as my poor father said upon his death bed, "I have not the least shadow of doubt upon my mind, that a wise, just, and beneficent Creator and Father of all, will pardon my errors." With the same sort of hope, and with a similar impression upon my mind, I pass my numerous hours of solitude here in the most delightful reflections. Calm, composed and perfectly free from the slightest impatience under the idea of my lengthened imprisonment, I have nothing about me of pining or fretting; and when I nightly lay my head down on my pillow, I invariably enjoy sweet, sound, and uninterrupted repose. I rise early, refreshed, vigorous and cheerful, always occupied, always looking forward with new and renovated hopes, of living to see the enemies of my country and the persecutors of my suffering countrymen brought to justice. Though I am a determined and unpromising enemy of those who tyrannize over and oppress my fellow creatures, yet I feel that I am always ready to forgive my personal injuries, and I am never in better humor with myself, and never have a higher opinion of my own character, than when I find my heart divested of all vindictive feelings against the petty tyrants by whom I am surrounded. For their cruel persecution of myself and my unoffending family, I will, if I live and have the power, deliberately and perseveringly bring them to justice; but I will not do it to gratify a vindictive spirit—I will do it for the sake of justice itself; not to gratify my own revenge, but for the protection of those who may come hereafter.

To return to my narrative: the letter which, in answer to my unlimited offers, I received from Lord Pembroke, I communicated to the neighbouring farmers, at a meeting held for that purpose. This quieted their fears, and the account of Lord Nelson's attack upon the flotilla contributed, in a great measure, to dissipate the general apprehension which pervaded the whole country, that an immediate invasion was actually likely to take place. The French Government understood this thing well; they knew that it kept the country in a continual state of ferment and apprehension; and therefore they persisted in keeping the army of observation and the flotilla at Boulogne, in order to harrass the British Ministry, who, however, contrived to turn this to their own advantage, as it enabled them to frighten the people out of their money, by an enormous levy of taxes; the supplies voted this year being forty-two millions, and the loan which took place being twenty-five millions. By this means the taxes this year were increased one million seven hundred and ninety-four thousand pounds. I believe that nothing but the dread of invasion would have induced the people of England to submit to such enormous drains upon their pockets. This bugbear, then, was cherished with the greatest care by the Ministers; a striking example of which is, the state of ferment we were placed in at Enford, the centre of the county of Wilts, at least fifty miles distant from any part of the coast, and a great deal further from any part of it where a landing was likely to be attempted. We all, however, in consequence of Lord Pembroke's letter, now went very steadily about our business again.

The patriotic and truly illustrious Washington's Presidency expired in America this year, and he

retired into private life, amidst the grateful benedictions of his country, which, under his wise, virtuous, and cheap administration, had, in spite of numerous difficulties, risen to such a magnitude, that its friendship was courted by all the old Governments. It appeared that the public debt was 78 millions of dollars, not more than 16 millions sterling, which sum was yearly diminishing, and that the annual expenditure of the chief officer of the state was only nine thousand five hundred pounds, not above half the amount of the sinecure of the Marquis of Buckingham or Marquis of Camden, as Tellers of the Exchequer. What a contrast was exhibited between the expences of Great Britain and those of America!

In England the average price of wheat, throughout the year, was a hundred and twenty shillings a quarter, or fifteen shillings a bushel. It was estimated, that nine millions of acres of corn were grown in England this year, and the price which the produce sold for may be fairly averaged at twelve pounds per acre; therefore, in the one year, one hundred and eight millions of pounds were pocketed by the land-holders and farmers in the price of their corn only. I had grown most excellent crops, and of course had come in for my share. In fact, my corn averaged above four pounds per sack for the wheat, and four pounds per quarter for the barley; so that merely the corn with which I offered, in case of an invasion, to supply the Government, gratuitously, was not worth less than fifteen thousand pounds. I repeat it once more, let the exclusively loyal gentry—let the life and fortune men—let the hole-and-corner addressers come forward, and point me out one instance amongst their whole hordes, of a man who ever volunteered to serve his country to such an extent. What I this day told Dr. Colston, the Visiting Magistrate, is quite applicable on this subject. When he was professing every disposition to serve me, I replied, looking him firmly in the face, "Doctor, doctor! shew me an *act* and I will believe you. *One act is worth ten thousand professions.* I ask for nothing but what is reasonable, and consistent with common sense and common humanity; and nothing but what is consistent with your strict duty as a man, a clergyman, and a christian. *Let me see my family at reasonable hours in the day time, so long as they conduct themselves with decorum and propriety, and violate none of the rules of the gaol, and I am content.*"

The reader will see, that this is the burthen of my song, "Let me see my family." This one simple, this one reasonable request, is all I have asked, is all I do ask, and it is all I shall ask. But, while you deny me this, talk not to me of conciliation. All your little, petty, dirty, mean tricks to annoy me I can and do laugh at; I should despise myself, if I could not despise and disregard them. But, like expert butchers, who, when they are about to cut the throat of their innocent victim, the bleating lamb, know well where to apply the knife, so do you know where to inflict a deadly wound in the most vital part. There is, to be sure, this distinction between you and the butcher; it is his business, it is his profession, by which he gets his daily bread; and, indeed, the sooner he kills his victim the more merciful he is: but as for you, your conduct is ten thousand times more brutal than that of the butcher, inasmuch as you inflict torture upon a human being, merely for the pleasure of inflicting torture. And do you really believe, are you so besotted as to flatter yourselves, that you will escape? Do you really believe, that "Where vice and cruelty go before, vengeance will not follow after?" Vain and delusive hope!!! Justice is slow, very slow, in reaching the minions of power; but she is certain to prevail at last. This digression I am sure will be excused, and I will now proceed. This period (1801 and 1802) may be said to have been the zenith of the farmers' glory. If a farm was to be let, scores were riding and driving over each other, ready to break their necks to take it, to rent it at any price. Not only farmers, but tailors, tinkers, grocers, linen-drappers, and all sorts of tradesmen and shopkeepers, were running, *helter skelter*, to be farmers; men connected with the press, and cunning attorneys were joining in the chase; men of all professions, indeed, were now eager to become gentlemen farmers. My father used to class the whole of these under the general denomination of APRON FARMERS. Never was there a more significant and intelligible term applied to any set of men. In every parish you now saw one or two of these *apron farmers*, gentlemen who knew very well how to handle a yard, so as to make short measure in selling a piece of cloth; men who could acquit themselves well at a pestle and mortar, who could tie up a paper parcel, or "split a fig;" who could drive a goose-quill, or ogle the ladies from behind a counter, very decently; but who knew no more about the management of a farm than they did about algebra, or the most intricate problems of Euclid. A pretty mess these gentry made of it! every one who had saved four or five thousand pounds by his trade must now become a farmer! They all knew what profits the farmer was making, and they not only envied him, but they made a desperate plunge to become participators with him in the booty. There was scarcely an attorney in the whole country that did not carry on the double trade of quill-driving and clod-hopping. Most of them purchased land, even if they borrowed the money to pay for it; and many, many of them, after having farmed and farmed, till they had not a shilling in their pockets to support their families, have been compelled to give up their estates to the mortgagee. As an illustration of this fact, I could point out numerous instances of this sort of mad folly. I remember an Irish Barrister, who had married a lady of fortune at Bath, came and purchased an estate in Sussex, adjoining one that I occupied; and this, as he expressed himself, he did, that he might have the benefit of my experience to assist him in the cultivation of it. He was to take the timber at a valuation, and it is a sufficient proof of his ignorance of these matters, that he really did not know the difference between a hazel bush and an oak tree; for, although he was a very clever and an ingenious

man in his way, yet he actually applied to me, to know how they would measure such *small timber* as that which he pointed out to me, which was nothing more than a *hazel bush*! Such was his ignorance of country affairs, that he did not know barley and wheat from grass, nor beans from oats, when growing; and he seriously proposed, as the best method of hatching young ducks, to set them under the rooks who had made their nests in the lofty trees that surrounded his house; and yet this gentleman must be a farmer, forsooth! But I am anticipating my history. These facts must, however, convince every rational mind, that this was such an unnatural state of things as could not exist for any lengthened period. It did, nevertheless, drag on to the end of the war, when all these *apron farmers* were brushed off their farms, as one would brush from off one's leg a fly that was stinging it. These gentry long since quitted the turmoil and difficulty of *agricultural pursuits*. Those that purchased have given up their land to the mortgagee; and those that rented have had their stocks sold to pay their creditors; and many of them, cursing the evil hour when they were induced to become farmers, have crept quietly back to occupy the situation behind the counter, as servants, where only a few years before they had reigned as masters. These were some of the evils naturally attendant upon the bad policy as well as wickedness of one nation going to war to put down and destroy the liberty of another!

I used regularly to attend Devizes market, seldom, if ever, missing a market-day. After my father's death I was elected, or rather promoted to his seat, which was that of chairman at the head of the table, at the principal dining room of the farmers, at the Bear Inn, the best Inn of the town. I have already described some of the scenes that used to occur upon those occasions, as to the way in which the bottle was passed about after dinner; but there is one other important point, connected with these weekly meetings of farmers, which I deem most worthy of recording. Those parties were composed chiefly of farmers; but there were intermingled several large millers, brewers, maltsters, and corn jobbers from Bath and the surrounding country; and every now and then a gentleman *bag-man*, or traveller, would join us, which he was sure to do if there was any one in the town. After dinner the home news of the day having been talked over, foreign news and politics were generally introduced; for, since I had been in the King's Bench, my opinion was considered as some authority, and very earnest and warm debates used frequently to take place. For some years before this period all political discussion had been put down with a high hand, by the impudent and boisterous conduct and assertions of one or two of these Bath corn jobbers, who denounced any one as a Jacobin who ever dared to utter a word contrary to the plans of the despots of Europe, or hostile to the measures of Pitt. As far back as 1794 and 1795, if any one boldly delivered his sentiments, and reprobated the war as the measures of the ministers, he was not only denounced as a Jacobin, but he was generally turned out of the company, and his arguments, instead of being answered, were silenced by *brute force*. However, my father possessed too much manhood and liberality to suffer such a course as that to be taken while he presided.

At our meetings there was an impudent, unblushing, self-conceited fellow of the name of Perry, a miller and corn-dealer of Bath, who was always sure to contradict and insult any one who dared advance a liberal opinion; in which outrageous conduct he never failed to receive the support of those gentlemen *bag-men*, when any of them happened to be present; so that every young man, whatever were his pretensions to talent, was compelled to keep silence, unless he concurred with the ignorant and slavish doctrines of this hectoring jobber in grain, and the still more consequential knights of the bag. Having been informed, by a gentleman of Bath, one day, when I was speaking of this Perry's insolent conduct, that he was one of Mr. Pitt's agents, paid to promulgate his doctrines, and to put down the arguments of his opponents, I took occasion, when I was in the King's Bench, to make inquiries upon this subject, and any friend Clifford ascertained, from the most unquestionable sources, that it was one of Mr. Pitt's plans, to employ and pay, out of the secret service money, almost all the travellers in the kingdom, at least all those who possessed either a sufficient stock of impudence or a talent of speaking or arguing in company, for the express purpose of putting down public opinion, and enforcing and propagating the measures of the ministers, as the most wise and politic; and that these worthies were paid in proportion to their boisterous powers, and their impudence; and the reader will easily conceive that they soon acquired a sufficient stock of the latter, when they knew under what powerful auspices they were acting. He also ascertained that, in addition to these itinerant propagators and champions of tyrannical and despotic measures, they had from one to three stationary auxiliaries in every principal town in the kingdom, who frequented all places of public resort, and were always ready to denounce any man as a Jacobin and an enemy to his country, who dared to give utterance to an honest, candid thought. These fellows were so backed on by the local authorities, that the general feeling being also pretty much in their favour, their insolence was in many cases almost insufferable. Few men chose to enter the lists with them, because they had no chance of fair play, nor any probability of arguing the question with any degree of candour or liberality; and as a man must have either put up with flat ignorant contradiction, and open premeditated insult, or have got into a quarrel with them, conversation on political subjects was for many years effectually banished from almost every public company. However, since I had returned from my travels (which is the slang term of going to prison), I had acquired a considerable degree of confidence, and, accordingly, the very first time that I

found this Mr. Perry pouncing upon one of the company with one of his rude knock-down arguments, I, without ceremony, took up the cudgels, and announced that, as long as I continued to be the chairman of that company, it was my intention to maintain the freedom of conversation, and I called upon the company to support me in my determination. If they would do this, every man would, I said, be at liberty to deliver his sentiments upon public matters with perfect freedom, as long as he abstained from offering any personal rudeness or insult to any one present, which should not be tolerated from any quarter whatever. With one or two exceptions, my proposal met with general approbation. This said, Mr. Perry made a long speech, calling upon the company to sustain their character for loyalty, and to declare themselves church and king men; and he urged them not to tolerate any thing like republican or free principles. He was heard very coolly, and even met with some disapprobation, upon which, getting warm, he declared that no man should utter any jacobinical expressions while he was present. This very naturally caused a laugh, and Mr. Upstart sat down, vowing vengeance against all Jacobins. I replied, and informed him that his notions about jacobinism were thoroughly ridiculous, and that if he ever heard any sentiments delivered of which he disapproved, and, in answer to which he could not find arguments, stated in decent language, the only way for him to act was, to walk out of the room; for he might depend upon it, if he ever insulted any one of the company in future, by giving them the lie, or calling them Jacobins and enemies to their country, if the party would support their chairman, I would put him out of the room. This was indeed turning the tables upon the loyal gentlemen, and it shews the alteration of opinions of that same company, who, a very few years before, had joined in forcing a very worthy man to quit the same room, merely because he disapproved of the war with France. This room ever afterwards was notorious for the liberality of sentiment that pervaded the company; and, as long as I remained the chairman thereof, the freedom of rational discussion was preserved unimpaired.

The reader will perceive that I have of late very seldom mentioned the name of Mrs. Hunt. The fact is, that I did not at this period enjoy that domestic felicity, of which I had heretofore partaken. I was, as I have more than once stated, gay, thoughtless, and dissipated. I seldom ever spent a retired, quiet evening at home, enjoying the rational amusements of my own domestic fireside. We had always company at home, or I was one of a party abroad; myself and Mrs. Hunt were living a true fashionable life, and we entered into all its levities and follies. This course of life had drawn us into more fashionable, more accomplished society; and I own that to me polished manners were a great attraction, and that those who possessed them, possessed superior powers to fascinate. Amongst this number I frequently met a lady, who had been bred up and educated in the highest and most fashionable circles; she was tall, fair, and graceful, and, as far as my judgment went, every charm and accomplishment, both corporeal and mental, that could adorn an elegant and beautiful female, appeared to be centered in her. At first sight I was struck with her superior air and graceful form, but I soon began to admire the beauties of her mind more than I had at first sight been captivated by her person. We were, as if by accident, frequently thrown into each other's society—a circumstance with which I was very much delighted; and, as it never occurred to me that there could, by any possibility, be any harm in admiring and paying respectful attention to a lovely, elegant, and accomplished female, I never concealed in the smallest degree the pleasure which I felt in her society. Though for upwards of twelve months, which was ever since we had become first acquainted, my attentions had been very marked, yet they had not attracted any particular notice. I thought, alas! and I professed what I thought, that I felt the most pure platonic affection for this lady, and that I was blessed with her friendship in return. My wife had watched the progress of this attachment with anxiety and pain; she mentioned her fears, and expostulated in becoming terms against the imprudence of my conduct, which might give occasion to the world for ill-natured remarks; and she represented to me that, although my attentions were open and undisguised, they were very pointed and visible to every one, and that people would and did talk about it. I professed to set at defiance the malignant opinions of the envious and the ill-natured, and, as I was conscious of the purity and honour of my intentions, I was the last man living that would be likely to forego any pleasure, merely because the censorious world chose to make their remarks upon it. I saw that my wife had not the slightest suspicion of any thing criminal, neither was there the least reason for any such suspicion; but I saw also, that she dreaded the consequence of such incessant—such devoted attention on my part, which, although it was received with politeness, and the strictest propriety, she nevertheless perceived to be not at all disagreeable. Though this attachment was as pure and disinterested as platonic affection could possibly be, and although I should quite as soon have indulged an improper thought towards my own sister, yet the society of this lady was now become absolutely necessary to my comfort; we were, therefore, frequently together, and I was miserable if three or four days passed without our meeting—a circumstance which seldom happened, notwithstanding we lived at a distance of ten miles from each other.

It will be asked, what said the husband of the lady? for she was a married woman. It would ill-become me to say more than is absolutely necessary upon that subject; but, unfortunately he was careless and inattentive, and knew not how to prize the treasure that he possessed; and besides, as he never entertained, nor ever had any reason to entertain, a shadow of doubt respecting his wife, we were constantly left together. This intimacy had now continued nearly two years, and as the lady was going

to stay with her family in a distant county, I was invited (almost of course) to pay her a visit while she was there. I scarcely need say, that the invitation was accepted. Instead of staying a week or ten days, I remained a month. During the whole of the time, my attention was incessant; I could not join in any scheme of pleasure or amusement, unless she was one of the party. Unluckily, too, there was no one to controul us. Her word was a law, which I resolutely carried into effect. At length the gentleman getting quite tired of my visit, which was never intended or professed by me to be to him, but to the lady, he left us, and went to London. Whenever he was asked by his friends or acquaintance, if I would not make one of a party to walk, to ride, to drive, or any other amusement, he invariably answered, "you must ask my wife, by G—; Hunt is no visitor of mine he is Mrs. ——'s visitor;" and I, without any ceremony, admitted this, by saying it was perfectly true, if the lady chose to go I should accompany her, and if she chose to remain at home, I should remain with her; and this determination I invariably followed.

Business, however, called me home, a few days after the gentleman left us, and I went into Wiltshire, about the middle of May, having made a promise to return in July, to attend the races at Brighton. This was the longest and most tedious six weeks of my life. I thought of nothing but my intended visit to Brighton races; and such was the anxiety of my mind, that it brought on a serious, and, indeed, alarming fever. In the fits of delirium I raved for the lady who was the object of my solicitude, and at one period the paroxysms were so violent, that Mrs. Hunt actually thought that I should have been bereaved of my senses; and to calm me, she seriously proposed to send an express for the lady. In a few days the strength of my constitution overcame the disease, and I recovered. But I found my life was quite a blank; my very soul was absorbed in thinking and longing for the society of one dear object. I took not the least interest in the political occurrences of the day; and, for the first time in my life, I grew careless, and totally neglected my business. Peace had been proclaimed: such an event, at any other time, I should have considered a matter of the highest importance, but that event scarcely excited my attention. Buonaparte was made first consul for life, and the Legion of Honour was established; this occasioned a great sensation throughout the country, but the discussion of these matters created no lively emotions in *my* breast; my mind was totally absorbed in contemplating another object. I now began to feel the fatal effects of indulging such a passion as that of platonic affection. Though there had never been the slightest variation from the strict line of virtuous friendship, yet, such was its power over me, that I found it irresistible. I struggled to break the spell, but I found it impossible; every effort that I made, only served to wind it more closely round my heart. I confessed my weakness to Mrs. Hunt; and, indeed, it was already too visible to her to require any confession on my part. At length the time arrived for my departure, and the manner of taking leave between myself and Mrs. Hunt, was very different from what it had ever been before; it was distressing to both, and appeared to be clouded with an ominous aspect.

Without dwelling any longer upon this painful subject, suffice it to say, that notwithstanding it was the very eve of harvest, I proceeded on my journey. I drove my old friend Robert Clare, in my curricule, and our servants followed us on horseback. We arrived in the neighborhood of Brighton, where we were received with great politeness. Clare went to visit the gentleman, I, the lady. We remained a few days before we departed for Brighton, where we had taken lodgings for the race-week. Instead of being diminished, my attentions to the lady increased every day, and as they became more pointed, and excited the notice of every one, the husband remonstrated, and threatened to take the lady home. In fact, he was urged on to do this by some of the lady's family. I expostulated, but never relaxed my assiduities, and he was indecisive. A storm was, however, gathering round us, which threatened to burst every moment; and dreading that separation which appeared worse than death, at the thoughts of which I was almost frantic, we took the desperate resolution to put it out of the power of any one to part us. Brighton was a dangerous place for persons in our situation; there was the Prince of Wales, our present King, living with Mrs. Fitzherbert, in the most open and public manner; this was an example too likely to have a baneful effect upon two persons so doatingly fond of each other, that the very idea of being parted, produced almost a momentary madness. Such was the result of platonic affection. Without ever having made the slightest approach to any thing criminal, our attachment was so riveted, that to cease to exist would have been ten thousand times preferable to such a separation, as would have finally deprived us of the power of enjoying each other's society. The die was cast—my curricule was brought to the door about one o'clock in the middle of the day; and I prevailed on her to take a seat, which she did almost in a lifeless state, without knowing where I was going to drive her. This did not excite the particular observation of our friends who were of the party, as I was in the habit of driving her out almost every day. As soon as we were seated, I drove off to Lewes. Upon the road we met the Prince, Mrs. Fitzherbert, and Sir John and Lady Lade, in a barouche, returning from the races. The moment that we arrived at Lewes, I ordered four horses to a post-chaise, and having written a short letter back to my friend Clare, to explain the cause of our absence, we proceeded to London with all possible speed. The friends of the lady followed her the next day, and every offer was made to induce her to return; but the fatal step being once taken, there was no retreating, and all entreaties were in vain, though every inducement was offered and repeated for six or eight months. I shall only add, that though there can be no justification for such a rash step, yet if ever there was a female that

had received cause, which greatly palliated, almost to justification, she was that person. The circumstances were so peculiar and so distressing, that no legal proceedings were ever taken either against her or myself; but, on the contrary, amicable arrangements were made.

Perhaps, and no doubt, it will be said by some, that I am an unfeeling, barefaced offender, thus publicly to blazon forth my own errors. But I claim the indulgence of my readers to recollect that I have undertaken to write my own history, and, as I have promised to do it faithfully, no consideration upon earth shall induce me to conceal from the public my faults. They, and particularly the Reformers, shall, if I live, know my character such as it is. It is a duty I owe to them as well as to myself, and though this is a most painful duty, yet I am determined not to shrink from the task of performing it with a rigid fidelity. Millions of the most amiable and the most virtuous, if they cannot altogether pardon, will know how to make a generous and liberal allowance for the frailties of human nature. I have a much more difficult labour yet to accomplish, in narrating the separation that took place between myself and my wife, in consequence of this fatal step. But as I am quite sure nothing I ever did in my life can make me appear half so bad as I have been represented to be, by the venal public press of the country, I shall proceed deliberately and resolutely to disclose the whole.

The circumstance of our departure from so public a place as Brighton soon got into all the newspapers, and the intelligence had reached my home at Chisenbury, long before I got there, whither I was obliged to return, as it was just in the middle of harvest. I had written to a friend to meet me there, and to prepare Mrs. Hunt for the interview. Our meeting I will not attempt to describe; it was most painful for all parties; I concealed nothing from my wife, and, when she knew the extent of the evil, with a becoming spirit, she declared her determination not to share a divided heart. Without going into a detail here, it will be sufficient to say, that a separation was mutually agreed on, and her relations were appointed to meet my attorney, to make the necessary arrangements for carrying it into effect. I disclosed to my attorney my circumstances as to property, and intrusted him to accede to the most liberal settlement.

How many times, when I have come before the public, have I been taunted by the hireling press, and its still baser agents, that I had turned my wife out of doors to starve! How incessantly was this falsehood bawled out, repeated, and reiterated, by the dirty hireling agents of the contemptible Westminster Junto, so properly denominated by Mr. Cobbett the Rump Committee! How often was this lie vomited forth upon the hustings, by the *paid tools* of the opposing candidates at the Bristol and Westminster elections! Whenever I have argued for the right of every Englishman to be free, for Universal Suffrage, or have pleaded the cause of the poor, instead of answering my arguments, or controverting my principles of justice and humanity, the answer has been, "you have turned *your wife out of doors, to starve, Hunt, therefore we will not listen to your doctrine.*" This has been particularly the language of that hypocritical faction the Whigs, or Burdettites; those pretended sham friends of liberty, who, within the last seven years, have done more to palsy public opinion, than all the Tories that ever lived could have done. This Rump, this fag-end of a committee of Westminster electors, that was once formed to support the freedom of election in that city, but the members of which have, since the management of it got into their hands, converted the power that they have assumed into an engine of the basest corruption, and have proved themselves the most tyrannical suppressors of public opinion, as well as the most determined brutal destroyers of every thing like fair discussion; who, at all their public meetings, whether held in Palace Yard or the Crown and Anchor, have systematically put down, and forcibly prevented from delivering his sentiments, every person that was not one of their own gang; who, with coarse, vulgar, beastly hootings and yellings, have driven every honest public man from their bacchanalian carousals at the Crown and Anchor; this set of dirty underlings I have most narrowly watched, year after year, during a long period; and, as I know all their tricks and shufflings, I will faithfully lay them before the public, as I proceed in my Memoirs. The ramifications of the mischief they have done, have spread far and near. They have kept up a correspondence with some of the most patriotic individuals in every principal town and city in the kingdom; by which means they have frequently exercised the power which they thus acquire, of stifling those sparks of popular fervour, that would have long since kindled into an irrepressible blaze of patriotism, had it not been for the sinister exertions of this foul extinguisher of every particle of generous public liberty, that did not tend to promote their own base and selfish ends; always acting, as they have done, under the direction and immediate influence of their Grand Lama, or principal juggler, Sir Francis Burdett, in whose pay they have most of them been, directly or indirectly, for many years past. Unable to answer my arguments, and dreading the exposure of their hero's trickery, this gang, with a broad faced, impudent individual, of the name of Adams, a currier, in Drury Lane, at their head, whenever I offered to address them in public, have been always foremost in the cry of, "Hunt, you turned your wife out of doors to starve;" and not satisfied with this, these despicable wretches have worn the heels of their shoes off, in running from door to door, and from pot-house to pot-house, to vilify me behind my back, propagating the most bare-faced falsehoods, all of their own fabrication. I will, by-and-bye, give the reader a specimen of one of the stories invented by this Adams, and related to Mr. Cobbett by the man himself, when he was

confined in Newgate, in the year 1812; all their lies ending with the usual burthen of the song, that "I had turned my wife out of doors to starve." This man, Adams, was a witness in the trial of Wright v. Cobbett, in the Court of King's Bench, some time since, for a libel; and if he swore that which was attributed to him, Mr. Cobbett neither did justice to himself nor to the public, by declining to prosecute him for perjury.

But I will now proceed to detail the particulars of the settlement which I made upon my wife at the time of our separation; and I have no doubt that any statement, at the same time that it gives the lie direct to the base assertions of the foregoing scoundrels, will convince every unprejudiced, as well as every liberal and rational person in the country, of the dastardly conduct of mine and my country's greatest enemies, the hypocritical false friends of liberty. It will be recollected by those who have done me the honour to read my Memoirs, that when I married I received one thousand pounds as a fortune with my wife; five hundred of which I lent immediately to one of her brothers, without ever having taken it out of the house of my wife's father; which five hundred pounds still remained, and continued to remain in his hands, for several years after my being parted from his sister. I mention this fact, here, to shew in what light her brothers and family considered this separation. They looked upon it as a misfortune which all lamented; but it is evident, from this circumstance, that they did not look upon it in a criminal light; for, if they had done so, they would not have continued a moment under such a pecuniary 61

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obligation to me, which by them could have been so easily removed, as they were all by this time in very good circumstances; and the brother, James, who held this sum, was now in partnership with his elder brother, John, the banker at Marlborough. My wife's fortune was, as I have said before, one thousand pounds. The consideration then was, what sum I should secure annually to Mrs. Hunt. I had given my attorney authority to consent to, nay, to propose, the most liberal allowance; having made him fully acquainted with my property and income, which I authorised him to lay before her brother, who was acting in her behalf. After a conference, my attorney informed me that he had proposed to allow Mrs. Hunt an annuity of two hundred pounds, and secure it as a rent charge upon my freehold and leasehold estates in Wiltshire and Somersetshire, which he had no doubt would be accepted if I approved of it. My answer was, "although this may be considered a liberal and handsome annuity to my wife, when compared with the fortune I received with her, and as a fair allowance, when taking all my property and prospects into consideration, yet, as I am the *aggressor*, I will, as far as I have the power, make at least a pecuniary compensation. I shall not be satisfied with what might be considered as fair; but I will make her a liberal and generous allowance. I have now the means, and while I have the means and the will to do her justice, I will put it out of my own power to act otherwise. Go, and settle the annuity, draw up the deed, and insert therein *three hundred pounds a year*, and I will sign it immediately, for fear of any accident."

This was done as I directed, and it was also agreed that Mrs. Hunt should have the care of our daughter, and I of our two sons, but that we should both have free access to them whenever we pleased. All this being arranged amicably, and in a manner perfectly satisfactory to Mrs. Hunt and her relations, at least as far as pecuniary affairs went, and as this annuity was regularly paid for nine years before another arrangement was proposed by the trustee, her brother, which I shall faithfully detail when I approach that period of my history, I would fain hope that the calumnious cowards who have so often assailed me, as having turned my wife out of doors to starve, will, at any rate, in future, abstain from propagating such a bare-faced falsehood. When I think of these things, perhaps I ought to thank them for urging me on to this disclosure of my domestic arrangements; which, as I believe they will not tell to my disadvantage, as to liberality, so I am quite sure that nothing but such overwhelming and persevering calumnies would have ever induced me to disclose them.

It was proposed that Mrs. Hunt should go and live with her relations; but, as I thought three hundred pounds a year was quite sufficient to make her independent of any one, and quite enough to enable her to keep a small and respectable establishment of her own, I recommended that she should take a house, and have her family to herself. She urged that there would be the expence of purchasing furniture, &c. and that she would rather, on that account, take furnished lodgings. I soon contrived to overcome this difficulty; I was living in a large mansion, Chisenbury House, containing four or five sitting rooms, and ten or twelve bed rooms, amply and expensively furnished with plate, linen, china, and every requisite for a large family, keeping a great deal of company. I, therefore, without the least hesitation, followed up the liberality of the original deed, by immediately offering a moiety of my household furniture, plate, linen, china, books, &c. &c. which was more than enough to furnish any moderately-sized house. This offer was no sooner made than accepted this is another proof of the malignant falsehood of the base editors of the venal press, and of the hireling tools of "England's hope and Westminster's pride," the despicable Rump! "Well, how did you manage to divide these things?" it

will be asked! Why, in a manner totally beyond the comprehension of these political *split-figs, tailors, glass-cutters, leather-dressers, and curriers* of the Westminster Rump. Instead of doing as these fellows would have done under such circumstances, instead of sending for a broker or an appraiser, I acted as follows: I desired her to send for a cabinet maker and his man, and make them pack up a half of every thing, which I should leave entirely to her own choice; and as I was going from home, which I did for the purpose of leaving the whole arrangement to herself, I left an order for my bailiff to place any number of waggons and horses at her disposal, to convey whatever she might choose to have packed up, to her house at Marlborough, and before I left home I placed one hundred pounds, exclusive of the annuity, in her hands, adding, that if she did not pack up the best half of every thing, it was her own fault. Look at this, ye venal, calumniating crew, and hide your diminished heads. Ye paltry tools of the Baronet, ye *Places, Adamses, Clearys, Brookses, and Richters*, belonging to the Rump of Westminster! You have dragged this statement forth, you have given me an opportunity of doing justice to myself, in this particular.

I understand there has been a great desire amongst this crew, to see how I should get over this part of my domestic history. The base vermin, some of them, I know, expected that I should follow the example of *higher authority* and traduce my wife, as a justification for my own errors and frailties. Gracious God!—traduce my wife!—calumniate the mother of my children! Rather than have been guilty of such baseness, rather than have done this, even if she had been exactly the reverse of what she is, instead of being all truth, purity and goodness, if she had been guilty of some errors and indiscretions, even then I would rather have plucked my tongue from my mouth, and have cast it into the fire, much rather than have uttered a breath of slander against my wife, or have whispered a calumny against the mother of my children.

Mrs. Hunt did as I requested her, and the first time I paid her a visit, at her new residence, at Marlborough, which was about a month afterwards, I found that she had not only got furniture enough to furnish a comfortable house, but that she had a room-full over what was necessary. Some of my readers will stare to hear me talk of visiting my wife, under such circumstances, and after such a formal separation. But so it was; and I can say further, though we have had the misfortune to be divided, I do not believe that any human being ever heard either of us cast any reflection, or throw out any the slightest imputation against the other. I have always treated her and spoken of her as the amiable mother of my children, and she, I believe, has spoken of me at all times as the affectionate, though in this respect the unfortunate father, of her children.

Thus have I, without the slightest disguise, given a faithful and unvarnished detail of this melancholy and distressing event. This has been the only drawback, the only thing that my enemies could ever bring fairly against me, that I was separated from my wife—an assertion which was too true to admit of dispute; but all the other calumnies against one are as false and as groundless, as that *of having turned my wife out of doors to starve*. Having said thus much, I am sure that the reader will not expect that I shall be constantly wounding the feelings of an amiable and extensive family, by dwelling upon and publishing every little anecdote of my private domestic concerns. It is enough to say here, that it is now nearly nineteen years since this event occurred, and I will briefly add, that, placing this unfortunate family affliction out of the question, no man living ever enjoyed nineteen years of such uninterrupted domestic felicity with less alloy than I have done. No man's home was ever more agreeable than mine was at all times to me; and I sincerely believe, that this alone has enabled me to support and to survive the great public exertions that I have been constantly making for so many years past.

To all those who may exclaim against my errors, I can only say, in the language of the greatest Reformer that ever came upon the earth, "let him or her that is without sin cast the first stone." How many profligate and abandoned scoundrels will read this, and casting their hypocritical eyes up, "like a duck in thunder," will exclaim and rave against my failings! How many profligate, debauched rakes, when sneaking home to their wives and families from stews and brothels, will, to disguise their own debauchery, profess to rail still at me! How many abandoned, though slyly intriguing city dames, will cast their arms around their husbands' necks, as a proof of their own virtue, or rather to disguise their own frailties, and exclaim aloud against me! None but the truly virtuous know how to make a liberal allowance for the failings of others. My father used to observe, and he set it down as an invariable rule, that the most abandoned and profligate secretly intriguing females, were always the most unforgiving, unrelenting persecutors of any one of their own sex, who had committed an error, or fallen into a misfortune of this sort. A lady, of the parish of Enford, who having been railing in an unmerciful manner against a servant girl who had the misfortune to have an illegitimate child, my father remarked privately to me, that it was a sure proof to him, that she was no better than she should be. A few weeks afterwards, this very same dame was detected in an intrigue with the *house thresher!*

I trust the reader will not think that I am endeavoring to justify the crime of incontinency, seduction or debauchery; quite the reverse; there is a very broad distinction between justifying a crime, and

making a liberal and humane allowance for the frailties of poor human nature. Those females who are really chaste, and who practice rather than profess virtue, are always tender and sparing of their censure of the misfortunes and errors of others of their own sex: so it is with honourable and virtuous men; although they would by no means encourage vice, yet they take a very different course to eradicate it, than that of declaiming publicly against those who have not been so successful as themselves in resisting temptation.

How many living instances could I point out, as illustrations of this self-evident proposition. It was but yesterday I had before me a glaring specimen of the sort of canting hypocrisy which is the object of my censure. It was a reverend and dignified pillar of the church, as demure as a saint, turning up his eyes, and professing and preaching morality, which I had more than once or twice before heard him do, while, with a sanctified leer, he expressed great horror at my breach of conjugal chastity, or violation of the marriage vow. The reader will easily imagine the manner in which I eyed him, while he was uttering these truly religious and moral doctrines, when I inform him that, only a few hours before, an old neighbouring farmer had been relating to me and my friends, a little of the private history of this chaste and pious parson. It seems, by this old gentleman's account, that this now worthy and dignified clergyman of the Church of England, who was originally a mere clerical adventurer, the better to enable himself to perform that duty which he had recently sworn that he was called by the Holy Ghost to execute, took to himself an antiquated damsel for a wife; but what she was deficient in beauty and youth, she made up in the scale by the weight of her purse; and my informant observed that, during the life time of the "first madam," not a servant girl could live in his house, without giving evident proofs that the rosy-gilled priest was not quite purified from the sinful lust of the flesh, notwithstanding the call he had received from the Holy Ghost, and the all-powerful ordination of the Holy Bishop of the diocese to boot.

I could not only, fill this number, but I could fill a volume, with instances of this sort in this very neighbourhood. Let me only take half a score of clergyman, and half a score of magistrates, of this part of the county of Somerset; and in merely detailing the scenes of *debauchery, seduction and desertion* of which they have been notoriously guilty, I could fill a book that would excite the horror and detestation of every rational mind. Let it be observed that I do not by any means class the whole, nor any considerable portion, of the magistracy or clergy in this list; God forbid I should, because I believe there are many, and I know there are some, very excellent and truly good men amongst them. "Well," it may be said, "and what of all this, because some Justices and Parsons are profligate, debauched, and abandoned, would you infer that to be any justification or palliation for your errors?" Not in the least. I do not wish to assume any such ridiculous proposition. All I mean to say is, it brings me to this conclusion, that as we are by our very nature liable to err, and that as it is quite clear that those who are the most forward to condemn others are not always totally free from the frailties of human nature themselves; it therefore behoves us, while we have "the *beam* in our own eye," not to be too officious in exposing the "*mote* in the eye of another." But, after all, I will boldly and fearlessly rest my own character upon the following issue. If any one of those who have been railing against me, will come forward; *if any person*, male or female, will come forward and establish *one act of seduction* against me, even from the earliest period of my life, up to this hour; if they will produce one illegitimate offspring of mine, or prove that there ever has been such, even by common report; I hereby solemnly promise not to write, or have published, one more line as long as I remain in this prison. And further; if any one will come forward and prove, that I have ever been the inmate of a brothel, or been ever seen within the walls of a house of ill-fame, since the day I was married, *twenty-five years ago*; or that I ever, in the whole course of my life, seduced, and afterwards deserted, a female; I do hereby solemnly declare, that upon such proof being established, I will, within one month from the time I leave this gaol, voluntarily banish myself from this country; and so far from ever appearing again in public, I will never again set foot upon British ground. I make no protestations of being more virtuous than other men; but after having made this voluntary offer, if no one accept it, if no one come forward, then in common charity, for the sake of the national character, let these my calumniators for ever afterwards hold their peace. It may be said this is nobody's business; but this answer will not do; it has been every venal knave's business; it has been the business of the corrupt scoundrels of Bristol; it was the daily and hourly business of the debauched editors of the public newspapers of that city, when I offered myself as a candidate there at two contested elections. It has also been the business of the corrupt and profligate editors of almost all the London daily, and most of the London Sunday newspapers, to abuse and calumniate my private character, whenever I have come before the public, at the call of my distressed fellow-countrymen; whether it was at a public meeting, or at a contested election, they made it their business to vomit forth every species of unmanly abuse against me. It has, even in a still greater degree, been the business of those hirelings composing the Westminster Rump; it has been the particular business of the Whigs, the Burdettites, and the Tories; all equally hostile to real liberty; it has been their business openly and covertly to slander and vilify me, for the last twelve or fourteen years. I now, therefore, call upon every one of these corrupt and despicable knaves to come forward, either individually or collectively, and substantiate *some one* of those charges which they have so long,

so repeatedly, and so unblushingly preferred against me. Upon all occasions, they have unequivocally and unanimously denounced me as an enemy to social order, an enemy to the Whigs, an enemy to the Tories, and an enemy, as they say, to the country.

Now, then, is their time to silence me, if they have it in their power to establish one of the crimes with which they have charged me; but if they remain silent, and cannot establish any one of their charges against me, what a race of cowardly, profligate beings they must feel themselves to be! But the fact is, that all

these vermin *know* that they were propagating the most barefaced and wanton falsehoods against me. And who are these men that have been the foremost to accuse me? Some of the most degraded, swinish, and abandoned of the human race. And what has been the cause of all their hostility to me? Why, merely because I have been the undisguised and uncompromising advocate of the people's rights and liberties; because I have publicly and unequivocally, upon all occasions, maintained the right of annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot: in this I have been joined by the great mass of the people of England. and Scotland. For my public exertions in 1816 and 1817, to promote this great cause, I received the most cordial testimony of the regard and esteem of my fellow-countrymen—I received repeated votes of thanks from almost every town and city of consequence in the kingdom, and particularly from the North, and from Scotland. I believe I had the approbation of *nine tenths* of the industrious and most valuable classes of the community, because I fearlessly advocated the right—the constitutional right of all these useful and industrious classes to partake—practically to partake, of that constitution which compelled them to risk their lives and property, if called upon by the government, in its defence. This I did, regardless of all, of every faction, whether *Whig, Tory, or Burdettite*; for at this period there was a considerable faction, composed principally of *petty shop-keepers, and little tradesmen*, who, under the denomination of *tax-paying housekeepers*, enlisted themselves under the banners of Sir Francis Burdett, in order to set themselves up as a sort of privileged class, above the *operative* manufacturer, the artizan, the mechanic, and the labourer. Thus, at the very time that all these classes of operative manufacturers, artizans, mechanics, and labourers, consisting of three-fourths of the population of the kingdom; at the very time, in 1816, when almost the whole of these persons had become united in one object, and had held meetings all over the kingdom, and upwards of a million and a half of them had signed petitions to be presented to Parliament, demanding universal suffrage; at this very juncture, which was immediately after the first meeting held in Spa-fields, lo and behold, Sir Francis Burdett, *hitherto our great leader* in the cause of public liberty, DECLARED OFF and deserted us, by avowing himself the enemy of universal suffrage, and declaring that he would not support any reform that had for its object to extend the suffrage beyond house holders; thus, at one sweeping blow, blasting the hopes, and driving out of the pale of the constitution, at least two-thirds of the population; and that part, too, the most useful and most industrious, and therefore the most beneficial to the nation! The Baronet declared that he would support the *householder suffrage*—that those who occupied a house, and paid King's and Parish taxes directly to the tax-gatherer, should have a vote for members of the Commons' or People's House of Parliament; but that all the junior branches of families, all lodgers, every person who was not the master of a house, should be excluded altogether from any share in electing those who make the laws, by which EVERY ONE'S liberty, life, and property is to be disposed of.

Up to this time, the Baronet had stood so high in the public estimation, and was so much looked up to and respected, not only by me, but by all those who took a lead in the general cause of public liberty, that his word had hitherto been A LAW in these matters; in fact, he had not only gone with us, but he had run before us, and all our difficulty was, to keep up to his mark, for he was always complaining of the apathy of the people, and declaring that they did not deserve liberty, unless they would exert themselves, and join him in demanding it; and he was everlastingly urging us, who laboured under him for the cause (Major Cartwright, Mr. Cobbett, myself, and others), to excite and rouse the people into action, to support his exertions in the House. But when, in 1816, Mr. Cobbett and Major Cartwright had, by their writings, and I and others had by our speeches and resolutions, passed at public meetings, roused the people into a sense of their public duty, to petition the Parliament for their individual, collective, and *universal* rights, behold the Baronet stopped short, and turning sharp round, declared that he would not go with us; and that he would only support the right of liberty for householders, leaving all the rest of the community in a state of abject slavery and bondage! Up to this period—till this fatal decision, with the exception of one or two little obliquities of conduct, Sir F. Burdett had enjoyed the confidence, and received the support of every wise, good, and disinterested man in the nation; because every one believed that he was sincere in his protestations for the universal freedom of mankind. But, now, for the first time, his supporters dwindled into a faction of *shopkeepers and housekeepers*—a little selfish crew, who were anxious to enjoy liberty themselves, and who were elated at the thoughts of becoming a sort of privileged class, above and distinct from the great body of the people. From this cause arose a new faction, under the denomination of BURDETTITES.

It will be recollected, that, at this period, not one of the Whigs came up to this mark even of *householders*. A few of the most liberal of the Whigs, viewing with alarm the rising spirit of the people, thought they must do something—that they must make some show of approach towards a more liberal system; they, therefore, joined the city cock, Mr. Waithman, and held a meeting at the Free- Masons' Tavern, where they manfully declared their readiness to support a Reform, upon the principle of *triennial*, instead of *septennial* Parliaments; but not one word of any alteration in the suffrage;—not one of this faction was then bold or honest enough to support the Burdettite faction, even in their humbug of householder suffrage; and the consequence was, that the Burdettites, or little shopkeeper faction, made a great parade about how much further they were disposed to go than the Waithmanite, or Whig faction.

At a great meeting of delegates, from all parts of the kingdom, and particularly from the North, and from Scotland, held at the Crown and Anchor, to settle the sort of Reform that should be adopted by the people, Major Cartwright and Mr. Cobbett proposed *to limit the suffrage to householders*, for two reasons— first, upon the plea now exploded, of the *impracticability* of every man enjoying freedom or universal suffrage; and secondly, for the purpose of joining and still clinging to Sir Francis Burdett, without whose name and co-operation, it was contended that no plan of reform could be carried into effect. I, however, stood boldly up for the great and just principle of universal suffrage, and moved, as an amendment to the motion made by Mr. Cobbett, that instead of *householder suffrage*, universal suffrage should be substituted. After a long and animated debate, my amendment was carried by a vote of sixty; three hands only being held up against it. For this uncompromising, for this determined support of the principles of universal suffrage, in opposition to the *householder* plan of Sir Francis Burdett, I have ever since been pursued by the vindictive hostility, both openly and covertly, not only of the Baronet's Rump Committee, but of the whole of the Burdett faction, who have, in conjunction with the base and hypocritical Whig faction, been ten times more virulent against me, than even the Tory or Government faction. It may be said, that this is a singular and long digression, and that I am forestalling my history. It is very true; but I deem it necessary to repeat and reiterate the foregoing circumstances, so that a great number of honest and truly excellent Reformers may be able clearly to account for some part of my conduct, which may hitherto have appeared inexplicable. Thousands of very worthy friends of liberty, must have been puzzled and staggered by the violent attacks and calumnies that have been levelled at me, in those public prints that have been generally understood to be the staunch supporters of the principles of freedom; but if they will look back, and narrowly examine into the objects and views of these public prints, they will find that they have been merely the vehicles, by which the Burdettite faction have directed their envenomed shafts against me. Thousands of very sincere and honest friends of liberty have been and are puzzled, to understand how it is, that I have met with such cowardly and unmanly opposition at the *Rump Westminster Dinners*, at the Crown and Anchor; and thousands of equally worthy and honourable men, are disposed to question my pretensions to public favour, upon the ground of the beastly and factious opposition which I have some time experienced from the Whig Waithmanites, at the Common Halls, in the City of London. But as I go along, I will undertake to show the cause of that opposition, and expose the motives of that little city faction, as clear as day-light. Nothing can, indeed, be more plain than this fact, which is, that these factions, one and all, are opposed to the principles of universal Liberty. They have all of them their little, petty, selfish objects to obtain, and in the pursuit of them, they know their greatest obstacle to be, that they cannot any longer make the people their dupes and tools; and they know too, that no man has been so zealously and so perseveringly instrumental as I have been, to keep the people steady in one common pursuit—that of obtaining something for themselves—that of struggling for the interest of the whole community; and they know and feel that nothing could ever warp me from my duty to the public; that I could never be bamboozled nor muzzled, nor silenced, nor bribed, by any one of these factions; and this, this it is that has roused against me their rage and their hostility; and in proportion as I have exposed their sophistry so has their malignity increased. Finding that they could neither answer nor controvert my principles, nor put me down, they have been base enough to resort to slander, and to the most wanton and barefaced falsehoods, which they have trumped up to blacken me. The separation from my wife was a subject that they never failed to urge against me, after having tortured it into a thousand aggravated shapes; not one of which was true. If, however, I would but have joined any one of these factions—would have followed the example of Sir Francis Burdett, and deserted the great mass of the people, by going over to, and joining even the *shopkeeper* or *householder* faction, I might have deserted my wife, and left her to starve, with impunity. I might have been as profligate as any of my calumniators—might have been as debauched as a Prince, or as abandoned as some of these Justice Parsons, and yet I might have passed for one of the most pious and virtuous characters in the kingdom, particularly if I had put on a little demure sanctified hypocrisy. I believe there is no other man in the world, besides myself, but who would have been overwhelmed and driven from the field of politics, by the incessant attacks—by the premeditated and infamous slanders that have been poured out against me. And it is certainly a fact—it is quite true, that nothing on earth could have enabled me to keep my ground, but the purity of my intentions, and the conviction of my heart, that the holy cause for which I have been contending, is just and equitable; nor would any thing on earth induce me to

persevere, but the solemn conviction that it is the law of God and Nature, that man should enjoy civil and religious freedom, and that no law of God or Nature ever condemned a human being to be either a religious or a political slave.

But now to return to my narrative. After this great change in my domestic affairs, I made full as great a change in my course of life. I immediately abolished all the accustomed carousals and feasts that I had been in the habit of giving at Chisenbury-house. I continued the society of a few select friends, but I cast off the busy, fluttering, flattering throng—the fawning, cringing crew—that had been used to crowd my table. I took a house in Bath, and spent the following winter in comparative retirement, in which I was blessed with the society of two or three rational and intelligent friends.

This being a period of peace, there was very little political news afloat. The circumstance that most excited public attention at this time, was the visit of Mr. Fox to Paris, where he was received by the First Consul with every mark of regard and respect. Gracious God! that Mr. Fox could but have lived to have known that this illustrious man should first become Emperor of France, and now be imprisoned on a barren rock, that the English Government should be his gaoler, and that they should cut him off from all communication with the world, and prohibit him from the society of his wife and child! If Mr. Fox could but have lived to have known this, or could have anticipated any such event, he would with his manly eloquence have roused the dastard apathy of the people of England into a just sense of this disgrace, and the national dishonour, as becoming parties to so cowardly and unjust a measure.

The hireling ministerial press of the metropolis was now using the most inflammatory language against the First Consul of France, for the purpose, if possible, of creating a new war; and they were daily spreading the most monstrous and barefaced falsehoods against him, to stimulate the fears and the prejudices of John Bull, by representing him as a tyrant and a monster, who had been, and who would be, guilty of all sorts of cruelties and atrocities, and whose aim it still was, to subdue and conquer England, that he might make us all *slaves* and beasts of burden. Thus were the credulous people of England duped by the paid ministerial agents of government, while Napoleon was most anxious to remain at peace, and particularly at peace with England, that he might consolidate his own power upon the Continent, and protect the people of France against the inroads and tyranny of the despots that surrounded them. The infamous and dastardly conduct of the English ministerial writers drew down the execration of the whole civilized world, and the *Moniteur*, the official newspaper of the French government, announced the indignation and resentment of the First Consul at the conduct of the Court of London, for encouraging and sanctioning such brutal libels. It declared that "every line printed by the English ministerial journalists *is a line of blood*." The reader, who does not recollect the infamous conduct of the ministerial scribes of that day, will find but little difficulty in believing this assertion to be true, when they reflect upon the atrocious and cowardly language of the ministerial hirelings of the present day, and read the obscure balderdash and blood-thirsty principles published in the *Dull Post*, the *Mock Times*, and the *Lying Courier*.

Before I go any further, it is proper for me to remind the reader that it ought never to be forgotten, by the people of England, that Napoleon had been acknowledged by the English government, as the legitimate ruler of France, that very Napoleon whom they now keep a prisoner upon a barren rock at Saint Helena, contrary to every principle of justice and humanity, and in violation of all law, and particularly in violation of the law of nations, notwithstanding Mr. Brougham's priggish assertions to the contrary.

Notwithstanding the jealousy of the English government, and the cowardly slanders of the English ministerial writers, Napoleon assumed great power in France, which the French people were induced to concede to him, that he might be the better able to contend against the intrigues and treachery of the British ministers: he placed himself at the head of the christian church; he caused a new constitution to be adopted in Switzerland; he compelled the Barbary powers to make peace; he was courted by Prussia; he entered into an agreement, called the *Concordat*, with the Pope; he granted an amnesty to the emigrants, which created him a host of friends; and ultimately, in the course of this year, the French government appointed him Consul for life, and the new constitution which he had proposed was approved throughout France. Ambassadors were exchanged between the two powers, England and France, but the administration of England was jealous, suspicious, and in fact never cordially cemented the peace, into which they had been compelled, from circumstances, to enter. On their part, as it will be seen hereafter, it was nothing more or less *than a hollow deceitful truce*.

On the nineteenth of November, this year, (1802), Colonel Despard and nine other persons were apprehended, on a charge of high treason; and, after many examinations before the privy council, they were ultimately committed to prison, on the twenty-ninth of the same month, to take their trials for high treason. This plot, as it was called, caused a very considerable sensation throughout the country. It was stated to have been entered into not only to dethrone, but to kill the King, as he was going from his Palace to the Parliament House, through the Park, by blowing him and his attendants to atoms, by

firing the long piece of ordnance at them when they came near the Horse Guards; and it was asserted that Colonel Despard had formed and entered into this conspiracy, to shoot the King and overturn the government, with the said piece of ordnance, in consequence of the ministers refusing to attend to, and liquidate, some claims that he had upon the government. The ministers contrived to create a considerable alarm throughout the whole empire, amongst the credulous, and such as were easily terrified by the explosion of this ridiculous *pop-gun plot*.

The ministers, however, were obliged to repeal the income tax, as a bribe to the landed interest, upon whom it was considered to fall particularly heavy, although the removal of it was looked upon as a boon to every one who paid it. This was a *peace* offering, such as our present ministers appear determined not to bestow upon us, notwithstanding we are now in the sixth year of peace. This year there was a loan of twenty-three millions raised. The taxes were enormous, that of the poor rates alone having amounted to five millions. The average price of the quartern loaf, during the twelve months, was one shilling. The prime minister was the Right Honourable Harry Addington, now Lord Sidmouth; Mr. Perceval was Attorney, and Mr. Manners Sutton was the Solicitor-general; the Chief Justice Lord Kenyon, having received his sentence, and been condemned to be banished to another world, by the Judge of judges, Mr. Law was created Lord Ellenborough, and appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

On the third of January, 1803, a special commission was issued under the Great Seal, to inquire of certain high treasons committed within the county of Surrey; and on the twenty-first of January, it was opened at the Sessions House at Newington—present on the bench, Lord Ellenborough, Sir Alexander Thompson, Sir Simon Le Blanc, and Sir Alan Chambre. The grand jury were sworn, composed of Lord Leslie, foreman, Lord William Russel, Sir Thomas Turton, and others, and after a long speech from the newly made Chief Justice, which, by the bye, was quite unnecessary, the said grand jury returned a true bill against Edward Marcus Despard and twelve others; throwing out the bills that were preferred against SOME OTHERS who were known to have been deeply implicated with Colonel Despard. The Court then adjourned to the fifth of February, after having, at the request of the prisoner Despard, assigned Mr. SERGEANT BEST and Mr. GURNEY as his counsel.

On Saturday, the fifth of February, 1803, the court met, pursuant to adjournment, at the Sessions House at Newington, the same Judges presiding as before. Edward Marcus Despard and twelve others were placed at the bar, and severally pleaded not guilty. On Monday, the seventh of February, the Court met again at nine o'clock in the morning—present, Ellenborough, Thompson, Le Blanc, and Chambre, as before. There were nine counsel employed by the crown, as follow: Attorney and Solicitor General, Perceval and Manners Sutton, Sergeant Shepherd, Plumer, Garrow, Common Sergeant, Wood, Fielding, and Abbott. Counsel for Colonel Despard, Mr. SERGEANT BEST and Mr. GURNEY. The prisoner being placed at the bar, the following jury were sworn, *Grant Allan, William Dent, William Davidson, Gabriel Copland, William Coxson, John Farmer, John Collinson, James Webber, Gilbert Handyside, John Hamer, Peter Dubree, and John Field*. I am sure the reader will agree with me, that nothing can be more desirable than to record the names of all the parties concerned in such melancholy and bloody transactions, that they may be handed down to posterity for the use and information of the rising generation, that they may be enabled the better to judge of the motives and management of the prosecutors, and the degree of guilt or innocence of the accused. What a subject for the reflecting mind, to watch the rise and progress of those concerned in the various transactions of this sort, which have occurred during our own time, and within our own memory. As my opinion is, that Colonel Despard fell a sacrifice to the intrigues and the spy plots of the ministers of that day, and their detestable agents, that the verdict was obtained against him by perjury, and that he was in no degree guilty of the charges that were preferred against him, it will be most interesting to watch the progress of those concerned in his prosecution and trial, and to mark their end.

Upon the trial of Colonel Despard a number of witnesses swore the most outrageous things against him, but the two principal witnesses were two soldiers; one of these men, it is said, left England immediately afterwards, and was never again heard of by any one in this country; the other, as I was informed by Mr. Clifford, confessed upon his death bed, that he had been bribed to swear against the Colonel, that what he had sworn was false, and that he had been instructed what to say, and he did so, for doing which he received a considerable sum. These were two fellows of the most abandoned character, as came out upon their cross-examination, (SUCH AS IT WAS), but the evidence for the prosecution was so inconsistent, and so ridiculously improbable, that one is astounded at the thought, how it was possible for any twelve men in the kingdom, indiscriminately and fairly chosen, to have said *guilty* upon such testimony, and that principally upon the testimony of accomplices. But, what was more extraordinary than all the rest, was, that, although there was a ROOM FULL of witnesses for the prisoner, many of them most respectable, who were ready and willing to disprove a great deal that the witnesses for the prosecution had sworn, and to prove that several of the principal witnesses were not worthy to be believed upon their oath, yet, to the astonishment of the Court, to the grief and sorrow of

the prisoner's friends and relations, to the wonder of the whole country, *the counsel for the prisoner never called one of these witnesses*. Gracious God! the bare recollection of this circumstance freezes one's blood with horror! I have received a letter from a friend of the colonel, to say, that when they found the counsel were only calling a few witnesses to character, they, the colonel's friends and relations, wrote him a note, imploring him to demand that these most important witnesses should be called and examined. But he returned this fatal answer, "I have trusted my case in the hands of my counsel, and in them I place implicit confidence; I shall therefore not interfere with them." Oh fatal confidence!

It is not for me to accuse the counsel of having betrayed and sold their client; but it is my firm and unalterable opinion, that, had these witnesses who were in attendance been called for the prisoner, no jury would ever have pronounced the word—guilty. Thank God! I made up my mind long, long ago, never to trust my life or my liberty in the hands of a counsel! I have not the least doubt, not the shadow of a doubt upon my mind, that, if the government could have been sure that I would have trusted my defence in the hands of a counsel, if they could have indulged in a well-grounded hope, that I would have committed my case to the keeping of the worthy *Counsellor Scarlett*, but that they would have tried and convicted me and my friends of high treason, for attending the peaceable meeting at Manchester; for which, as it was, they could not even get me convicted of a conspiracy, though they had packed a tractable Yorkshire Whig jury. But if they could have got me to place a brief in the hands of the worthy and able WHIG SCARLETT, I should have been tried for high treason, and the evidence of *Hulton*, *Entwistle*, and *Andrew*, would have been so beautifully managed, that I am quite sure a packed Yorkshire Whig jury, with the Halls, the Chaytors, the Hultons, the Chadwicks, and the Oddys, at their head, would, under the dexterous management of the worthy hermaphrodite politician, Mr. Scarlett, have, and upon the self-same evidence, found me guilty either of high treason, or of sheep stealing, whichever might have best suited the purpose of the prosecutors. Under such circumstances, had I left my life in the hands of Mr. Scarlett, notwithstanding I should have subpoenaed, and had in attendance, *one hundred and fifty witnesses*, to contradict all the perjury sworn by the aforesaid *trio*, I should not have been surprised if Mr. Scarlett, instead of calling them, had contented himself with calling, perhaps, Parson Hay and Mr. Nadin to my character, under the pretence that, twenty years before, they had known me a very loyal man in the Everly or Marlborough troop of yeomanry cavalry.

The only witnesses called for poor Colonel Despard, were three complete Government men; Lord Nelson, Sir Alured Clark, and Sir Evan Nepean, Bart. Gracious God! only look at this! The counsel for the prisoner well knew that these evidence to character were not worth a straw; for they had not known any thing of Colonel Despard for many years past, and yet these men were called, and others of the most vital importance were not called. Gracious God! as Mr.— now Sir Thomas Lethbridge, would say, it almost makes my hair stand an end upon my head! Two out of three, viz. *Clark* and *Nepean*, upon their cross-examination, evidently gave such testimony as told much more against him than for him. But Lord Nelson spoke of him as follows:— " We went on the Spanish Main together; we slept many nights together under the same blanket, in our clothes, upon the ground; we have measured the height of the enemy's walls together. In all that period of time, no man could have shown more zealous attachment to his Sovereign and his country than Colonel Despard did. I formed the highest opinion of him at that time, as a man and an officer; seeing him so willing in the service of his Sovereign. Having lost sight of him for the last twenty years, if I had been asked my opinion of him, I should certainly have said—if he be alive, he is certainly one of the brightest ornaments of the British army." This was certainly a just and true description of Colonel Despard's character; but let us see how Lord Nelson finished his cross-examination, by the Attorney General. What your Lordship has been stating, was in the year 1780?—"Yes." Have you had much intercourse with him since that time?—"I have never seen him since the 29th of April, 1780." Then as to his loyalty for the last twenty-three years of his life, you know nothing?—"NOTHING." Gracious God! and THERE Mr. SERGEANT BEST left his examination. Let the reader only look back at the trial, and read the mawkish cross-examination of the villain Windsor, by the learned Sergeant, and he will make up his mind to two things the very moment he has finished it:—the first is, never to feel surprise again at the verdict against Colonel Despard; and the second is, that he will never trust his own life in the hands of an aspiring place-hunting lawyer.

After a very short speech from Mr. SERGEANT BEST and Mr. Gurney, wherein they both apologized to the jury for its *length*, and a very long and able reply from the Solicitor-General, and a very long summing up by Lord Ellenborough, the jury withdrew for about twenty-five minutes, and a little before three o'clock on the Tuesday morning, they returned a verdict Of GUILTY. The foreman added, "MY LORD, WE DO MOST EARNESTLY RECOMMEND THE PRISONER TO MERCY, ON ACCOUNT OF THE HIGH TESTIMONIALS OF HIS FORMER GOOD CHARACTER, AND EMINENT SERVICES TO HIS COUNTRY." The Judge said not a word. But where is the man of the present day, who has read of the verdict of wilful murder given by the jury, at Horsham Assizes, against the person upon the preventive service, who deliberately shot a man, and who has since read of the pardon that has been granted to that person, but would have expected that the very strong and emphatic recommendation of the jury,

for the extension of mercy to Colonel Despard, would have received some attention. No! no! Colonel Despard had *opposed* and *exposed* the Government, and he was hanged in the front of the county gaol at Horsemonger Lane, and after having been suspended about twelve minutes and a half, his head was taken off, (*the King having most graciously remitted the execution of the remainder of the sentence.*) Thus died Colonel Despard, who, though he was not a man of great talent, yet he was, in the language, the words of Lord Nelson, "as brave as Caesar." But, as the vulgar saying goes, "the death of the horse is the life of the "dog," and "it is an ill-wind that blows nobody good." The learned Sergeant BEST displayed such *extraordinary* talents upon this trial, that he was rewarded with a silk gown within one month afterwards. It has been confidently asserted that when the Prince Regent had incessantly, but in vain, urged the Lord Chancellor to promote a certain Welsh Judge, this venerable Peer once answered, "I "cannot conscientiously recommend venality "to the English Bench." "*Ellenborough, Thompson, Le Blanc, and Chambre*, the four Judges, have long, long ago gone to stand at the bar of a special commission to receive the sentence of the Judge of judges; but it is doubtful whether they carried with them so strong a recommendation to mercy as that which was urged, in vain, for poor Despard. We all recollect how the then Attorney-General, Spencer Perceval, went out of the world headlong by a shot, from the unerring aim of Bellingham. The junior counsel for the exown, ABBOTT, and the senior counsel for the prisoner, BEST, are both now placed in the same seat in the Court of King's Bench. It also is a fact worth recording, that the *most violent* of all Colonel Despard's associates had *no Bill* found against him, although *two* were preferred, one in Surrey and one in Middlesex. It came out in evidence, that this person was more violent and more determined than any other, and made use of the most outrageous denunciations against the Government, and against any of his comrades who might betray them, or refuse to go the lengths that he did. The Government had this evidence, and it came out, upon the examination of Thomas Blades, that this person threatened that he would blow any one's brains out that showed any symptoms of cowardice, and that he would plant a dagger in the breast of any one who should divulge their secret. And yet, the same Grand Jury that found the Bills against Colonel Despard and others, threw out the Bills against this said violent and courageous gentleman. This is exactly the same game that was played by Edwards and Castles; these two scoundrels were the most violent, and urged on their unfortunate victims to deeds of desperation, yet they escaped not only punishment but even indictment. What a lesson for all Reformers, to avoid the snares of the most violent men, who are generally the agents of Government! All these worthies contrived to get into my company, *Castles ONCE, Edwards ONCE*, and this said person who played such an active part in Colonel Despard's affair *ONCE*, and *only once* each; *once* was quite enough for me. It has often been said, by my friends, that Providence interfered to prevent my falling into the trap of these villains. It is very true; but Providence interfered in this way, Providence gave me resolution never to attend any private meetings, never to be concerned in any private cabal, never to get drunk, or associate with persons who frequented public houses; in fact, Providence has filled my heart with a desire to promote the welfare and happiness of my fellow-creatures, by a bold, straight forward, public, open course. In private life, I have relaxed into all the delightful enjoyments of domestic happiness, where I have very seldom suffered politics and her boisterous train to interfere with my rural felicity; but whenever I have come before the public, I have always, with an inflexible resolution, cast all selfish considerations behind me, and given a loose to that "*amor patria*" with which my bosom ever glows, when I am in the presence of my fellow-countrymen. I have always said bolder things, and used more of what is called violent language, in public, than I ever allowed to escape from my lips in my happy privacy. In that privacy I have been in the habit of associating with friends holding different political sentiments from my own, without ever quarrelling with them, or thinking the worse of them, on that account. My safety has, I repeat, arisen from my political honesty. I have never joined in any intrigue, any cabal, any faction; I have openly and boldly contended for the natural and legitimate right of every man to enjoy political freedom; and I pray God that I may breathe my last before I alter my opinion upon this subject.

I had now resided in Bath nearly a year, occasionally visiting my farm at Chisenbury and Littlecot. During my residence at Bath a circumstance occurred of some importance to me and my family. A brewer, of the name of Racey, had, as I have before hinted, borrowed upwards of seven thousand pounds of my father, without any other security than his own bond, in which sum he was indebted to him at his death. As he had not paid his interest up regularly, I was induced to look a little more minutely into his concerns; especially as I found that he was living a very debauched life. My uncle, William Powell, of Nurstead, a quaker, who was left joint trustee and executor with myself to my father's will, and had taken the most active part in the management of my father's affairs, appeared to place full as much reliance in the credit of this said brewer as my father had done, and he had several times resisted my importunities, to demand jointly with me better security for this money than the brewer's own bond. I argued, that my father had a perfect right to exercise his own judgment, and give what credit he pleased, as it was his own property; but that my uncle and myself, acting as trustees for my brothers and sisters, were not justified in suffering so considerable a sum of money to remain in this man's hands without better security. He, however, still persisted that the brewer had a good stock, and a good trade; that he regularly examined his stock every half year, and he found that it was in a flourishing state. My answer was, the man lives a very debauched life, and therefore his affairs must be

in a precarious state; but the quaker was inflexible, and nothing was done in the matter. The brewer continued his debauched course, and neglected and quarrelled with his family, and my uncle Powell continued his confidence. At length, the old man carried his excesses so far, that he not only quarrelled with his eldest son, but he actually turned him out of doors. This young man was a great intimate of mine, with whom I had contracted a sort of school-boy friendship; he, therefore, fled immediately to me for protection, when he was driven from his father's house. I laboured with great zeal and perseverance to promote a reconciliation between the father and the son, but I found the former implacable, and rancorously vindictive against his son, who had been interfering about some of his father's debaucheries; and he was consequently not to be forgiven. The young man saw that his father's affairs were going fast to ruin, and knowing the large sum that he was indebted to me and my family, he communicated to me the real situation of his father, and advised me to take some measures to secure the property that he was indebted to us as executors under my father's will. I went to my uncle once more, and represented the matter to him, but he was as obstinate as ever: he answered, that I had taken a prejudice against the old man, in consequence of his quarrelling with his son; and that he should decline taking any hostile measures against him; and that he had a large stock of good beer, for he had lately examined it. I informed him that he was imposed upon, that the old brewer had filled up all his large casks, amounting to between two and three thousand barrels, with *small beer*, in order to deceive him, and make him believe that it was strong beer. At this he stared a very incredulous stare, and said that he would look into it, but he delayed it so long that, when he did join me in taking decisive measures, the whole property sold for about two thousand pounds, so that we were minus about five thousand pounds; and every shilling of this loss I attribute to my quaker uncle's obstinacy—a failing, notwithstanding all their good qualities, to which this sect is very subject.

I had contracted a great predilection for the son, with whom I had had an intimacy for some years; and, notwithstanding the loss I had sustained by his father, he prevailed upon me to join him in a brewing concern at Clifton, near Bristol: as he had not a shilling of his own, I was to find the cash, and he judgment. I did this mainly to set him up in business, although I was not without expectations that it might ultimately become a profitable concern. I therefore engaged to find a capital of six or eight thousand pounds; from two to three of which was to be sunk in building a brewery, the erection of which I was to superintend, and complete the fabric after my own plan. As soon as this was done, I was only to find the money, and my young friend was to manage and conduct the brewing concern. I agreed to all this upon one condition only, which was, that there should be nothing brewed in our brewery but genuine beer and porter, made of malt and hops alone. After some parley upon this point it was at length assented to.

The brewery was built upon the site of an old distillery, at the rising of a spring called Jacob's Well, at the foot of Brandon Hill, and immediately below Belleview, at Clifton. The whole was soon completed under my own eye, and finished entirely on my own plan. I took advantage of the declivity of the hill, on the side of which the premises were situated, to have it so constructed that the whole process of brewing was conducted, from the grinding of the malt, which fell from the mill into the mash-tun, without any lifting or pumping; with the exception of pumping the water, called *liquor* by brewers, first into the reservoir, which composed the roof of the building. By turning a cock, this liquor filled the steam boiler, from thence it flowed into the mash-tun; the wort had only once to be pumped, once from the under back into the boiler, from thence it emptied itself, by turning the cock, into the coolers; it then flowed into the working vats and riving casks, and from the stillions, which were immediately above the store casks into which it flowed, only by turning a cock. These store casks were mounted on stands or horses, high enough to set a butt upright, and fill it out of the lower cock; and then the butts and barrels were rolled to the door, and upon the drays, without one ounce of lifting from the commencement of the process to the end. This was a great saving of labour. I left the concern in the hands of my young friend, with every prospect of success, and I then returned to my farm at Chisenbury; having, as I was taught to believe, laid the foundation of a lucrative concern, from which I expected to derive a liberal interest for the money I had advanced, which was about eight thousand pounds, and at the same time afford a handsome income for my young friend. But such is the uncertainty and precarious state of all speculative concerns of this nature, and such the inconstancy of friendship, that, instead of ever receiving one shilling from this concern, I found it still continue to be a drain upon my purse. Bills were coming due, I was told, and they must be provided for, or the credit of the firm would be blasted. Duty, to a large amount, was to be paid every six weeks, and as often I was called upon to assist in making up the sum. I now began, although much too late, to curse the hour that I became connected with trade. I, however, did not despair. I met all the demands, till, having called in a considerable sum of money, which I had lent to a friend, an attorney, upon his note of hand, he gave me bills, payable at *one, two, and three* months, for the amount. These were all absorbed at the brewery, and paid away in the course of trade, for malt, hops, &c. but the first, second, and third, all the said bills, were as *regularly dishonoured* as they became due. So much for friendly attorneys! and though I had a sufficient sum in my bankers' hands, Stuckey and Co. to meet the deficiency, with some exertion of my own, *yet*, such a ticklish thing is *credit*, and particularly in the illiberal city of Bristol,

that I found my bankers always looked shy at any bills that were carried to them afterwards. My friend, the attorney, renewed the bills, with a solemn promise that they should be regularly paid when they became due; but the word and honour of an attorney, at least of this attorney, was good for nothing. Fortunately, I only paid one of them away in the trade; for that and the others were as *regularly dishonoured as before*.

To meet and overcome such treachery, I was obliged to reside a great portion of my time at Clifton; and I soon found that, instead of my receiving regular interest for the money which I had advanced, I was in a fair way of being drained of every shilling I possessed, if I did not make a stand. My old friend, Waddington, came to visit me; he was a man of business and of the world, and I begged of him to look into the books and advise me. He did so, and at the end of a couple of hours he returned, and informed me that I had been egregiously deceived, plundered, and robbed, and that he had not the slightest hesitation in declaring, that my young friend, in whom I had placed such unlimited and implicit confidence, was a *great villain!* I was thunderstruck, and inquired how he meant to substantiate his charge; his answer was, invite him to dine with us to-day, and after dinner send for the books, and I will make him confess his villainy before your face. I followed his advice, invited him to dine, and after dinner I sent for the books, under the pretence of explaining something to Mr. Waddington. The books came; Mr. Waddington turned to a particular account, which he had investigated in the morning, pointed it out to him, and begged to know how he could account for such and such entries. My gentleman turned pale and equivocated. Mr. Waddington turned to another and another, upon which my protégé stood confessedly a most complete hypocrite; and having thrown himself on my mercy, he at once obtained my forgiveness, upon a solemn promise of never being guilty of a similar offence again. Mr. Waddington expressed his astonishment at my forbearance in not having him committed, and ridiculed my folly in continuing to place any confidence in him; adding, "I hanged one clerk and transported two more, for much less offences than he has been guilty of, and in which I have clearly detected him."

The young man shewed the greatest contrition, and after he had vowed reparation in the most solemn terms, he took his leave. The moment his back was turned, Mr. Waddington declared, that he had not the least doubt in his own mind that, notwithstanding all the protestations which I had heard, he was gone away determined to commit some more desperate act of fraud; and, to convince me of the correctness of his judgment, he got up at four o'clock the next morning, and stole down to my brewery, and there he detected him in the fact of practising upon me a fraud similar to that of which he had been previously convicted by his own confession. Mr. Waddington came back to breakfast, and informed me of the fact, and urged my taking immediate criminal proceedings against the offender. I, however, preferred giving him an opportunity to escape, and having ordered my curricula I called at the brewery, to say that I was going to Chisenbury for a few days. He inquired as follows—"Pray, Sir, what day shall we have the pleasure of seeing you back again?" I replied that it would be in about a week. These were the last words I ever heard from him. When I returned I found, as I expected, that he had sailed for America, bag and baggage, two days: after I left Bristol.

I discovered that the concern was in a most wretched state; the debts had been collected to a shilling, where they were good for any thing. The cellars were filled with bad beer, although he had had the unlimited control of the best malt and hops. I had sent my own best barley down from Chisenbury, and had made fifty quarters of malt a week, for two whole seasons, for which I had no return, and the amount of my losses in this concern is incalculable. When he first began brewing I made him make oath, before the Mayor of Bristol, that he would use only malt and hops in the brewing of the beer and porter at the Jacob's Well Brewery. Some time after this, I had some ground of suspicion that the brewer purchased some small quantity of copperas, to assist his faults in brewing. I, therefore, ever afterwards made the brewer, as well as his master, take the oath before the Mayor, that they would use nothing but malt and hops in brewing.

When the act was passed, making it a penalty of two hundred pounds to use any *drug, ingredient, or material*, except malt and hops, in the brewing of beer, Alderman Wood obtained a patent for making of colouring, to heighten the colour of porter. This colouring was made of scorched or burnt malt, and it was mashed the same as common malt, which produced a colouring of the consistency of treacle, and having nearly its appearance. As this patent was very much approved of, almost every porter brewer in England used it in the colouring their porter; and amongst that number I was not only a customer of the worthy alderman for colouring, but I was also a considerable purchaser of hops from the firm of Wood, Wiggan & Co. in Falcon Square. I had just got down a fresh cask of this colouring, and it was standing at the entrance door of the brewery, where it had been rolled off the dray, when news was brought me that the new exciseman had seized the cask of colouring, and had taken it down to the excise office. I immediately wrote to Wood, Wiggan & Co. to inform them of the circumstance; upon which they immediately applied to the board of excise in London, and by the return of post I received a letter from Messrs. Wood, to say, that an order was gone off, by the same post, to direct the officers of

excise in Bristol to restore the cask of colouring without delay; and almost as soon as this letter had come to hand, and before I could place it upon the file, one of the exciseman came quite out of breath to say that an order had arrived from the board of excise in London, to restore the cask of colouring, and it was quite at my service, whenever I pleased to send for it. I wrote back a letter by the fellow, to say, that as the exciseman had seized and carried away from my brewery a cask of colouring, which was allowed by the board of excise to be perfectly legal to use, as it was made of malt and hops only, unless, within two hours of that time, they caused it to be restored to the very spot from whence it was illegally removed, I would direct an action to be commenced against them. In less than an hour the cask of colouring was returned, and the same exciseman who had seized it came to make an apology for his error. His pardon was at once granted, and so ended this mighty affair; and I continued to use the said colouring, as well as did all the porter brewers in Bristol, without further molestation, as long as I continued the brewery; never having had any other seizure while I was concerned in the brewery.

Now, let the reader look at this circumstance, and compare it with the account, the malignant account, given of it in the *Mock Times*, which, I think, was given to the public while I was in solitary confinement in the New Bailey, at Manchester, upon a charge of high treason. That was the time chosen by the cowardly scoundrel, the editor of the *Mock Times*, to state "that I had formerly been a brewer at Bristol, and, that I had made oath that my beer was genuine, and brewed solely from malt and hops; but that, in turning to the excise books, they found that, at such a period (mentioning the term) Henry Hunt was exchequered, for using deleterious drugs in the making the said genuine beer." This was the time chosen to propagate this infamous, this cowardly, this barefaced falsehood; the very time when I was locked up in solitary confinement, in a dungeon, under a charge of high treason; and this is the hypocrite who pretends never to attack private character. This fellow, Slop, I never yet saw to know him; but I hope I shall live to look the coward scoundrel in the face.

In the latter end of the year 1803, an insurrection broke out in Ireland, and the Habeas Corpus Act was in consequence suspended. Lord Kilwarden, Chief Justice of the King's Bench in Ireland, was put to death by the insurgents in Dublin. War had also commenced once more between England and France. The English proceeded to seize all the French ships they could find at sea; making the people on board prisoners of war. In retaliation for this act of aggression, Buonaparte seized upon the persons of all the English in France, and treated them as prisoners. This was blazoned forth as a tyrannical act of injustice, in all the public newspapers, the venal editors of which contrived to keep out of sight the provocation which France had received, and that she only seized the English, and made them prisoners in retaliation. Addington's peace was now, indeed, proved to be what Mr. Fox had anticipated, in his speech upon the occasion in parliament, "a hollow truce;" for, to use the minister's own expression, "he had entered into the treaty of Amiens *merely as an experiment*." A bill called the Defence Bill was passed; an army of reserve was raised; volunteer corps were again established all over the country; and every measure was used to repel the threatened invasion of the enemy. This defence bill compelled every parish or district to raise a certain number of men, as volunteers, or pay a fine if it failed to do so. Having endeavoured in vain to raise their quota, many parishes paid the fine (which by the bye was not unacceptable to the Government).

Amongst the number of defaulters on this occasion was the parish of Enford, the farmers of which had used every means to raise the men; being, in the first place, loth to part with their money, and in the next, not relishing the disgrace of not having influence enough with their labourers to induce them to volunteer. They had already held two meetings, at which officers were appointed, but no men came forward to put down their names, although they were earnestly exhorted to do so by the vicar of the parish, the Reverend John Prince, who was generally liked by his parishioners. One of my servants, my bailiff, I believe, wrote to me at Clifton, to inform me of the state of the politics of the parish, which was, that the men were willing enough, but they did not like their officers, and that they wished me as an officer. My bailiff added, that if I would come to the meeting, on the following Sunday, which was the last intended to be held, and give in my name as their captain, the number, which was to be sixty, would be volunteered in an hour. Agreeable to this suggestion I drove to Enford on the following Sunday, and, as I was late I drove up to the church door in my curricule. I was welcomed as usual by the kind and friendly salutations of my old neighbours; but when I came to the church-yard all was solemn silence, and as still as death itself; not one of the parishioners appeared as usual upon such occasions. I supposed that the meeting was over, and was about to return, when one of the farmers came out of the church and invited me into the vestry, where all the heads of the parish were assembled, as he informed me, with the vicar in the chair. I followed him into the vestry room, where I found them all in solemn, sober, deliberation, brooding over their disappointment, in not having obtained the names of any of the labourers of the parish. One of them shortly addressed me, inveighing against this disloyalty and disaffection, and he informed me, that they had just come to an unanimous resolution to pay the fine, and not trouble themselves any farther about it, unless I could suggest some plan to avoid the disgrace and the expence to the parish. I submitted the propriety of making a proper appeal to those whom they wished to come forward. They replied by producing a hand-bill, to which they said they had

added their personal entreaties; but all in vain, as not one man had come forward, although three persons had volunteered as officers. I hinted that that was beginning at the wrong end; that the men should have been first enrolled, and then allowed to choose their own officers.

At this moment the sexton came in, to say that the church-yard was full of men; women and children; that the whole parish had assembled when they saw Mr. Hunt drive up to the church; and that the men all said, "if Squire Hunt would be their captain they would enroll their names, and would follow him to any part of the world." It was proposed that we should go out to them, and hear what they had got to say. As soon as we reached the door, the cry was raised of Captain Hunt for ever! accompanied with three cheers. This was a most gratifying spectacle to me; I was surrounded by all those with whom I had been bred up, those amongst whom I had been born, and with whom, and under whose eye, I had passed my whole life, with the exception of the time which I had spent at school. I could do no less than address them, and accordingly I mounted on a tombstone (an excellent rostrum)—I spoke to them in a language that they well understood, the language of truth and not of flattery. I kindly thanked them for the honour they intended me, and the unqualified confidence they appeared disposed to place in me; I recalled to their recollections the happy days that we had spent together in the alternate and rational enjoyment of useful labour and cheerful recreation; we had worked, we had toiled together in the field; we had mingled together in the innocent gay delights of the country wake; I had been present, and had never failed to patronise their manly sports, at the annual festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide; I had contended with them, while yet a boy, in the foot race, at the cricket match, or at the fives court; I had entered the ring with the more athletic, struggled foot to foot for the fall, and had borne off many a wrestling prize for the day, which I had never failed to give to some less powerful or less fortunate candidate for the honour: I had always mingled with and encouraged their innocent sports, but I had never countenanced any drunken revelry. In fact, I was so well known amongst the young and the old, that they all with one accord exclaimed, if Mr. Hunt will be our captain we will follow where he leads, if it be to the farthest parts of the earth. At the same time that I thanked them for, and was highly delighted with this predilection, I endeavoured to prevail upon them to accept those who had offered themselves as their officers; and I pointed out to them the distance at which I should be from them, and the inconvenience it would be to me to attend to instruct them in their duty. But all would not do; not one man would put his name to the paper; not one female urged her relation on to volunteer. I must own that I felt a conscious pride in their partiality, and particularly upon this occasion, because a few envious persons had hinted that my family misfortunes, and my separation from my wife, had in a great measure weaned the affections of some of my neighbours from me.

At length, after having tried their sincerity fairly, and found it invincible, I yielded to their wishes, and in an impassioned tone, I announced *that I would be their captain*; this I did amidst the enthusiastic shouts of the whole assembled multitude, men, women, and children; every man pressing forward to sign his name as a volunteer. But, having obtained silence, I seriously admonished them as follows:—"My kind-hearted, generous, zealous, neighbours and friends, recollect what you are about to do, and pause a little before you sign your names; for I solemnly declare, before God and my country, that I have no other object in becoming your captain, but a sincere desire to serve my country; and, as I should be ashamed to become a volunteer, if I were not ready to lay down my life in defending her shores against the invasion of a foreign enemy, I shall, therefore, not tender my services, or accept of yours, upon any other terms than these: *That we volunteer our services to Government, to be ready at a moment's notice, to march to any part of the united kingdom, whenever we may be called upon, and wherever we may be wanted.* Upon these terms, and these alone, I consent to become your captain."

This was again answered by three more cheers, and a general cry of "*wherever you, our captain, choose to lead we will be ready to follow!*" The first men who pressed forward, and placed their names at the head of the list, were those very men whom, a few years before, I had caused to be prosecuted for a riot and rescue, at Netheravan. I never witnessed a more gratifying flattering scene than the village church-yard of Enford exhibited. Old women were encouraging their sons, others their husbands, young maidens were smiling their willing assent to their sweethearts and brothers, and although there was not a single instance where the men required any of these to urge them on to do their duty in the defence of their country, yet the approbation and smiles of the females gave such a zest to the act, and stamped such a sanction upon the whole undertaking, that one and all burned with the most lively enthusiasm to become willing agents to stem the threatened irruption of the invader, and to repel his aggressions even at the risk of their life's dearest blood. With the exception of two individuals, who had taken some pique, every man in the parish capable of bearing arms enrolled himself on that day or the following morning; upon the completion of which I wrote the following letter to Earl Pembroke, the Lord Lieutenant of the County :—

Chisenbury House, August 15, 1803.

MY LORD,

Having observed, with infinite regret, in the public newspapers, that when a general meeting of the various parishes in this neighbourhood took place, the inhabitants exhibited great apathy with regard to the situation of the country, and that only a small portion of the inhabitants of the parish of Enford had signed their names to act as volunteers in defence of their country in case of an invasion, I was induced, yesterday, from a sense of public duty, to come amongst them; and, at their particular and unanimous request, I accepted the offer to command them, agreeable to the provisions of the late act of parliament. I have the pleasure now to inform you, that all the men in this parish capable of bearing arms, with the exception of two, have voluntarily enrolled their names to act as a company of volunteers, to be at the command of the Government, to march at a moment's notice to any part of the united kingdom, where our services may be required. I also beg leave, in addition to the foregoing, to renew the offer which I made through your Lordship two years back, of my life and fortune, without any reservation, to oppose the daring views of our enterprising enemy. Sir John Poore, your Deputy Lieutenant, has expressed himself much pleased with the zeal and the alacrity with which the people of Enford have come forward, and I have to solicit your Lordship's early attention to this corps (in case our services should be accepted), as I feel particularly anxious to render their services available as speedily as possible.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

H. HUNT.

To the Earl, of Pembroke.

Having dispatched my servant off with this letter, enclosing a list of the names of the volunteers, I appointed to meet them at my house at Chisenbury on the following Sunday, by which time I expected I should be able to give them the answer of the Lord Lieutenant; and in the mean time I returned to look after my brewing concern at Clifton. In a few days after, I received a palavering letter from my Lord Pembroke, as follows:— *Lower Brook Street, Aug. 18, 1803.*

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th, enclosing a list of persons who have volunteered in the parish of Enford. The offer is most liberal and handsome on your part, as well as on the part of those who have joined you in tendering such unlimited service, which, although it far exceeds the limits of the Defence Bill, yet I shall feel it my duty to lay it before the Secretary of State, that it may receive that attention which your patriotic offers merit. There will be a meeting of Deputy Lieutenants in a few days, when your offer shall be taken into consideration, and receive my early attention.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

PEMBROKE.

To Henry Hunt, Esq.

Chisenbury House.

I could easily see that there was a shuffle meant here; and I anticipated that our services were much too zealous and disinterested to meet with the sanction of his Lordship, and so it proved; for when I reached Chisenbury House, on the following Sunday, I found a letter, written by Lord Pembroke to Sir John Melburn Poore, Bart, left for my perusal, as underneath:—

Margate, August, 1803.

SIR,

I find that it will not be in my power to forward the offer from Enford, in your division, which was communicated to me by Mr. Hunt, of Chisenbury House. I must beg that you will state to him, for the information of the members of the proposed company, that I am sorry they cannot be included in the

county quota, in consequence of there having been a sufficient number already volunteered from that district; but that, in justice to their marked zeal and loyalty, I shall think it my duty to state the offer that they have made, to the Secretary of State, and I shall point it out as an instance of great devotion to the service, to the notice of his Majesty's ministers, &c. &c. &c.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

PEMBROKE.

Sir J. M. Poore, Bart.

When I drove into my front court, at Chisenbury House, I found these brave and zealous fellows drawn up in as good line as I ever in my life saw in a company of regulars, and they instantly saluted me with three cheers. They had employed a drill serjeant, and had met to perform their exercise two or three evenings during the week, and they could already march and wheel with considerable facility and address. However, as soon as I had read the letter which had been forwarded by Sir John Poore, from the Lord Lieutenant, I did not keep them a moment in suspense. I formed them into a hollow square, and having briefly addressed them, I next proceeded to read the letter aloud, which appeared to excite mingled feelings of regret and indignation; every one seemed to feel that zeal and devotedness were not the qualities that were sought for by the Lord Lieutenant. We had, however, the great consolation of knowing that our promptitude and patriotism, not only saved the parish of Enford from the fine which had been threatened, but also saved the whole district from the fines that would no doubt have been levied to a shilling: for the Lord Lieutenant having said that he declined to forward our offer in consequence of a *sufficient number* of men in our district having already volunteered their services, they could not after that, with common decency, fine any parish in our district for not offering to volunteer.

I now caused a hogshead of good old strong beer to be rolled out upon the lawn, and, although our services were not accepted in defence of our country, yet that did not prevent us from drinking to her success, and prosperity to her people. My neighbours, when they had finished their old stingo, were about to depart in peace; but, as is frequently the case, when men have made free with the glass, reason and liberality forsake them, so it was here, for some of them wished to proceed immediately to the house of the miller, who, with his servant, in consequence of some pique against me, had declined to place their names in our list of volunteers. Elated with liquor, they proposed to inflict summary punishment upon these persons, by giving them a sound ducking in their own mill pond; but this course of proceeding I immediately put down, by justifying the men in their conduct, and contending that they had an equal right to withhold their services as we had to volunteer ours; and thus they escaped the threatened unjustifiable punishment. The men, however, one and all, renewed their offers to me, that they would be ready and willing at all times to come forward, to undertake any service that I might propose to them; and they added the assurance of their belief, that I would never propose any thing to them that I would not join them in accomplishing. Thus ended our meeting, and at all events we had the satisfaction of having done our duty to ourselves and our country.

Some time after this, I was informed of a very curious circumstance, relating to this affair. As soon as I sent in this offer to the Lord Lieutenant, he called a meeting of his Deputy Lieutenants, and laid it before them; pointing out the unlimited and extensive nature of the tender of our services, and expressing a doubt whether he should be justified in accepting it under the provision of the Defence Bill, without some reduction in the numbers, and modification as to the extension of the service tendered. This, I understood, caused a very long discussion; all of them disapproving of the example set by offering such extensive service; none of the other corps having volunteered to go farther than their military district, Wilts, Hants, and Dorset. One of these wiseacres exclaimed, in very boisterous language, against accepting the offer, and for this sapient reason—"because," as he said, "two hundred men out of one parish had volunteered to march to any part of the kingdom to hazard their lives in the defence of their country, provided they were commanded by an officer of their own choice; *ergo*, it was highly improper to trust arms in the hands of such a body of men." Though this was very properly laughed at by some of the more rational members of this divan, yet they came to an unanimous resolution to exempt the whole district of Enford from their quotas rather than run such a desperate risk. Well! I had all the credit of the offer, without any of the trouble and expence of putting it into execution. I have detailed these facts as another proof of my enthusiasm. I never acted from any cold calculating notions of self-interest. If I thought it right to perform an act of public or private duty, having once made up my mind, I never suffered any selfish considerations to interpose to prevent my carrying it into effect.

After all, the troops of Napoleon never landed, and consequently the mighty heroes of the volunteer corps escaped with whole skins. Buonaparte, nevertheless, persisted in playing off the bugbear of the French flotilla at Boulogne, by which John Gull was kept in a complete state of agitation and ferment. Addington's majorities fell off every day, in the House of Commons; and by Pitt's intrigues and management he was at length left in a minority; and, as it was considered much too disgraceful a thing even by Addington to hold his place after he had been left in the minority, he resigned, and William Pitt once more wielded the destinies of England, he being appointed prime minister on the twelfth of May, 1804. The British navy was unsuccessful in its attempts to destroy the French flotilla at Boulogne; and three trials to set fire to the shipping at Havre also proved abortive.

On the eighteenth of May, Buonaparte was declared Emperor of France, under the title of Napoleon the First. This act was in fact hastened, if not produced, by the discovery and detection of a real diabolical plot against the life and government of Buonaparte; in which Moreau, Pichegru, Georges, and others, were implicated, and were in consequence arrested. Moreau was tried, found guilty, pardoned, and exiled. The Duke D'Enghien, grandson of the Prince of Condé, was known to be on the frontier, connected with these men, and some English agents, who were concerned in the conspiracy. D'Enghien was urging them on, and zealously endeavoring to raise a rebellion in the French territories. This he did in a very conspicuous way, relying upon his own security, he being at the time in Baden, a neutral territory; but Buonaparte, setting the Duke of Baden at defiance, entered his territory, and caused the conspirator to be seized and tried, and being found guilty, he was shot. The despots of the north, Russia and Sweden, remonstrated against this violation of neutral territory; but all the other powers of Europe displayed a more tame and forbearing policy. As the trial and execution of this sprig of the Bourbons, who was detected in a conspiracy to assassinate Napoleon, and to produce the overthrow of his Government in France, caused a universal howling of all the hireling editors of all the newspapers in this country, against what they called the murder of this Duke D'Enghien, I shall shortly state the charges on which he was unanimously found guilty by the Military Court, which was appointed to try him; the President being Citizen Hulin, General of Brigade. The FIRST charge was "That of having carried arms against the French Republic."—SECOND, "Of having offered his services to the English Government, the enemy of the French people."—THIRD, "Of receiving and having, with accredited agents of that Government, procured means of obtaining intelligence in France, and conspiring against the internal and external security of the state."—FOURTH, "That he was at the head of a body of French emigrants, paid by England, formed on the frontiers of France, in the districts of Friburg and Baden."—FIFTH, "Of having attempted to foment intrigues at Strasburg, with a view of producing a rising in the adjacent departments, for the purpose of operating a diversion favourable to England."—SIXTH, "That he was one of those concerned in the conspiracy planned by England for the *assassination of the First Consul*, and intending, in case of the success of that plot, to return to France." The court, composed of military officers, after a patient hearing, unanimously found the prisoner *guilty* of all the six charges. The president of the court then pronounced the sentence as follows:—"The Special Military Commission condemns unanimously to death, Louis Antoine Henry de Bourbon, Duke D'Enghien, on the ground of his being guilty of acting as a spy, of corresponding with the enemies of the Republic, and conspiring against the external and internal security of the Republic." However this young man might be pitied, however much we may have lamented his end, yet he was tried and condemned by the known and written law of France, which was expressed in the following terms:—Article 2nd, 11th January, year 5—"Every individual, whatever be his state, quality, or profession, convicted of *acting as a spy for the enemy*, shall be sentenced to the punishment of death." Article 1st, every one engaged in a plot or conspiracy against the Republic, shall on conviction be punished with *death*. Article 3rd, 6th October, 1791.—Every one connected with a plot or conspiracy tending to disturb the tranquillity of the state, by civil war, by arming one class of citizens against the other, or against the exercise of legitimate authority, shall be punished with *death*. Signed and sealed the same day, month and year aforesaid. Guiton, Bazancourt, Revier, Barrois, Rabbe, D'Autancourt, Captain Reporter; Molin, Captain Register; and Hulin president.

After all the howling, and all that has been said, about this trial and execution, this Duke D'Enghien had as fair a trial, a much fairer jury, with an unanimous verdict of guilty upon *all* the charges, and a much more equitable, and ten times more just sentence, than I received from the immaculate Court of King's Bench. *Hulin* was much more justified, by the law of France, in passing this sentence upon D'Enghien, than *Bailey* was in passing a sentence upon me of *Two Years and Six Months* incarceration in this infamous jail. It is very true that *Bailey* was only the mouth-piece of the court, and I am ready to admit that, though he passed the sentence upon me, yet, he was so far from concurring in it, that he actually wrote down "not one hour," as the whole of his share of the punishment that he thought I ought to receive. There was, however, the *pure* and *venerable judge*—, as he was denominated by the amiable *Castlereagh* alias *Londonderry*, when my Petition was rejected by the Honourable House on the 15th instant, May, 1821, the day when Sir Francis Burdett brought forward his long-promised, long-delayed, frequently put-off motion, upon the Manchester massacre. Oh! the *venerable Judge!* I thank you kindly for that, my Lord—I will always follow so good and worthy an example as that of your

Lordship; in future he shall always be designated by me as the *venerable Judge!* Jeffries was indeed also a *venerable Judge*, and Jeffries came to an end the most appropriate for such a *venerable Judge*. Talk of *Hulin* indeed! he was a paragon of justice, humanity and mercy, compared with my Lord *Shift-names' venerable emblem of purity*. I think it was Mr. Horne Tooke that used to say, that it was as difficult to know who and what our nobility were, as it was to know a pickpocket or a highwayman, the former changed their names as frequently as the latter; and really the remark is a perfectly correct one! The famous Mr. Drake, the notorious English plenipotentiary at the court of Munich, was at the head of this conspiracy, while holding the situation of English Ambassador to the Elector of Bavaria. Ten of his original letters were seized by the police of the Republic, and in the report of Regnier, the Chief Justice, the following extracts from Mr. Drake's letters were introduced. In addressing one of his correspondents, an active conspirator, as he thought, who had undertaken to assassinate the First Consul, but who was nothing more or less than an agent of the French Police, he writes with a brutal fury worthy of the part he plays. The letter is dated Munich, December 9, 1803. "It is," says he, "of very little consequence *by whom the Beast is brought to the ground*; it is sufficient that you are all ready to join in the chace." There was also another of these precious diplomatic agents of the British Government, a person of the name of *Spencer Smith*, Minister from England at Stutgard, acting as a conspirator against the person of the First Consul and the Republic of France, who was wise enough to employ a Frenchman, named Pericaud, as his confidential secretary. In one of his letters Drake uses the following language: "*You should*," says he, "*offer the soldiers a small increase of pay beyond what they receive of the present Government*." In the report of the Grand Judge, he speaks of Mr. Drake as follows:—"an English Minister such as Mr. Drake, cannot be punished by obloquy—this can only mortify men who feel the price of virtue, and know that of honour." He adds, "Men who preach up assassination and foment domestic troubles, the agents of corruption, the missionaries of revolt against all established governments, are the enemies of all states and all governments. The law of nations does not exist for them." In the second interview of Mr. Rosey with Mr. Drake, when he was devising the plan for destroying Buonaparte, Mr. Rosey says, he, Drake, spoke as follows, when speaking of the fall of Napoleon: "Profit, when the occasion shall offer, by the trouble in which the rest of his partizans will be plunged. *Destroy them without pity; pity is not the virtue of a politician*." In fact it appears very evident, that the plan was to assassinate the First Consul, and thereby to produce a fresh revolution in France.

Soon after this, Captain Wright, who landed Georges, Pichegru, and their accomplices, on the coast at Dieppe, was taken in a corvette by the French gun-boats, and was sent off to Paris in the diligence, accompanied by the Gendarmerie. This Captain Wright, after very urgent negociations through the Spanish Minister at Paris, was ordered to be given up to the English by Talleyrand; the French Government having refused to exchange him as a prisoner of war on any terms. Having been engaged in this plot to assassinate Buonaparte, he was treated as a spy, and might have been tried by the law of France and executed as such. The French Government, however, thought it a sufficient disgrace to him as a man of honour, to refuse to exchange him, but to give him up as a boon to the Spanish Ambassador. Wright, it is said by his keepers, cut his throat in the prison; but the English hireling newspaper editors made a great clamour against Buonaparte, to persuade John Gull that he had been murdered in prison; though it would be difficult to find any good reason for this, when he might have been tried and executed by the law of France, upon the same principle that D'Engchien was convicted.

Mr. Cobbett, who had now become celebrated for his political works, particularly his Weekly Political Register, had about this time began to write very freely in the cause of Liberty. Being a most powerful writer, he had attacked with great success the tyrannical measures of the Irish Government, and he was, therefore, prosecuted for a libel upon the Earl of Hardwicke, Lord Redesdale, Mr. Justice Osbourn, and Mr. Marsden. The trial came on before Lord Ellenborough and a Middlesex special jury, and he was found guilty, of course. He also had an action for damages brought against him by Mr. Plunkett, Solicitor-General of Ireland; and this action being also tried by a Middlesex special jury, he had, of course, a verdict against him, with £500 damages.

Mr. Pitt was now again in power, and he endeavoured to make the public believe that he had assented to the wishes of the nation, by an union with Mr. Fox, whom he professed to have recommended to his Majesty to appoint one of the cabinet. This was one of Mr. Pitt's artful and hypocritical shuffles; he contrived that the King should object to the admission of Mr. Fox; while at the same time he managed so as to make the nation think that he studied their wishes by recommending Mr. Fox to the King; and thus he fixed upon his Majesty the odium of disregarding the prayers of the people, and objecting to Mr. Fox from merely personal motives.

I was living at Clifton at this period, and during the summer I visited Cheltenham with my family. At the latter place I frequently met Mr. Fox, who was drinking the celebrated waters, for his health, which had become greatly impaired in consequence of his attending so incessantly to his parliamentary duties. He was accompanied by Mrs. Armstead, the lady whom he afterwards married, and to which lady the people of England have had the honour to pay twelve hundred pounds a-year, ever since the

death of Mr. Fox. Mrs. Armstead appeared to be a very delightful woman, with whom this great statesman and senator evidently lived in a state of the most perfect domestic harmony. They were almost always together, seldom if ever were they seen separate—at the pump-room in the morning; at the library and reading-room at noon, when the papers came in; at the theatre, or at private parties, in the evening; Mr. Fox and Mrs. Armstead were always to be seen together. The Duke of Bedford was then recently married to his present Duchess. Mr. Fox and his lady were frequently of the Duke's party; in fact, they were as one family. Cheltenham was then very full of gay company; amongst whom a great deal of dissipation and intrigue were going on. It was frequently made a subject of remark, that Mr. Fox and Mr. Hunt appeared to enjoy more real happiness, more domestic felicity, than any of the married persons at Cheltenham, with the exception of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, who lived a retired domestic life at that time; and, from what I have heard, have continued to do so ever since.

I remember sitting in the library with Mr. Fox, on the morning when the news arrived by the post, that Sir Francis Burdett was elected the representative for the county of Middlesex, by a majority of ONE. Mr. Fox was greatly elated with this momentary success of the Baronet; but he expressed his doubts upon the final issue of an inquiry before a Committee of the House of Commons. This famous contest for Middlesex had caused considerable anxiety throughout the country, and a party of us, amongst whom was Mr. Fox, used to assemble daily on the arrival of the post at the library, to hear the state of the poll. This election had been carried on fifteen days with unabating enthusiasm. Sir Francis Burdett was backed by all the men and women of the county possessing liberal principles; he had besides an immensely long purse, the contents of which were lavished upon his partizans with an unsparing hand. *Ninety-four thousand pounds* was the price of the two elections, which came out of his own pocket; besides all the gratuitous assistance that he received from his friends and partizans. Mr. Mainwaring was the treasurer of the county; his father was the chairman of the County Quarter Sessions. The father had been rendered by a committee of the House incapable of sitting in that Parliament, he having been convicted of treating during the previous election. The son, therefore, a mere clerk to the magistrates, was set up against Sir Francis; this son being a man without the slightest pretensions to a seat in Parliament for a rotten borough, and much less for the county of Middlesex, either as a man of fortune, a man of rank, or a man of talent. In fact, it was a ministerial contest against Sir Francis Burdett; most of the partizans of Mr. Mainwaring declaring, at the time, that they voted *against Sir Francis*, and not for Mainwaring. I was one of those who thought that this was a great triumph in the cause of liberty, and I was therefore excessively rejoiced that Sir Francis Burdett should have been successful against all the magistracy, and all the ministerial aristocracy of the metropolitan county. But now, when I look back, and read the speeches of the Honourable Baronet, I only feel surprised that I could have been such a dupe as to expect that any real benefit would ever arise to the people from his exertions. All his promises, all his protestations, I now perceive to have been general; there was nothing in them specific and tangible. The great cry raised against Sir F. Burdett's principles at that time was, that he had been the associate of the traitors *Despard* and *O'Connor*. This was most infamous, and was resented by every upright and honest freeholder in the county. The Baronet was evidently the most popular candidate; but what gave the greatest *ecclat* to his election was the lavish expenditure of his cash to bribe the electors. Henry Clifford was his counsel, and he himself was a host.

The newspapers of the next day, however, brought us an account which blasted all the sanguine hopes that we had entertained the day before. At the final end of the scrutiny the Sheriff declared the numbers on the poll to be the same as they were the day before, at three o'clock, and these were the numbers by which he ought to decide the election. They were as follow: for Mr. Mainwaring, 2828—for Sir Francis Burdett, 2823—and Mr. Mainwaring was of course declared duly elected by a majority of five votes. Thus ended this great political contest, in which so much money was spent, and of which *drunkenness, riot, bribery, and perjury*, were the most prominent characteristics. On the 29th of October, one of the most atrocious acts of tyranny, robbery, and lawless plunder, took place, which ever disgraced the character of any nation, namely, the British navy captured three Spanish frigates, with upwards of *three millions* of dollars on board. This unparalleled act of aggression was committed upon the property of Spain, a nation with whom England was at peace, and this plunder was what is called *Droits of the Admiralty*, which is claimed by the crown; so that, when the crown chooses to become a robber upon the high seas, and plunders a state to enrich itself, the people of England are called upon to spill their best blood in defending an act which, if committed in common life, would entitle the robber to a halter.

Soon after this, by way of retaliation, Buonaparte caused Sir George Rumbold, a British Minister, to be seized at Hamburgh, by a detachment of French soldiers, who carried him off to France. The law of nations was, in fact, set at naught by all the Belligerent Powers; in most cases the weakest went to the wall. The English Ministers violated every known and heretofore received principle of the law of nations. Buonaparte always took care to retaliate in the most prompt and decisive manner; and thus the subjects of both powers were at once rendered the sport and the victims of their tyrannical rulers.

There was no safety in neutral territories, nor any safeguard in the hitherto acknowledged law of nations. The conspiracy formed by the English Ministers to assassinate Napoleon was detected, and all their agents, who were concerned in so hellish a plot, were exposed and denounced by every civilized state in Europe. Moreau was banished to America; Pichegru strangled himself in prison; Georges and D'Enghien were executed; Drake had a narrow escape with his life; Captain Wright cut his own throat in a French prison; and thus the whole conspiracy was as completely frustrated, and its agents as completely punished, as were the agents of the Cato-street conspiracy: both of them were got up by the same parties, and the only difference was, that the former was ten times more atrocious than the latter.

The King and the Prince of Wales, who had been long at variance, had a meeting on the 12th of November, 1804, when a reconciliation took place between them. Every body now expected to hear that the Prince's Debts were soon to be paid off. About this time there were great discussions relative to who had the legal care and education of the Princess Charlotte of Wales; and while in London the English Ministers and the Opposition were squabbling about this mighty concern, the coronation of Napoleon by the Pope, took place in Paris, where he was crowned Emperor of France.

I trust that my introducing these events, as they occurred, will not be deemed superfluous by the reader. I do it, because it is my intention, as it has been all along, to give a brief history of the political occurrences of my own time, and within my own recollection. It is, I think, not unadvisable to put upon record some of the transactions of the English Ministers for the last twenty years, and dispassionately place them in their true light. At the period when these things were done the public mind was in a state of heat and effervescence—it was in such a fever of political delusion and delirium, that what was written and published at the time, particularly by the diurnal press of the day, instead of enlightening, was calculated only to mislead and deceive the people. Far from recording fairly what was passing in the world of politics, the principal object of the great mass of public writers, and more especially of the conductors of public newspapers, was to *disguise and conceal the truth*; they were all in the pay, or under the influence, of the two great political factions, the Ins and the Outs, the Tories and the Whigs, both interested in keeping the people in the dark. They were both struggling for nothing but place and power; their great end and aim were the same. The watch-word which, notwithstanding their ostensible difference in principles, was common to them, was this—"keep the people in ignorance, or neither of our parties will be able to plunder them." Therefore, though to the superficial observer, they appeared inveterately hostile to each other, yet I repeat, that they had the same object in view, and this was proved beyond all the possibility of doubt when the Whigs came into power. For twenty long years had Mr. Fox and his party been inveighing against the measures of Mr. Pitt; yet, the moment Mr. Fox and his friends came into place, they not only adopted all the measures of Mr. Pitt, but they even followed up the most obnoxious of those measures towards the people with an unfeeling and arbitrary severity. This being the case, I shall take leave, as I go along, to represent public events in their true colours, in such as they must strike every rational, dispassionate, and unprejudiced mind.

At this period invasion was still the general topic; it was in every person's mouth, and nothing else was either thought of or talked of. It was the subject of every one's almost hourly inquiry, both in London and the country, even in the most remote parts. Mr. Cobbett well described it at the time, "a state malady; appearing by fits and starts; sometimes assuming one character, and sometimes another. At last, however, it seems to have settled into a sort of hemorrhage, the patients in Downing-street expectorating pale or red, according to the state of their disease. For some weeks past it has been remarkably vivid; whether proceeding from the heat of the dog-days, or from the quarrellings and fightings, and riotings amongst their volunteers, it would be hard to say, but certain it is, that the symptoms have been of a very alarming complexion for nearly a month."

Notwithstanding all the terror which was felt, the fact is, that Buonaparte never seriously intended to invade England; but he knew that the gun-boats at Boulogne kept this country in a continual state of tremor, and put it to an enormous expense; it was evidently the policy of France to let us alone, provided that she could keep us in a state of agitation and ferment. It is very curious to observe how well this answered the purpose of Pitt as well as of Napoleon. Mr. Pitt had, in the first instance, to raise the spirit of the country, or rather to delude John Gull, created a false and unfounded alarm of invasion by Buonaparte, long before the latter ever dreamed of it, and the trick succeeded to a miracle. Pitt knew that he could not get such immense sums from the pockets of the people, unless he could work upon their fears; and this gave rise to the bugbear of invasion. John, as was expected, took fright, and the whole country was in consequence thrown into a violent ferment. Volunteer corps and voluntary subscriptions were every where the order of the day; John opened his purse-strings widely, and patiently suffered the rapacious and cunning Minister to dip his griping fist into the treasure as deeply as he thought proper. Napoleon, who had some of the most intelligent men in the world about him, soon discovered the state malady of poor John Gull, and he and his councillors lost not a moment to set about prescribing a dose, which they were sure would increase the nervous fever that had taken possession of the whole country. Their prescription was a very simple one, it merely consisted in

ordering gun-boats at Boulogne. Napoleon played Pitt's own game off to such a tune as he did not expect. Pitt created the alarm to raise taxes; Napoleon fell into the scheme, in order to continue the call for taxes upon the pockets of Gull, and to exhaust the resources, and waste the wealth of the country, which at that time appeared to some people to be absolutely inexhaustible. This Boulogne flotilla was therefore a mere playing upon the fears of the people of England, but it was a most ruinous war upon the national finances.

This was the time when the people of England were made drunk, and indeed mad, by the deleterious potions that were administered by Pitt and his colleagues, in the shape of Acts of Parliament, for raising volunteer corps, catamaran schemes, car projects for conveying troops, &c. &c. with every other species of folly and profligacy. The taxes raised this year were little short of SIXTY MILLIONS.—In February the quartern loaf was *eight-pence*; by December it had risen to *one shilling and four pence halfpenny*. Those were rare times for the farmers and the yeomanry; and they did not forget to make their poor neighbours feel their power. This rise in the price of corn was caused by the CORN BILL, which was carried through the House of Commons for the purpose; but its operation was arrested in the House of Lords, till the 15th of November. Mr. Cobbett was still one of the great advocates for war, and he wrote some very able but very mischievous papers, to prove that war did not operate to raise the price of bread, and that for the last fifty years bread had been cheaper in war than in peace. This he did for the purpose of discountenancing and reprobating the cry that had been raised of "*Peace and a large loaf*." Mr. Cobbett's Register at this time became a very popular work, and the great talent displayed by the author caused it to be universally read. I, for one, became one of his constant readers and zealous admirers, although I did not agree with many of his doctrines. Notwithstanding the great talent he displayed, and the knowledge in matters of political economy which it was very evident that he possessed, I could never be convinced that war in any way either promoted the freedom or happiness of the people, much less that it ever produced cheap bread, or contributed to the comfort of the poor. I must, however, do Mr. Cobbett the justice to say, that he condemned the Corn Bill, and, in glowing language, boldly and ably pointed out the folly as well as the injustice of Corn Bills, to raise the price of grain. I did not know Mr. Cobbett at that time, but I own that I longed to become acquainted with so celebrated a public writer, who had afforded me so much pleasure in the perusal of his literary works. It will be but doing common justice to him, as well as to myself, to observe here, that I have never failed to read it from that day up to the present hour; and that I have received more pleasure in reading his works, and have derived more information from him, ten times ten-fold, in subjects of political economy, than I ever derived from all the other authors I ever read besides. Mr. Cobbett, at that time, censured in strong terms the volunteer system, and ridiculed their pranks and squabbles with the most cutting irony; for he was at that time the mighty champion of a standing army. Mr. Cobbett had been a soldier, and a zealous, active, and intelligent soldier; therefore, as such, it was not only excusable in him to be an advocate for that system, with which he was so well acquainted, and whose power he so well knew, but his predilection was quite natural. He, however, then little thought what a monster he was nourishing, in the shape of a standing army. Sir Robert Wilson also was bred a soldier; and he also published a pamphlet, addressed to Mr. Pitt, under the title of "*An Inquiry into the present State of the Military Force of the British Empire, with a view to its re-organization*." This pamphlet was in favour of a regular army, in preference to the volunteers. In fact, the whole nation was mad; and as drunk with fear now, as they had been in the commencement of the war with France with folly and boasting. We long since began to feel the baneful effects of that war, and we are now tasting its bitter fruits, with all their appalling evils. We have now a standing army in good earnest; and now that army is kept up, in the sixth year of peace, to compel John Gull to pull out of his pocket the last shilling, to pay the interest of that debt, which, in his drunken, insane folly, he suffered his rulers, to borrow, in order, as they first told him, to humble the power of the French Jacobins; a debt which was greatly enhanced to humble Napoleon; and, lastly, it was brought to its climax to restore the Bourbons. The people of England were drunk, wickedly drunk, when they went to war to destroy the principles of liberty in France; for, be it remembered, to their shame, that the people sanctioned this war—they were duped and deceived, it is true, but it was certainly a popular war with the great mass of the people of England.

Being now arrived at the summit of power, Napoleon became more than usually anxious to secure that power. It was his interest, as it had long been his object, to be at peace with England; and in order to secure this desirable object, he wrote a letter to the king of England, with his own hand, offering the fairest terms, and expressing a sincere desire to put an end to the spilling of human blood, and to see the two nations at peace with each other. Common courtesy, and the rules of good breeding, entitled him to an answer. But, instead of this, the Secretary of State merely informed the French Minister, that the King, by treaty, was obliged to act in concert with his allies. As soon as this slight was offered to the Emperor of France, preparations were immediately renewed for invading England. Mr. Pitt finds that his difficulties have increased since his former administration; he therefore makes an effort to strengthen the Government by an union with the Addingtons, and the late Prime Minister is raised to the peerage, by the title of Viscount Sidmouth.

On the 24th of January, 1805, war was declared by England against Spain. In fact, it was absolutely necessary to declare war against Spain, or restore the three frigates and the three million dollars of which we had robbed them; and not choosing to be honest, and do an act of justice to that nation, war was inevitable. I have this moment found a copy of the letter addressed by Napoleon to the King of England, which I will insert, that the rising generation may be able to judge for themselves of the characters and dispositions of the two monarchs, George the Third and Napoleon the First. The letter is as follows:—

"SIR AND BROTHER, *January 2, 1805.*

"Called to the throne of France by Providence, and by the suffrages of the senate, the people, and the army, my first sentiment is a wish for peace. France and England abuse their prosperity. They may contend for ages; but do their Governments well fulfil the most sacred of their duties, and will not so *much blood, shed uselessly*, and without a view to any end, condemn them in their own consciences? I consider it as no disgrace to make the first step. I have, I hope, sufficiently proved to the world that I fear none of the chances of war; it besides presents nothing that I need to fear; peace is the wish of my heart, but war has never been inconsistent with my glory. I conjure your Majesty not to deny yourself the happiness of giving peace to the world, nor to leave that sweet satisfaction to your children: for certainly there never was a more favourable opportunity, nor a moment more favourable to silence all passions, and listen only to the sentiments of humanity and reason. This moment once lost what end can be assigned to a war which all my efforts will not be able to terminate. Your Majesty has gained more within ten years, both in territory and riches, than the whole extent of Europe. Your nation is at the highest point of prosperity; what can it hope from war? To form a coalition with some powers of the Continent? The Continent will remain tranquil; a coalition can only increase the preponderance and continental greatness of France. To renew intestine troubles? The times are no longer the same. To destroy our finances? Finances founded on a flourishing agriculture can never be destroyed. To take from France her colonies? The colonies are to France only a secondary object; and does not your Majesty already possess more than you know how to preserve? If your Majesty would but reflect, you must perceive that the war is without an object, without any presumable result to yourself. Alas! what a melancholy prospect to cause two nations to fight merely for the sake of fighting. The world is sufficiently large for our two nations to live in it, and reason is sufficiently powerful to discover means of reconciling every thing, when the wish for reconciliation exists on both sides. I have, however, fulfilled a sacred duty, and one which is precious to my heart. I trust your Majesty will believe in the sincerity of my sentiments, and my wish to give you every proof of it, &c.

"**NAPOLEON.**"

Instead of his Majesty, George the Third, writing an answer to this pacific letter from the Emperor Napoleon, a letter was written by Lord Mulgrave, addressed to M. Talleyrand, the French Minister, couched in equivocal terms, and which concluded by saying that his Britannic Majesty had no power to act for himself, and that he could do nothing without consulting with his allies upon the Continent. After this conciliatory epistle from the Emperor of France, and the answer, or rather the failure of an answer, from his Britannic Majesty, no one that reads this letter of the Emperor Napoleon and the answer of Lord Mulgrave will ever believe or say that Napoleon was the cause of the continuance of the war. What oceans of blood might have been spared if the King of England, if George the Third, had accepted this liberal and candid offer of peace and reconciliation from Napoleon!

The reign of George the Third may, with the greatest propriety, be called the bloodiest reign in the annals of history. If his Majesty felt that he, having the power, neglected such an opportunity, that he threw away the delightful pleasure of sparing the lives of his fellow creatures, of stopping the effusion of human blood, if he felt this, I for one do not wonder at his Majesty's illness—the bare reflection was more than enough to drive any man out of his senses, to have distracted the strongest brain. Oh God! what a reflection! The pages of British history from that hour, that fatal hour, when the answer was written by Lord Mulgrave, dictated by the hand of a cold-blooded policy, from that hour, I say, the pages of history have been tarnished; blood having been shed, which, by a more humane policy, might have been prevented.

Let us now return to our domestic politics. At length a Committee of the House of Commons declared that George Bolton Mainwaring was not duly elected, and ought not to have been returned for the county of Middlesex; but that Sir Francis Burdett was duly elected, and ought to have been returned. This was a sad blow for the saints, who were the principal supporters of Mr. Mainwaring. Sir Francis Burdett now took his seat, out of which he had been unjustly kept at the beginning of the Sessions by the temporising and partial conduct of the sheriffs of the county of Middlesex.

At this time, in March, 1805, the tenth report of the commissioners of naval inquiry was laid before the House of Commons, which report implicated *Lord Melville* and *Mr. Trotter* in the crime of

defrauding the public of the monies entrusted to them, intended to discharge those accounts as connected with the office of Treasurer of the Navy, an office held by my Lord Melville. Trotter, Lord Melville's deputy, who had a salary of no more than 800_l. a year, was found to have increased his funded property since 1791, a period of fourteen years, to *eleven thousand three hundred and eight pounds one shilling* PER ANNUM!!—Lord Melville, on his examination before the commissioners, being asked, *upon his oath*, "whether Mr. Trotter had ever applied any of the naval money for his (Lord Melville's) benefit or advantage?"—*he refused to answer*, for fear of *criminating himself*. What came out upon this inquiry before the *Commissioners of Naval Inquiry*, now absorbed the whole of the public attention, and caused an universal sensation throughout the country. This said Lord Viscount Melville was that Henry Dundas, Esq. who was formerly a Lawyer in Edinburgh, became Lord Advocate of Scotland during the American war, and a strong supporter of Lord North's administration; was then made Treasurer of the Navy at the same epoch that Mr. Pitt first became Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Lord Shelburn's administration; again became Treasurer of the Navy in the administration of Mr. Pitt, in 1784; then became President of the Board of Controul for India affairs, and afterwards Secretary of State for the War Department, retaining all the *three offices* in his own person till the year 1800, when he gave up the Treasurership of the Navy, still keeping fast hold of the other two offices till he resigned, together with Mr. Pitt and the rest of that Ministry, in the month of March, 1801. This same Henry Dundas, who was again brought into place by Mr. Pitt, and put in greater power than ever, was, on the 8th of April, 1805, degraded by a censure of the House of Commons, inflicted by a solemn vote, on the motion of Mr. Whitbread, who brought the affair before them with great manliness, ability, and perseverance. The eleventh resolution moved by Mr. Whitbread, and carried by a majority of the House against all the influence and exertions of Mr. Pitt, was as follows—"That the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Melville, having been privy to, and connived at, the withdrawing from the Bank of England, for purposes of private interest or emolument, sums issued to him as Treasurer of the Navy, and placed to his account in the Bank, according to the provisions of the 25th of Geo. III. chap. 31, has been guilty of a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty."

Public meetings were on this occasion held all over the kingdom, calling for a rigid inquiry into the conduct of Lord Melville, and petitions were presented by the electors of Westminster, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of London, the electors of Southwark, from Salisbury, from the county of Surrey, city of York, the counties of Norfolk, Hants, Hereford, Bedford, Berks, Northumberland, Cornwall, Essex, &c. &c. against Lord Melville.

A county meeting was called for Wilts, at Devizes. I had myself written to the old Marquis of Lansdown, proposing to sign a requisition to the Sheriff, which his Lordship immediately complied with; but our High Sheriff, Sir Richard Colt Hoare, took *that opportunity* to take a trip into Wales, or some part of the West, without leaving any orders at home where his public or private letters were to be forwarded to him. In consequence of this circumstance, our county meeting was delayed three weeks or a month, and before it could be held, articles of impeachment were exhibited and agreed to by the House of Commons against Lord Melville. The meeting, however, having been at length advertised by the High Sheriff, to be held at the Town Hall at Devizes, a great number of freeholders assembled, and amongst that number were myself, Mr. Hussey and Lord Folkstone, the two members for Salisbury. In consequence of the decision of the House of Commons, to impeach Lord Melville, Mr. Hussey and Lord Folkstone recommended, that there should not be any petition sent up from the county of Wilts, because it would be prejudging the question before the House. Finding that no petition was to be submitted to the meeting, I sat down and drew up some resolutions, expressive of the indignation of the freeholders at the conduct of Lord Melville, and their approval of that of Mr. Whitbread. Amongst the number was a censure upon the High Sheriff, for his delay in calling the meeting, and his gross negligence in being absent from the county at such an important period. It was here that, for the first time, I addressed my brother freeholders at a county meeting. Mr. Collins, of Salisbury, seconded my resolutions, and they were carried by acclamation; but in consequence of the earnest entreaties of the venerable Mr. Hussey, who was the father of the House of Commons at that time, backed by those of his colleague, I, being young in politics, was prevailed upon to withdraw my vote of censure upon the conduct of the Sheriff, after having heard from him an explanation and an apology.

This was my first public entry into political life. I had always borne the character of an independent country gentleman; but I had never taken any decisive part publicly in politics till this occasion. I was very successful in my maiden speech, as it might so be called, for which I was highly complimented by Mr. Hussey and by Lord Folkestone. But, as I said before, by compliments and by flattery they wheedled me out of the main jet of my resolutions. The fact was, that my resolutions were too sweeping, as they cut at the Whigs as well as the Ministers. They contained a general condemnation of all speculations and speculators; and Mr. Hussey, as well as Lord Folkestone, who was a very young man and a very poor orator at that time, were neither more nor less than Whigs: it was therefore necessary, by a *ruse de guerre*, to get rid of my resolutions, which they found I was sure to carry, by a large majority of the meeting. The public spirit evinced by the Wiltshire freeholders was, however, an earnest

of their future patriotic disposition to take the liberal side of the question in public matters, whenever they might again be brought upon the carpet.

On the 25th of May, three men, who had falsely sworn themselves freeholders of Middlesex, to vote for the popular candidate, were, upon conviction, sentenced to seven years' transportation each. On the 26th of May the Emperor Napoleon was crowned King of Italy at Milan.

On the 13th June, 1805, a resolution was passed by the House of Commons, and that the fullest House that ever was known, for ordering the Attorney-General to commence, in the Court of King's Bench, a criminal prosecution against Lord Melville, for having used the public money for private purposes. This resolution of the Honourable House gave universal satisfaction to the people throughout the country. The examination of Mr. Pitt before the committee excited general interest, and nothing else was talked of or thought of in the political world. His shuffling, equivocating testimony, so much resembles what has been going on, during the last ten weeks, within these walls, that I will here insert some of his answers before the committee. It will be recollected that Mr. Pitt was a man who, whenever it suited his purpose, did, with a most surprising power of memory, revert to all the arguments and opinions of his adversaries, for a space of time, comprising his whole political life; not with *doubt, hesitation, or embarrassment*, but with the most direct, unqualified, and positive assertion. The following were his answers before the committee.

Answers. Times.

- He *thinks*, &c..... 6
- He *rather thinks*..... 2
- He *thinks to that effect*... 1
- He *thinks he understood*. 1
- He *conceives* 7
- He *believes* 8
- He *rather believes* 1
- He *believes he heard* 1
- He *understood* 3
- He *understood it generally* 2
- He *was satisfied* 1
- He *was not able to ascertain* 1
- He *can only state the substance* 1
- He *did not recollect* (Non mi ricordo!) 9
- He *really did not recollect* 1

Answers. Times.

- He had *no recollection*... . 1
- Did *not know* from *his own knowledge* 3
- Did *not know* that it *occurred to him* 1
- Was not in his *contemplation* 1
- Did not *occur to his mind* 1
- No *_impression* was *left on his mind* 1
- He could *not say* 2
- He could not *undertake to say*..... 2
- He could not *speak with certainty* 1

He could not *speak positively* 1

He could not state the *substance very generally*.. 1

ANSWERS. TIMES.

He did not at *present recollect* 2
He could not *recollect with precision* 2
He could not *recollect at this distance of time* .. 1
He could not *recollect with certainty* 1
His *recollection did not enable him* 1
To the *best of his recollection* 4
As *well as he could recollect* 2
Could not *pretend to recollect* 1
Not able to *recollect at this distance of time* ... 1
He had a *general recollection* 4
He could *not state with accuracy* 3
He could not state *precisely* 3
He could assign *no specific reason* 1
He did not *know* 2
Not that he *knew of* 2
He had no means of *forming a judgment* 1
He did not *think* 1
He had no *knowledge* 2
He could not *judge* 1
Probably 1
He was *led to suppose* 1
He was *led to believe* 1
He was *persuaded* 1
He *learnt* 1
He *heard surmises* to that effect 1

ABSTRACT.

He thinks, rather thinks, or thinks he understood 10
He conceives 7
He believes, rather believes, &c. 10
He understood, was satisfied, &c. 6
Not able to ascertain, could only state the substance 2
Did not recollect, to the best of his recollection, &c. 31
He could not say, speak with certainty, &c. 6
Did not occur to his mind, &c. 7
He could not state with accuracy, precision, &c. 7
He had no knowledge, not led to believe, to suppose, &c. 16
I am *perfectly convinced* 1
No, I believe it impossible 1

Now it is almost impossible to imagine that a witness could have made such answers to 104 questions, unless he deliberately and pertinaciously meant to conceal and withhold the truth by equivocating.

Mr. Pitt's memory, be it observed, was equally bad and treacherous upon the trial of poor old Hardy, the shoemaker, and Mr. Horne Tooke. He *then* could not recollect any thing that was likely to tell in favour of the prisoners: when their exculpation was likely to be the result of a plain honest answer, "*Non mi ricordo*" was his reply. That Mr. Pitt had connived at the peculations of Lord Melville, was clearly proved; and also that he had lent *Boyd and Benfield*, two ministerial Members of the Honourable House of Commons, 40,000 l. of the public money, without interest. These transactions being made known by means of Mr. Whitbread's exertions in Parliament, the public mind was in a violent ferment. Petitions were poured in from all parts of the country against the conduct of Lord Melville, and the people were delighted at the resolution passed by the House, ordering the Attorney-General to commence criminal proceedings against him in the Court of King's Bench. But they were very much mortified at the notice of the motion given by Mr. Leicester, on the 25th, for the rescinding

the resolution passed on the 13th of June, and thus to do away with the vote of the House on that night, in order to substitute an impeachment of Lord Melville, instead of the criminal prosecution.

On the twenty-sixth of June, an impeachment was ordered by a vote of the House, instead of a criminal prosecution. This was considered, by every honest man in the country, to be a measure adopted for the purpose of screening the newly made *noble delinquent*. Mr. Cobbett took up the discussion of these proceedings, with his accustomed zeal and ability; and his Weekly Political Register was universally read, not only in the metropolis, but all over the kingdom. His clear, perspicuous, and forcible reasoning upon this transaction, convinced every one who read the Register; he proved to demonstration that Mr. Pitt had been privy to and connived at his friend Lord Melville's delinquency, and it was made evident, to the meanest understanding, that the public money had been constantly used for private purposes, and to aggrandize the Minister's tools and dependants.

This was a mortal blow to Mr. Pitt, and it is with great truth said that this was the primary cause of his death. His friends had always cried up his integrity and disinterestedness, and his total disregard of wealth. This was very true as to himself; but he aggrandized all his friends and supporters; every tool of his ambition grew rich and fattened upon the public money; and having carried on this trade for so many years, and to be caught out in this barefaced fraud at last, I believe went far towards breaking his heart; I am sure he never well recovered it. To be detected in lending *Boyd and Benfield*, two Members of Parliament, 40,000_l_ of the public money, without interest, was bad enough: but for that he had impudence enough to offer something like an excuse; and lame as that excuse was, yet he obtained a bill of indemnity for his violation of his duty. But to have connived at Sawney's tricks, and to be detected in it, was too much for his proud spirit to bear! He was, however, determined at all hazards to screen and protect him from punishment; and hence the House was surprised into a vote, to rescind the solemn decision of the House for Lord Melville to be criminally prosecuted by the Attorney-General, little Master Perceval. Oh! what shuffling and cutting there was amongst the Minister's tools in the Honourable House; but Mr. Whitbread was made of too stubborn stuff to be driven from his purpose!

In the meanwhile, the whole country was alive to the transaction, and watched with a scrutinizing eye every step that was taken by the wily Minister, who was beset in every quarter. Mr. Cobbett contributed more than any other individual to bring this nefarious affair fully before the public eye. As I had taken a conspicuous part at the Wiltshire County Meeting, I called on Mr. Cobbett the first time that I went to London after it had occurred, as I was desirous to obtain a personal interview with a man who had afforded me so much pleasure by his writings, and who had given me weekly so much useful information as to politics and political economy. He lived in Duke-Street, Westminster, where, on my arrival, I sent in my name. I was shown into a room unfurnished, and, as far as I recollect, without a chair in it. After waiting sometime, the great political writer appeared; a tall robust man, with a florid face, his hair cut quite close to his head, and himself dressed in a blue coat and scarlet cloth waistcoat; and as it was then very hot weather, in the middle of the summer, his apparel had to me a very singular appearance. I introduced myself as a gentleman from Wiltshire, who had taken a lead at the county meeting, the particulars of which I had forwarded to him. He addressed me very *briefly*, and very *bluntly*, saying that "we must persevere, and we should bring all the scoundrels to justice." He never asked me to *sit down*; but that might have arisen from there being no other seat in the room except the floor.

I departed not at all pleased with the interview. I had made up my mind for a very different sort of man; and, to tell the truth, I was very much disappointed by his appearance and manners, and mortified at the cool reception which he gave me. As I walked up Parliament-Street, I mused upon the sort of being I had just left, and I own that my calculations did not in the slightest degree lead me to suppose that we should ever be upon such friendly terms, and indeed upon such an intimate footing, as we actually were for a number of years afterwards. It appeared to me, that at our first meeting we were mutually disgusted with each other; and I left his house with a determination in my own mind never to seek a second interview with him. I thought that of all the men I ever saw, he was the least likely for me to become enamoured of his society. The result was, nevertheless, quite the reverse; we lived and acted together for many years with the most perfect cordiality; and I believe that two men never lived that more *sincerely*, *honestly*, and *zealously*, advocated public liberty than we did, hand in hand, for eight or ten years. Although, perhaps, it would be impossible to pick out two men more different, in many respects, than we are to each other; yet, in pursuing public duty for so many years together, there never were two men who went on so well together, and with such trifling difference of opinion, as occurred between Mr. Cobbett and myself. It was, however, some years after this, before we became intimate. I constantly read his Political Register with unabated admiration and delight, for even at this time he far surpassed every other political writer, in my opinion.

At this period, 1805, many volunteers having refused to pay their fines for not attending their drills, under an idea that it was not compulsory, the magistrates decided that they were legally liable, and compelled them to pay their arrears.

On the 31st of August, the old humbug of invasion having been again played off by Buonaparte, Sir Sidney Smith attacked the flotilla off Boulogne, by means of catamarans, but with very trifling success, he having done but very little mischief to the enemy.

On the 8th of September, hostilities commenced once more between Austria and France; and, on the 2d of October, the success of the French arms began, by the defeat of the Austrians at Guntzburgh, and was followed up by the action of Wirtingen on the 6th. On the 7th, the French army defeated the Austrians on the Danube; and on the 14th, Memmingen surrendered to the French. On the 16th, six thousand Austrians surrendered to Soult; and, on the 17th, Ulm was surrendered to the French by the Austrian General Mack. On the 19th, the Austrian army was again defeated near Ulm by the French; on the same day the Battle of Elchingen was fought, where the Austrians were again routed; and on the 20th, the French forces in Italy passed the Adige. Werneck surrendered with 15,000 men to Murat.

As a counterbalance to the wonderful uninterrupted success of the French arms on the continent, Lord Nelson defeated the French and Spanish fleets, off Trafalgar, on the 21st of October. In this matchless naval engagement, the English sailors under Nelson took and destroyed twenty-four ships of the enemy; in which action the brave Admiral fell. This splendid victory of Lord Nelson's roused for a time the drooping spirits of the English Ministers, who had before been almost overwhelmed by the news of the repeated and uninterrupted success of the French troops over the Austrians; and as the Russian army had now joined them, the enemies of the French boasted that the campaign would end in favour of the allied armies of Austria and Russia. On the 31st of October, however, the French defeated the Austrians once more on the Adige. Sweden now joined the Austrians and Russians, and declared war against France. On the 10th of November, the Austrians were again defeated by the French at *Moelk*. On the 11th, Marshal Mortier defeated the Russians; and on the 13th, the French army entered VIENNA. On the 16th, the French defeated the Russians at Gunstersdorff; and on the 2d of December, the memorable and decisive battle of *Austerlitz* was fought, where the combined armies of Austria and Russia were signally defeated, and routed with immense loss. On the 6th of the same month, Austria sued for an armistice, which was granted by Napoleon; and on the 26th, Napoleon compelled her to sign a treaty of peace at Presburg; upon which occasion he bestowed the title of King upon the Electors of Bavaria and Wirtemburgh, the latter of whom was the husband of the Princess Royal of England, and elevated her to the rank of Queen of Wirtemburgh. Thus did our most powerful enemy raise one of the Royal Family of England from the rank of a petty Electress to the rank of Queen; and, under all the circumstances, this was a very remarkable event. On the 27th of the same month Buonaparte caused his brother Joseph to be crowned King of Naples. This wonderful man now had at his command all the crowned heads of Europe. He made Kings and Queens with as much ease, and with as little concern, as ginger bread dolls are made for a country fair. The proud, haughty tyrant, the Emperor of Germany, was at his feet, and Alexander trembled and obeyed his nod. The fortune of war was, during the campaign, most propitious to Napoleon; he beat the enemy in every quarter, and success attended every movement of his armies: to be sure, his different corps were commanded by the most intelligent, brave, and renowned generals in the universe; such as never before adorned any age or country.

The death of Nelson, at the battle of Trafalgar, although it did not detract from the brilliancy of the victory, was, nevertheless, a great drawback upon the pleasure that the news would have otherwise afforded to the country; for every individual laid aside, on this occasion, all feelings of political hostility, forgot his errors and his crimes as a politician and a man, and lamented the loss of the hero. No one will ever dispute Nelson's cool, determined presence of mind, in the midst of danger and the greatest difficulties; he possessed this admirable quality in a super-eminent degree. His presence of mind, which never deserted him in the midst of danger, is the sure indication of real courage; and this merit will be freely conceded to Nelson, even by those who abhorred his political subserviency.

Mr. Pitt severely felt the loss of the gallant admiral; and what with the detection and exposure which was made by the 10th Report of the Naval Commissioners, and the disgrace that was consequently brought not only upon himself and his bosom friend Lord Melville, but upon the whole of his administration; and what with the repeated and signal success of Napoleon and the French armies in Germany, the health of the Heaven-born Minister was so affected that he was obliged to go to Bath for his recovery. I shall never forget my seeing him leave York House, with his friend, about 10 o'clock in the morning on the very day that he received the dispatches of the news of the battle of Austerlitz. He walked down Melsom-street smiling and laughing with his friend, on their way to the Pump-room. In the mean time the dispatches arrived express, and were delivered to him there, as I learned afterwards. I met him again, walking down Argyll-street, in his way home to his lodgings, in Laura-place. I observed the alteration in his countenance, and remarked to my friend, with whom I was walking, "*that some bad tidings had arrived; that Mr. Pitt looked as if he had received his DEATH-BLOW.*" If he had been shot through the body, the alteration in his countenance and manner could not have been more evident; he could scarcely *reel along* as he leaned upon the arm of his friend; his head hung down upon his chest, and he looked more dead than alive. In ten minutes after this I arrived at the Library. The mail had

brought the papers, which confirmed the news of the complete overthrow of the combined Russian and Austrian armies at the battle of Austerlitz. Mr. Pitt returned to town, and I believe that he never left his house afterwards. Such an accumulation of difficulties and disasters was too much for his already shaken mind to support, and his death, I believe, was caused thereby. He never held his head fully up after the vote of the House, which declared his friend Lord Melville to have been guilty of "*a gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty.*" He made every personal effort in his power, and used his all-powerful interest to prevail upon a majority of his tools in the House to agree to the amendment which he proposed to substitute, in the stead of the above important and convincing declaration; namely, he moved to leave out the words "*gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty,*" and insert in lieu of them, the words "*contrary to the intention of the law.*" But the Ministerial Members of that Honourable House, corrupt as Pitt had made them, scouted his motion; his own tools voted against him, and he and his friend Melville were left in a minority upon his own dunghill. This was too much for his haughty, stubborn spirit to bear. To be handed down to posterity, so deservedly covered with the infamous charge of having connived at peculation; for the *Heaven-born Minister* to have been defeated, and convicted of *having winked at the plundering of the people*, and betraying his sovereign, who had confided to his hands the guardianship of their treasure, was too much even for his impudent, overbearing spirit to support; and he lingered out the remainder of his existence, and descended to the grave a wretched example of bloated pride, and detected mal-administration.

The public were greatly indebted to Mr. Whitbread for his exposure of these delinquencies in Parliament; but they were much more indebted to Mr. Cobbett, for his unwearied exertions, his able, clear, and perspicuous expositions of the whole of the transactions, which were published in his *Weekly Political Register*; which Register was universally read, with the greatest avidity, from one end of the kingdom to the other.

The Parliament was prorogued to the 21st of January, 1806, and meanwhile no exertions were spared by the Opposition, or Whigs, to keep the public feeling alive, as to the delinquency of Lord Melville, and to prepare them for his impeachment at the next meeting of the Parliament. The people of England had never thought for themselves, but had been hitherto made the puppets of the two great contending factions of the state, the Whigs and the Tories, alternately taking part sometimes with one and sometimes with the other; and the great object of these factions appeared to be always to join in keeping the people in a state of ignorance, and that faction that could best dupe and deceive *John Gull* was sure to be in place and power. The Pitt faction had succeeded in this their amiable occupation for a great length of time. In the years 1793 and 1794, they had so contrived to addle the brains of the multitude that their heads had been wool-gathering ever since; their vision had been then so mystified, and their brains had been so confused by the mountebank tricks of Pitt and his associates, that nothing but the pen of a Cobbett could bring them to their right senses again.

I was a constant reader of Cobbett's Register, and although, as I have said, I had been rather disgusted with the man at my first interview with him, yet I was quite enraptured with the beautiful productions of his pen, dictated by his powerful mind. I was become a professed politician; I had imbibed the sentiments of Lord Bolingbroke, that "the Constitution of England is the business of every Englishman." I therefore made politics my study, and I looked for Cobbett's Register with as much anxiety as I had heretofore looked to the day and hour that the fox-hounds were to meet; and if by any accident the post did not bring the Weekly Register, I was just as much disappointed, and felt as much mortified, as I had previously felt at being disappointed or deprived of a good fox-chase. I beg it to be understood, however, that I by no means had given up the sports of the field, which I enjoyed with as great a zest as I ever did; but when I returned from the pleasures of the chase, or retired from the field with my dogs and my gun, instead of spending the remainder of my time in routs, balls, and plays, in drinking or carousing with bacchanalian parties, I devoted my leisure hours to reading and studying the history of my country, and the characters of its former heroes and legislators, as compared with those of that day. No man enjoyed more domestic happiness than I did; my home was always rendered delightful by its inmates studying to make each other comfortable; and thus, instead of its being a scene of strife and quarrelling, as the homes of some of my friends were, it was quite the reverse; let me be occupied abroad how or where I would, I always returned to my home with pleasure; and the certainty of being received with open arms and a sincere and gratifying welcome, always made me long for that delight whenever I was absent.

The poor had felt considerable relief by the fall in the price of bread, since the commencement of the year, when the quartern loaf was as high as one shilling and four-pence half-penny; but it had now fallen to ten-pence. The misery that had been entailed upon the poor during the winter of 1804-5, in consequence of the enormous price of all sorts of provisions, was most heart-rending and revolting to the feelings of every one possessing a particle of humanity. I did every thing that lay in my power to relieve the wants and sooth the sorrows of my poor neighbours in the parish of Enford; I took care that my own servants should not want any of the common necessaries of life, but numerous little comforts,

and hitherto esteemed necessities, were, however reluctantly, obliged to be dispensed with.

I saw with pain a sad falling off in the character of the labouring poor; they were for the most part become paupers, while those who still had the spirit, and the pride to keep from the parish book were suffering the most cutting penury, and the greatest privations. I have often witnessed the contending struggles of a poor but high-spirited labourer, and seen him submitting to the most pinching want before his honourable feelings would allow him to apply for parish relief; himself, his wife and children, almost driven to a state bordering upon starvation, before he could bring his mind to admit the degrading idea of asking for parochial alms. Many and many is the half-crown that I have slipped unobserved into the hand of such a man, to enable him the better to overcome the hardships of winter; with the fond, but futile hope, that the next harvest might enable him to surmount his difficulties, and with the fruit of his honest labour procure bread to stop the mouths of his half-starved wife and children. My means had been greatly curtailed by the cursed brewery at Clifton, which was a perpetual drain upon my purse; for all that I acquired by the good management of my farms was devoured by the calls made from the brewery. This rendered me less able to assist my poorer neighbours; but I have the consolation to reflect, that I did my best.

A Bill, which has been lately before the House of Commons, to protect dumb animals from the brutal treatment of more brutal man, reminds me of an occurrence or two that happened to myself, and which, in justice to my character, ought not to be omitted. As I was riding to my farm at Widdington, one summer's day, with the Reverend William White, the present Rector of Teffont, in Wiltshire, who was on a visit at my house at Chisenbury, we perceived a brute, in the shape of a man, belabouring with a large stick a poor ass, who had sunk down under the weight of his load, a large heavy bag of ruddle. Exhausted by the heat of a meridian sun, the poor beast lay prostrate upon the ground, totally deprived of the power of rising with his burden upon his back. I sharply rode up, and warmly remonstrated with the huge two-legged brute upon his inhumanity, and offered to assist him in unloading the beast, to enable him to rise, and to help him to reload the animal after he had risen. This was rudely refused, and with an oath I was desired to mind my own business; while the fellow continued, in a most unmerciful manner, to beat the wretched unresisting beast upon a raw place on the upper end of his tail. Exasperated at the fellow's brutality, I rode up to him, and having seized his bludgeon, as he was brandishing it in the air about to apply it once more to the already lacerated rump of the poor ass, with an effort of strength I wrenched the bludgeon from the inhuman monster's hand, and threw it with great violence sixty or seventy yards over the hedge, into an adjoining corn-field. Gnashing his teeth with rage at being deprived of his implement of torture, and determined to be revenged for my interference, the ruffian immediately drew out a large clasp knife from his pocket, and seizing the ass by the tail, and exclaiming, "I will show you that I have a right to do what I please with my own beast," he instantly cut off his tail within two inches of his rump, and with savage ferocity he began kicking the wounded part with all his might, with a pair of thick-topped shoes. This was too much for me to witness, without making an effort to relieve the wretched animal, and punish its brutal master. I sprung from my saddle, and having consigned my horse to the care of my acquaintance, the parson, I flew to rescue the poor beast from its inhuman tormentor. The ruffian instantly turned to meet me, and having raised the clasp knife in a menacing attitude, he swore, with the most blasphemous imprecations, that he would plunge it into my heart, if I approached him another inch. My friend, the parson, urged me to forbear; but, keeping my eye steadily fixed upon that of the monster, while his hand was still raised with the bloody knife suspended, I gave him, as quick as lightning, a blow from my fist, which took the villain under the left ear, levelled him with the earth, and made him bite the dust. The knife fell from his hand, and I instantly seized it, and before the two-legged brute, who lay stunned upon the ground, could rise, I cut the girth which bound the load upon the back of the ass, and relieved him from his burden. The cowardly ruffian still lay sprawling, fearing to rise, because he dreaded a repetition of my chastisement, which I was most anxious to have given him if he had stood upon his legs; but which I declined to do while he was prostrate. The fellow now began to beg for mercy, and pretended to be very sorry for his conduct. The parson now proposed to give him a severe hiding for his villainous treatment of the poor beast; but as the coward would not get off his breech, but remained seated upon the earth, and declared that he would not get upon his legs while I remained, he saved himself from a severe and well-merited drubbing. He very coolly offered to sell me the mutilated beast, which I instantly purchased for five shillings, to save him from again falling into the hands of his cruel master. I had it sent home, and the greatest care possible was taken of it. But with all my care and attention, the poor thing never recovered from its ill-treatment; it lingered for four or five months and died. This was the only ass I ever was master of in my life; in fact, I always objected to the keeping of an ass, because I could not bear to see the ill-treatment to which they are generally subject.

I could relate several similar instances, wherein I have placed myself in the most imminent peril, urged on by an impetuous abhorrence of tyranny, even when that tyranny is exercised towards a beast. One other instance will, perhaps, induce the reader to think that my detestation of cruelty has often led me not only into acts of indiscretion, but that my rashness upon such occasions has been almost

bordering upon criminal enthusiasm. Coming down Newgate Street, one Monday afternoon, I saw a considerable crowd of people surrounding a drover, who held a butcher's knife in his hand, brandishing it in the air, and threatening any one that might approach him. I inquired the cause of the fellow's conduct, and his being thus surrounded by the enraged multitude. A beautiful ox was pointed out to me on the other side of the street, which stood trembling ready to drop down. To save himself trouble in driving the beast, the ruffian, who had undertaken to conduct it to Whitechapel for a butcher, had severed the *tendon Achilles* with his sharp knife; a practice which, I am informed, frequently occurs in London and which is called hamstringing. The populace, men and women, appeared very much enraged against this monster of a drover, and two constables, with their staves, stood ready to seize him; but he kept them and the whole crowd at bay, with the violent brandishing of his knife, and threatening destruction to any one who attempted to meddle with him. Several efforts were made to seize him, which he dexterously avoided. At length, I rushed up to him, and felled him to the earth, with a tremendous and well-directed blow with my fist under the ear. He was immediately seized by the constables, and the knife was taken from him. But I was not to get off quite so easy with him as I did with the ass-driver. The fellow, being disarmed, instantly stripped in buff, and offered to fight the man who had knocked him down. All eyes were fixed upon me, a perfect stranger, and the general exclamation was,—"Have nothing to do with him, Sir;" but, as the constables appeared to doubt whether they had the power to hold him in custody, there being no law against a drover maiming his beast, unless his master disapproved of it; and as I saw the fellow was likely to escape without further punishment, I instantly accepted his offer, and volunteered to punish him myself, urged on by the pitiable appearance of the poor ox, a beautiful animal which had not moved one inch the whole of this time. I therefore imprudently stripped, and having consigned my clothes into the hands of a by-stander, I set to, and in *three rounds* I beat my man blind; and having a fourth time knocked him down, without receiving any injury myself, he declined to meet me again. My clothes and watch were honestly returned; and, having replaced them on my back, I departed, receiving the hearty thanks of the surrounding multitude, without being recognised by any one. In fact, I was not at all known in London at that time. I laughed heartily, as an account of it was read the next morning, in the newspapers, while I was at breakfast in the coffee-room, at the Black Lion, Water Lane; the whole party joining in the praises of the man who had chastised the brutal ruffian.

One more circumstance of this sort will, I should think, be quite enough to convince the reader that I was always a determined foe to baseness and cruelty. As I was sitting with some ladies on a hot summer's day, in a front room of the Fountain Inn, at Portsmouth, with the window open, looking into the High-Street, observing the passing crowd, it being a fair day, we discovered an ill-looking fellow pilfering some articles from the stall of a poor woman opposite. This transaction was also observed by Admiral Montague, the Port Admiral, who was sitting in the adjoining room of the inn, with a friend, amusing himself with observing the passing scene. We hailed the poor woman, who detected the fellow in the fact; but, having dropped the articles on the pavement, he vociferously declared that he had never touched them. A crowd soon collected, particularly of women, and demanded that he should be taken into custody. He drew his knife, (always the ready resort of a coward) and placing his back in a corner against the wall, he set them all at defiance, and for a considerable length of time successfully resisted every attempt to secure him. At last he was, to all appearance, getting the better of his assailants, and by loudly asserting that she had most wrongfully and maliciously accused him, he was absolutely endeavoring to turn the tide of popular indignation against the poor woman who had detected him. The fact was, that the terror excited by his violence overcame the zeal of his accusers; and if it had not been kept up by three or four women, he would not only have escaped with impunity, but he would have turned the tables upon the poor woman whom he had endeavoured to rob. These women, however, kept up an unceasing battery with their tongues, which he at length began to put down by violence, pushing them away with one hand, and threatening them with the upraised knife in the other. This scene lasted nearly a quarter of an hour, and although my fingers itched to punish the ruffian, yet I was restrained by the entreaties of the ladies who were with me. At last he struck one of the women a violent blow, and knocked her down. This drew upon him the execration of the enraged multitude; but no one attempted either to disarm or to seize him. A second blow, inflicted upon a decent looking female, roused my indignation at the cowardice of the bye-standers, and I hastily left the room, crossed the street, and having walked deliberately up to him, pretending to inquire what was the matter, before he was at all aware of my intentions, and just as he was about to relate his story, I, with a well-directed blow, with my fist under the ear, laid him sprawling upon the pavement; his knife was seized, and I left him *unarmed to the care of the Portsmouth ladies* that surrounded him, who did not fail to punish him with their talons.

As I was passing over the street, on my return to the inn, Admiral Montague, who had witnessed the whole affair, looked out of his window and warmly gave me his personal thanks, for the summary justice which I had inflicted upon the ruffian thief, who had kept the street in an uproar for nearly half an hour. I went back to my party very well satisfied with the exploit I had performed; although I felt so very sensible of the danger I had incurred, that I promised my friends faithfully that I would never

again volunteer in such dangerous service. About two hours afterwards, I very unexpectedly received a warrant from Sir John Carter, the Mayor, to attend immediately at his office, to appear to a charge of a violent assault, committed in the public street, &c. &c. I took my hat and attended the Mayor's officer instantly, without the slightest hesitation; but as the Admiral had left the inn I had no witness with me. I, however, sent the waiter to bring the woman who had been robbed, and one of those who had been assaulted by the ruffian, to follow me to the house of the Mayor; but, almost as soon as I had arrived there, and before the fellow had finished making his charge, in walked the Port Admiral Montague, who having heard the circumstance, came immediately to give evidence of the facts to which he had been an eye-witness from the window of the inn. The gallant Admiral related the circumstances, and passed a high eulogium upon my courage and public spirit, in which he was cordially joined by his friend Sir John Carter; and the fellow, who was a *pot-house* keeper, from Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, escaped with a very severe reprimand, the poor woman having declined to prosecute him.

If I were not fearful of tiring the reader, I could continue a long chain of *rencontres* of a similar nature, which occurred to me in my youthful days; but as I have, I think, given quite sufficient to delineate the decisive character of the author at that period, I shall proceed, with other matters; only just observing by the way, that a frequent recurrence of such events obtained for me the name of a *very violent* young man, though, nineteen times out of twenty my violence was exercised in the cause of humanity; or in protecting and defending the weak and helpless, against the aggressions of the rich and powerful.

Returning from London, in the Ba--- mail, on a very severe frosty moonlight night, as we were passing Cranford-bridge, the coachman got one of the hind wheels firmly locked and entangled in that of a heavy brewer's dray, which gave us a most violent shock and nearly overturned the coach. A plentiful share of the slang abuse, usually arising upon such occasions, passed between the coachman and guard of the mail and the driver and attendant of the dray. The wheel of the coach appeared to be so firmly entangled in that of the dray, that it required a considerable exertion to release it; and the guard was entreating the passengers to assist him. But an Irish officer of dragoons, who was sitting by my side, very coolly answered, that as coachee had got into the scrape he might get out of it again and be d—d. For once in my life I was determined to follow such a selfish example; but, just as I had made up my mind to sit still and enjoy my own ease and comfort, the Irishman, who was looking out of one of the windows of the coach on the opposite side to that where the dray stood, exclaimed "by Jasus there is a fellow fallen from off his horse into the water, and is drowning." The moon shone almost as bright as day, and, as this happened within half a dozen yards of the coach window, it was perfectly visible to the Irish officer, who still sat perfectly cool, and as unconcerned as possible; observing, as he leant back in the coach, "the fellow is actually gone to the bottom, and I saw the last of him as he sunk." Till now I really thought the gentleman had merely witnessed the ducking of some one who had fallen into the pond; but this last observation induced me to call loudly to the guard to open the door; and, quite forgetting my determination to follow the officer's doctrine and example, "to take things coolly and let every one look to himself," I sprang out of the coach to the edge of the water, where a hat floating thereon was the only visible proof that any one was in the water. The Irishman, however, who still sat snug in the coach, and who never budged an inch, affirmed with an oath that the man had sunk exactly under where the hat was floating. The life of a fellow creature being at stake, cold, calculating prudence was instantly banished from my ardent mind; and, without waiting another moment, I plunged into the water, which I found was beyond my depth, and having swam to the spot, which was only a few yards, I came instantly in contact with the body, which I seized and dragged to the water edge, and, with some difficulty, assisted by the guard, he was hoisted out of the pond. The Irishman had lustily, but perhaps very prudently, ordered the coachman, at his peril, not to leave his horses, although a passenger on the box had the reins in his hand. By this time assistance came from the inn (I think the Crown), kept at that time by a person of the name of Goddard. Amongst the number of those who flocked to witness this distressing scene was a young man, who exclaimed, in a frantic agony of voice and gesture, "*it is my father!*" and he instantly seized the apparently drowned man by the heels, and held him upright, with his head upon the ground, his feet in the air, as he said, to let *the water run out of him*; an old, vulgar, and long exploded practice, which has proved in almost every instance fatal. I expostulated, but in vain; I pitied the agonised feelings of the youth, while I struggled to release his father by force from the fatal posture in which he had, although with the best intention, unguardedly and obstinately placed him. He, however, resisted my efforts with personal violence, in spite of the expostulations of the guard. Seeing that I was likely to have my humane intentions frustrated by the young man's obstinacy, and, as no time was to be lost, I resorted to my usual *knock-down argument*, and levelled the *son* with the earth, to save the life of the *father*. This I did so effectually that he was totally incapable of resistance; and, with the aid of the guard, I bore off the drowned man upon my shoulders to the inn, about a hundred yards distant. Dripping wet, and covered with mud, I assisted to strip him before the kitchen fire, and instantly proceeded to use the means recommended by the Humane Society, (and by which means I had once restored to animation a female who had attempted to drown herself). By chafing the body with warm cloths, rubbing in brandy about the heart, applying

bottles filled with hot water to his feet, &c. in which the guard manfully and zealously assisted the whole time, declaring that the coach should wait as long for me as I liked, in a very few minutes my labour and exertion was rewarded with symptoms of returning animation, by the twitching of one leg; upon which a fresh hot bottle was applied to his foot; we redoubled our exertion, and in another minute he opened his eyes and became sick. I now left him to the care of his son, the guard, and others, to continue the rubbing, while I went with the landlord and changed my clothes, having remained twenty minutes in the same state in which I had left the water, which being very muddy, I had spoiled at least ten pounds worth of wearing apparel. The landlord, however, furnished me with what I had not got in my trunk.

When I returned down stairs, I perceived my patient, who I was informed was an old post-boy, sitting in the settle of the tap-room, quite recovered; and when I was pointed out to him by his master, as his deliverer from a watery grave, the fellow attacked me in the most violent and abusive manner, and called down horrid imprecations upon my head for having saved him from that end which I now found he had courted, by throwing himself off the horse's back, with the intention of destroying himself. I was so exasperated with the fellow's ingratitude that it was with difficulty the landlord and the guard restrained me from inflicting upon him summary chastisement for his insolence; but the conviction of his insanity soon weighed still more powerfully with me to ensure my forbearance than any thing the landlord or the guard could have urged for his protection. At this moment my fellow passenger, who had never before appeared, but who had taken the advantage of this delay to get a comfortable cup of coffee, in a warm parlour, walked in, and began to moralize with me upon the folly "*of troubling myself with other people's business;*" and, as he did this with a very grave face, it had the desired effect, and I really began to meditate and to calculate which of the two, he or I, was the most extraordinary being; and I was almost disposed to concede to him the palm of being the most rational, a fact of which he appeared thoroughly to be convinced, and in which opinion he was strongly confirmed, after I got into the mail, and related to him the adventure of my having nearly lost my life, a few years before, in saving a female from being drowned in a deep river, on a Monday, who contrived to put an end to her existence and find a watery grave on the following Thursday, in a ditch which contained only eighteen inches of water. We travelled as far as Marlborough together, where we parted; he proceeded to Bath in the mail, and I to my home at Chisenbury, in my curricule. Parliament met on the 21st of January, and on the TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF JANUARY, 1806, the Heaven-born Minister, WILLIAM PITT, DIED, at his house at Putney. This man had, for nearly a quarter of a century, reigned triumphant over the people of England with the most despotic and arbitrary sway, by the means of a corrupt majority of a set of boroughmongers, who called themselves and their agents the House of Commons; thus pretending to be the representatives of the people of England, while, in fact, they might as well have been said to represent the people of Algiers as the people of England, a majority of them being returned by *one hundred and fifty-four* individuals. I may, I believe, venture to give my opinion of the House of Commons, such as it was constituted in the days and reign of Pitt. The banishment act would, of course, preclude me from speaking of the present House of Commons with the same sincerity and freedom; therefore, whether there be any resemblance in the present House of Commons to that of the House as it was constituted in the reign of Pitt, I must leave for the determination of those who have paid attention to their proceedings.

On the death of Mr. Pitt, the then House of Commons immediately voted that his debts should be paid by JOHN GULL, and that he should have a public funeral, at JOHN'S expense! This was all perfectly in character, for it was voted before the *Talents* or *Whigs* came into place and power. A ministry, a new ministry, was now made up of most heterogeneous materials; it consisted of men differing as widely from each other as any of the factions could differ; *Fox* and *Grenville* united, and, to crown the whole, Lord *Sidmouth* made one of the cabinet. Mr. Fox, who had been the determined opponent, the violent contemner, of all the measures of Mr. Pitt, formed an union with Lord Grenville, who had been the constant supporter of the very worst measures of Mr. Pitt! As for Lord Sidmouth, all the Addingtons appeared determined to have a "finger in the pie!" let who would be in office, the Addingtons appeared determined to have a share of the plunder, by joining them. Such opposite characters, such vinegar and oil politicians, were not likely to amalgamate so as to produce any good for the people; they might, indeed, combine to share the profits of place, but they were sure never to agree in any measure that was likely to promote the freedom and happiness of the people. This, however, was called a Whig administration; and it will not be unuseful to record the names of those personages who composed this Whig administration. They were as follow, which I beg my readers to peruse attentively:—

Right Rev. Dr. C. Manners Sutton, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Thomas Lord Erskine, Lord High Chancellor.

Dr. William Markham, Archbishop of York.

Earl Fitzwilliam, Lord President of the Council.

Viscount Sidmouth, Lord Privy Seal.

William Lord Grenville, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord Henry Petty, Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Earl Spencer, Viscount Howick,
and Right Honorable William
Windham, Secretaries of State.
Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, First Lord of the Admiralty.
Sir David Dundas, Commander in Chief.
Right Hon. Charles Abbot, Speaker of the House of Commons.
Right Hon. Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls.
Edward Lord Ellenborough, Chief Justice of the Court of King's
Bench.
Sir Arthur Pigott, Attorney General.
Sir Samuel Romilly, Solicitor General.
Right Hon. Sir William Scott, Judge of the Admiralty.
Right Hon. Richard Brindley
Sheridan, Treasurer of the Navy.
Earl Temple and Lord John
Townsend, Paymasters of the Army.
Francis Earl of Moira, Master General of the Ordnance.
Right Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War.
John Duke of Bedford, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Here, my friends, you have a pretty correct list of the Whig administration, or "All the Talents," as they were facetiously and ironically called, or rather nicknamed, who were called to office upon the death of Mr. PITT, a man of brilliant talents, and irresistible eloquence; but a man who turned these great gifts of the Supreme Being to the destruction of human liberty, and who directed his powerful genius, and the great facilities that were given him by his having the direction of the resources of this laborious and enterprising nation at his command, to the very worst of purposes, to the annihilation of the rights and liberties of his countrymen. Some of the poisonous effects of the Pitt system the nation has long been tasting, but the cup of bitterness and misery that it has produced is now filled to the brim, and its baleful contents are beginning to act fully on this once prosperous nation, and to blast and wither in the bud the very prospects of its once happy people. Mr. Pitt, in his younger days, before his ambition got the better of his principles, had been a reformer; but when he once got into place and power, he became the greatest apostate that ever existed; and, true apostate like, he endeavoured to hang his former associates and companions in that cause which he had so basely abandoned and betrayed. If there ever lived one man more deserving the execration of the whole human race than another, *Mr. Pitt was that man*. He corrupted the very source of justice, by bribing and packing the pretended representatives of the people; but it required the Whigs, the base Whigs, to put a stamp upon the system which Pitt created, to make it a perpetual bar and an everlasting curse to the nation.

The Whigs were at this time become popular with the nation at large, and possessed the confidence of the thinking and honourable portion of the people. The friends of rational liberty looked to them with, what was believed to be, a well-grounded hope, for some relief—some relaxation from the horrors of that accursed system which Mr. Fox and his friends had so ably and so zealously opposed for nearly twenty years; that system which they had invariably condemned and exposed, as the greatest curse that could befall a nation; and for having persisted in which infamous, impolitic, and ruinous course so long, they had predicted the downfall of this country.

I own that I was one of Mr. Fox's most enthusiastic admirers. I was too young and inexperienced a politician, to doubt for a moment the sincerity of his professions; I had for many many years watched his ardent and eloquent opposition to the measures of Mr. Pitt, and my whole heart and soul had gone hand in hand with him. I own I indulged the most confident hope that he would now realize all his former professions. Now that he was in place, and had a large majority of those who called themselves the representatives of the people at his command; *now that he had the power to do good*, I, for one, expected that he would tread in the "stern path of duty," and set about restoring those rights and liberties of the people, the loss of which he had so pathetically, and for so many years, expatiated on, and deplored. But, alas! my fond hopes were soon blasted; the expectations of the whole nation were soon disappointed. The very FIRST act of the Whig ministry was a death-blow to the fondly-cherished hopes of every patriotic mind in the kingdom. Lord Grenville held the sinecure office of Auditor of the Exchequer, with a salary of *four thousand pounds a year*; but being appointed *First Lord of the Treasury*, with a salary of *six thousand pounds a year*, it was expected, of course, on every account, that he would resign his former office of Auditor of the Exchequer, it appearing too great a farce to give a man 4,000_l_ a year to audit his *own accounts*; and, besides the barefaced absurdity of the thing, it was evidently illegal. In spite of this, these new ministers, dead to every sense and feeling of shame, brought in a bill, and it was passed a law, solely for the purpose of enabling Lord Grenville to hold, at one and the same time, these two offices, which were so palpably incompatible with each other;

namely, *First Lord of the Treasury*, and *Auditor of the Exchequer*. This shook the faith of every honest man in the country. I own that I was thunder-struck, particularly as Mr. Fox brought the bill into the House of Commons himself, and maintained it with his usual ability, and appeared quite as much in earnest and as eloquent in a *bad cause* as he had heretofore been in a *good one*. A vote, as I have already mentioned, had passed the House to pay Mr. Pitt's debts, before these ministers had actually taken their places; and now another vote was passed by them, to erect, at the public expense, a monument to his memory, upon the score of his *public services!* and this vote was passed, recollect, by the very same men who had declared, for the last twenty years, that the measures of Mr. Pitt were destructive to the nation, burthensome and oppressive to the people, and subversive of their dearest rights and liberties. But Mr. Fox *was now in place!* the case was now completely altered!!

Mr. Fox's friends now began to doubt his sincerity, and recalled to their recollection the former professions of Mr. Pitt. In a speech, delivered in his place, in the House of Commons, on the 26th of May, 1797, Mr. Fox had, in the following words, reminded Mr. Pitt of his former professions: " My opinion (said Mr. Fox) is, that the best plan of representation is that which shall bring into activity the greatest number of independent voters. That Government alone is strong that has the hearts of the people; and will any man contend, that we should not be more likely to add strength to the state if we were to extend the basis of popular representation? In 1785, the Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) pronounced the awful prophecy, '*without a parliamentary reform the nation will be plunged into new wars; without a parliamentary reform you cannot be safe against bad ministers, nor can even good ministers be of use to you.*' Such was his prediction, and it has come upon us. Good God! what a fate is that of the Right Honourable Gentleman, and in what a state of whimsical contradiction does he now stand!" This was the sarcastical language of Mr. Fox, in 1797, when speaking of the apostacy of Mr. Pitt; but which might have been very fairly retorted upon himself in 1806.

At the moment when I am writing this, at half past one o'clock on Thursday, the nineteenth day of July, 1821, I hear about thirty of the poor half-starved populace of Northover giving *three cheers* in honour of His Majesty's Coronation, or rather in honour of a dinner and some beer, which, I understand, is given to them by Mr. Tuson, the attorney of the place. The system that has made him *rich* has made his neighbours *poor*, and he very properly spews his generosity and his loyalty, by giving his poor neighbours a dinner upon this occasion. Poor, deluded, debased wretches! I envy not your feelings; a few months since you were amongst the first voluntarily to address the Queen upon her escape from the fangs of her persecutors, and you voluntarily illuminated your houses upon the occasion. But now your pinching wants, the cravings of your half-starved carcasses, give a sort of involuntary action to your lungs, and, in spite of yourselves, your *bellies* cry "*God save King George the Fourth;*" and the sound issues from your mouths, in hopes of having the space which the wind occupies in your stomachs replaced with *beef, pudding, and beer*. But this is one of the dog-days!—God save King George the Fourth, they cry; huzza, again, again, and again! All that I chuse to say is, that it is two years ago, the twenty-first of next month, that Lord Sidmouth addressed a letter to the Manchester Magistrates, which expressed, by command of His Majesty, "THE GREAT SATISFACTION HIS MAJESTY *derived from their prompt, decisive and efficient measures for the preservation of the public tranquillity.*" God preserve His Majesty from having any occasion to thank the magistrates again *for the perpetration of such horrid crime.*

I trust the occasion will be an excuse for this digression. Let us now return to the period of 1806. The new ministry began to act so decided a part, that they no longer kept the nation in any suspense as to what course they would pursue. They not only trod in Mr. Pitt's steps, by adopting all his measures, but they greatly outdid him in insulting the feelings of the people. As their THIRD act, they appointed *Lord Ellenborough* the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, (a political Judge) "one of the cabinet." This was a most unconstitutional measure, and calculated to render the ministry justly unpopular. The FOURTH step they took was to raise the INCOME TAX from *six-and-a-quarter* to *ten per cent*. The FIFTH thing they did was, to exempt all the *King's funded property* from the operation of that tax, while they left that of the *widow* and *orphan*, even down to the miserable pittance of *fifty pounds* a year, subject to all its inquisitorial powers. Their SIXTH measure was, to raise the incomes of all the younger branches of the Royal Family, from *twelve* to *eighteen thousand* a year. Their SEVENTH measure was, to bring a bill into the House, to make all *private breweries liable to the excise laws*; thus daringly meditating the violation of an Englishman's boast, "*that his house is his castle.*" But, most fortunately for the country, the Whig ministry were, in this one instance, left in a disgraceful minority by their own tools, the mock representatives of the people. Their EIGHTH measure was, to continue the French war, expressly for Hanover; Mr. Fox unblushingly declaring, that "Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire;" although the act of settlement expressly declares it to be a breach of the compact between the king and the people, to go to war on account of any of the king's foreign possessions. Their NINTH measure was, to draw up a bill, which they left in their office, making it, in Ireland, transportation for any person or persons to be seen out of their houses, in any of the prescribed districts, between sun-set in the evening and sun-rise in the morning; and this was to be carried into effect without the sanction of a

jury, and merely by the fiat of two magistrates! TENTH, and lastly, they abandoned the cause of the Catholics, in order to save and keep their places, when they found that the King made that abandonment a *sine qua non*: they had always, for many many years, when in opposition, supported the Catholic claims for emancipation, and had pledged themselves that, whenever they had the power, they would carry that measure into effect; and, as soon as they thought that they were firmly seated in the saddle of state, and their feet well fixed in the stirrups, they brought that measure forward in Parliament, having first gained the execration of every independent man in the united kingdom, for having acted in the way which I have above described.

The ten preceding political acts of the Whig ministry, of "*All the Talents*," as they impudently called themselves, had rendered them sufficiently odious throughout the whole country; and it only required this last act of theirs to render them as despicable as they were detested. As soon as they gave notice of their intention to bring forward the Catholic claims, the *old leaven*, the refuse of the Pitt faction, who had only wanted a plausible opportunity, began to bellow aloud for the safety of Mother Church, and the Protestant Ascendancy; declaring that the church, the established religion, was in danger. They had always their intriguers about the person of the old bigotted King George the Third, who immediately took the alarm, or rather took this opportunity of getting rid of a ministry that he never liked, and with whom he had never acted cordially, although they had, in the most subservient manner, complied with all his whims and prejudices. Now was the time then for the remains of the Pitt faction to make an effort to dislodge their enemies from their strong hold of *place* and *power*! Alas! alas!! the despicable Whigs now began to cry for help from *the people*; from that people whom they had so infamously deceived. They, however, called in vain for the protecting hand of that people whom they had so basely betrayed; they called in vain for the helping hand of that people whom they had insulted and oppressed, and whose voice they had treated with contempt and derision, when basking in the sunshine of power. The people had been enlightened; the people had read Cobbett, and they were no longer to be deluded, and made the tools of a despicable, a hypocritical, and a tyrannical faction, such as the Whigs had proved themselves during their administration. The King was well advised of this by the old PITT creatures; he therefore treated the Whig ministers with very little ceremony; he made a very serious affair of their intention to make him violate his coronation oath; he demanded that they should abandon the Catholics, or abandon their places. The *place-loving Whigs* made no parley even with the King, but instantly and unconditionally agreed to comply with his demand; thus deserting the Catholics and their own principles together, to save their places. The King was astonished and disappointed; he had no idea that they would have acted so basely, and Lords Liverpool, Eldon, and Castlereagh were foiled for a moment, in their attempt to dislodge them; but their best ally was the hatred and the indignation which the people evinced towards the Whigs. Taking advantage of this, the Outs urged the King on to insult his then ministers, by demanding a written pledge from them, that they would never bring forward the measure any more in Parliament; thus openly evincing that His Majesty would not take their words. The paltry Whigs did all they could to save their places; they bore kicking with wonderful patience; they were as subservient as spaniels; they promised every thing, and they prayed lustily; but the King was determined, and persisted in demanding a *written pledge*. This was such a premeditated, barefaced insult, that they could not submit to it. They would bear kicking privately, but it was too much to be kicked and cuffed so publicly, and to be asked to sign their names to their own condemnation; this was too much for the most degraded of men to bear with any degree of temper. They now remonstrated, but their remonstrances were in vain; the King despised them for their meanness as much as he had before detested them for their insolence, and, without any further ceremony, he gave them one more kick, and kicked them headlong out of place and power.

Thus fell the bass Whig faction, never to rise more! deservedly execrated by all honest men, lamented by none but those who profited by their being in office, by their hangers-on, and by such men as Mr. Waithman, the city patriot, who was looking out for a place with as much eagerness and anxiety as a cat would watch to pounce upon a mouse: a few such men as these were mortified and hurt at the fall of those to whom they were looking up for situations of profit, and for pensions, which were to be extorted from the pockets of the people; but the nation at large rejoiced at the downfall of these upstart, hypocritical pretenders to patriotism. The people knew that they should not gain any thing by the change; they knew that the Pittites were open and avowed enemies to the liberties of the people; and, therefore, they did not expect any good from them. But the Whigs had professed every thing, and performed nothing; they had grossly deceived the people, and, in revenge for their treachery, everyone rejoiced at their fall. How many a good and staunch friend to Liberty did I know, at this time, who became for ever neutralized, in consequence of having been deceived in Fox; they now made up their minds never again to place any confidence in any political professions, from whomsoever they might come.

Mr. Pitt was interred, with great funeral pomp, on the 22nd day of February. On the 29th of April, the Commons impeached Lord Melville; and, after being *convicted* by the unanimous verdict of the *whole nation*, he was acquitted by a majority of his *brother peers*. On the 12th of June, peace was signed

between the Emperor of France and our magnanimous ally the Emperor of Russia: on the 20th of July, and on the 6th of August, the sanctified Emperor of Austria abdicated the throne of Germany, and declared himself the hereditary Emperor of Austria.

On the 13th of September, Mr. Fox died at Chiswick. Oh! what an injury has the character of human nature sustained by his not having died one year before! If Mr. Fox had been taken from this world at the time when Mr. Pitt died, his name would have been immortalized, and he would have been handed down to posterity as one of the brightest and purest instances of political patriotism. But, alas! he unfortunately lived to make one of the Whig ministry, one of the "Talents" in 1806, and his deeds are recorded in the TEN acts of the Whigs, as I have enumerated them above.

About this period the conduct of the Princess of Wales was investigated by a committee of the privy council. This affair, which was called the "Delicate Investigation," lasted some time, and caused a considerable sensation throughout the country. It created great anxiety amongst politicians to ascertain what was the nature and extent of the inquiry; but it was studiously kept a profound secret, very much to the injury of the Princess, because, amongst the Prince of Wales's friends, there were not wanting friends, aspersers of character, to whisper away her fair fame.

Lord Lauderdale went to Paris on an embassy, to negotiate peace, but soon returned without any successful termination of his mission. Mr. Fox was buried by a public funeral, in Westminster Abbey, on the 10th of October, and was attended by his numerous friends, which composed a great portion of the men of talent belonging to both Houses of Parliament. One act of the Whig ministry deserves to be recorded with the highest praise; and this is a proof that few men are so worthless but they possess some good qualities. If the Whig ministers had, in other respects, conducted themselves with even a small portion of becoming decency towards the nation; and, if they had not perpetuated a system of white slavery at home, which they certainly did in almost every measure that they proposed to and carried through Parliament, they would have been immortalised by the abolition of the black slave trade abroad. But, in this measure of abolishing the slave trade, the canting *Saints*, with Wilberforce at their head, joined them with as great an avidity as they supported every measure to curtail the rights and liberties of the people at home. Lord Henry Petty stamped his character as a statesman, by becoming a humble imitator of Mr. Pitt, even so far as to eulogise the greatest of all frauds and humbugs, the 11 Sinking Fund." But this was always a subject which tickled John Gull's *ear*, at the same time that it puzzled his *brains*, and emptied his *pockets*.

The Parliament was dissolved, and a general election took place in November, 1806. The Whigs thought that, at all popular places, they should bring in their friends with a high hand. They, however, were very much deceived;—they were warmly opposed every where, and, instead of being, as they had heretofore been, the popular candidates, they were in all quarters unpopular, and nothing but ministerial influence gained them their seats. In several places they were thrown out. The electors for the borough of Southwark rejected Mr. Tierney, and he was obliged to come in for a ministerial rotten borough. Mr. Sheridan was opposed by Mr. Paul, for Westminster, where he was evidently far from being popular. The Whigs being in place and power, exercised the most unconstitutional means to carry their elections; they proved themselves much more barefaced in exercising their corrupt influence than the Pittites ever had, and they unblushingly set the opinion of the people at complete defiance. In Hampshire, Lord Temple behaved in the most arbitrary manner, and attempted to dictate in the most overbearing way; but, in doing so to Sir William Heathcote, he behaved so insolently, that the old Pittite of a baronet exposed him to his party, which caused the greatest indignation in the breast of every independent freeholder throughout the county and the kingdom.

One of our members for Wiltshire, Ambrose Goddard, of Swindon, being old and superannuated, resigned, and one of an old family, RICHARD LONG, of Rood Ashton, was to be foisted upon the county by an arrangement made between two clubs, without consulting the wishes of the freeholders. Mr. Goddard had resigned in consequence of some questions that I had put to him at a former election, as to his neglect of duty; which neglect he confessed arose from ill health and inability to attend in his place, in consequence of his age; and this rendered it too ridiculous for him to offer himself again. Mr. Richard Long, of Rood Ashton, was a fox-hunting country squire, without any other qualification to be a Member of Parliament than that of belonging to an ancient family of the county; in fact, he was proverbially a man of very inferior knowledge, remarkable only for being a stupid country squire, who, although a sportsman, scarcely knew how to address his tenants on his health being drank on a rent-day.

At a former election for the county, I attended on the day of nomination, at the townhall at Devizes, and, after Ambrose Goddard and Henry Penruddock Wyndham, Esqrs., had, in the usual form, been proposed and seconded, when the sheriff was about to put it to the vote, I stepped forward, and desired that, before the show of hands was taken, I might ask a question or two of the candidates who were the late members. This produced a murmur amongst the old electioneering stagers of the county; and Mr.

Salmon, an attorney, who, from his overbearing disposition in the borough of Devizes, had acquired the name of "King Salmon," cried, *order! order!* and begged that the sheriff would proceed to the regular business of the day. I was young and bashful, but in so good a cause I was not to be put down so easily, although I had never attended at an election meeting before; I therefore respectfully, but firmly, addressed the High Sheriff, and demanded to exercise the right of a freeholder, by asking some questions of the candidates as to their former conduct in Parliament, of which questions I expected a specific answer, before I gave them my suffrage again. I was once more called to order by some of the ministerial sycophants; but, I added, that, unless I was permitted to put these questions, and received a satisfactory answer, I should feel it my duty to propose some other candidate.

The High Sheriff, *Hungerford Penruddock*, Esq., who, by the bye, had an eye himself to the future representation of the county, now interposed, and decided that as a respectable freeholder of Wilts Mr. *Hunt* had an undoubted right to put any questions which he might think proper to the candidates, before he proceeded to take the show of hands. Poor old Mr. Goddard mumbled out that he had represented the county for forty years, and had never before had any question put to him. A profound silence now pervaded the hall, and I proceeded as follows:—"Mr. Goddard, I wish to ascertain how you gave your vote in the House of Commons when the bill was brought in imposing a duty of TWO SHILLINGS PER BUSHEL upon malt? Wiltshire is a very considerable barley county, and many of your constituents are large barley growers, whose interests are seriously affected by this measure, which will take a very great sum of money annually out of their pockets. How did you give your vote upon that occasion?" Mr. Goddard hesitated, and stammered out, in a very feeble voice, "*I have been incapacitated by old age and ill-health from attending my duty in Parliament, for the LAST TWO YEARS. I have never been in the House during that time, and, I fear I shall never be able to attend again.*"

I next turned round and addressed Mr. Wyndham, the other candidate, as follows:—"Well, Mr. Wyndham, as your colleague was '*incapacitated*' by old age from attending at all in the House, how did you vote upon this important measure, which so materially affects the interests of your constituents?" Mr. Wyndham, placing his *finger* upon his right temple, as if to recollect himself, *pertly and affectedly* replied, "'Pon my honour, Mr. Hunt, I cannot charge my memory whether I was in the House or not upon that occasion_." Upon this, I addressed him, at considerable length, shewing how many acres of barley were grown in the county of Wilts, and what an enormous sum of money would be taken out of the pockets of his constituents; and I proved that this was a tax that affected them a great deal more than the income tax, about which there had very properly been so much said. I added, that, in this additional duty upon malt and beer, one brewer in the town of Devizes would pay more than the whole inhabitants of the town, amounting to a population of six or seven thousand persons, would pay by the income tax; I urged, that the members for all the other barley counties in the kingdom—Norfolk, Suffolk, Hertfordshire, Sussex, Hampshire, &c. had opposed the measure with all their power and influence; therefore, I wished to know what measures he had taken to oppose and resist the passing of it? But all the answer that I could get from our worthy and efficient Member of Parliament, Mr. Wyndham, was, "'Pon his honour he could not recollect, could not charge his memory whether he was in the House or not when this measure was discussed and passed!"

My efforts on this occasion were, however, in vain, I had no one to second my exertions and inquiries, and the independent electors of Wiltshire proceeded to the business of the day, and once more returned the above two *worthy, capable, and efficient* representatives, to watch over their rights and liberties, to be the guardians and trustees of their property, and to assist in making those laws which have brought the country to its present state. I warned them, I began to warn them, thus early; and I continued to warn them against such apathy, such dereliction of principle, as long as I remained amongst them in that county. My having dared to ask a question and to expose the two venerable representatives of the county in such a public manner was an offence not to be forgiven; and accordingly I was set down as a jacobin and leveller, and was looked upon with an evil eye by the cunning supporters of the system, the parsons, lawyers, and attorneys. I received the thanks of many of the freeholders privately; but the poor sycophants did not dare to shew their, approbation publicly. How many of them are there who, when they read this, will recollect the circumstance with shame, and feel a pang of remorse that they did not stand forward at the time to obey the dictates of their conscience.

We will now return to the dissolution of the Parliament in 1806. On that occasion I made one more effort to rouse my brother freeholders of the county into a sense of their political rights. In order to stimulate them to the exercise of those rights, I called upon them in a public address, which I sent to be inserted in the Salisbury and Winchester Journal; and, taking care that there should be no pretence for refusing it, I sent the money to pay for it as an advertisement; but the time-serving proprietors of that paper refused to insert it in the columns of their Journal; I therefore had it printed and published in numerous handbills, which I caused to be pretty generally circulated. It also obtained admission into

one of the Bath newspapers, and Mr. Cobbett, to whom I sent one of the bills, gave it a place in his Political Register. It will be impossible for me, in these Memoirs, to give all the public documents of this sort which I have sent forth to warn my fellow-countrymen of their danger, and to exhort them to stand up to maintain and defend their rights and liberties; but I will insert this, my first printed address, as I find it in the tenth volume of Cobbett's Political Register, published in November, 1806; and it will shew that I have always been consistent in my public conduct, and always maintained the same independent principles from that time to this.

"Mr. Hunt's Address to the independent Freeholders of the County of Wilts.

"GENTLEMEN, I flatter myself that a few lines addressed to you by a brother freeholder, (one who has ever lived among you, and has ever been most sincerely devoted to the liberty and independence of the county,) will not, at this critical period, be deemed obtrusive, nor wholly unworthy of your serious consideration.

"Considering, with many of the best disposed characters in the kingdom, that the fate of this country will be in a great measure decided by the approaching election, I think it highly important, that every freeholder should be exhorted to think and act for himself on this occasion. Let every man remember, that by bartering his liberty at this awful period, he may speedily endanger the very existence of his country. If you duly reflect on the present situation of the Prussians, and every other power on the Continent that are opposed to our powerful enemy, I think you will agree with me that this moment is the most awful in the history of Europe. Old England, our country, is not yet subdued; let us hope that she never will; but, it is by every thinking man confessed to be in a very perilous situation—in such a situation that it cannot possibly much longer support its independence, without the extraordinary sacrifices and exertions of the people. Therefore, it behoves you, my brother freeholders of this county, at this moment in particular, and let me conjure you, as the greatest boon you can bestow on your country 'diligently and impartially to inquire whether all the evils we endure, and all the dangers that threaten us, are not to be ascribed to the folly and the baseness of those who have so shamefully abused their privilege of choosing Members of Parliament.' The dangers I allude to will (I fear) be increased by every post we receive from the Continent; the evils are a system of taxation, which must be felt by us all (to say the least of it) to have trebled the paupers of this county, within the last twenty years. No country is willing to attribute its ruin to its own baseness, but if you tamely submit to have a man thrust down your throats, to be a representative for this county, by the Beckhampton or the Deptford Club, or any other party of men whatever, without your considering whether he be a proper independent character, and capable of executing such an important trust, at this eventful period; if you basely and tamely submit to this worst of degradation—whether it be from indolence, or whether it be from the worst of all human dependence, the fear of offending Mr. Long or Mr. Short—you will be a disgrace to your country, and be curst by your posterity for your pusillanimous surrender of those liberties and just rights that were so gloriously secured to you by your forefathers. I beseech you, let no man deceive himself; if he act in this manner, I am persuaded that he may live to be convinced that he has, by losing this opportunity, been in a great degree instrumental in his country's ruin.—Is there a man among you so insensible as not to feel the weight of the present taxes, and yet so hardened as to go to the hustings and give his vote to a mere cypher:—to a man from whom he has not the least reason to expect any thing but a tame acquiescence in the measures of any one who happens to be the minister of the day! The man who is now looked out to be our new representative, his very best friends do not speak of any qualification that he possesses, to make him worthy of that honourable situation; they only tell us of his uncle's long purse! therefore, in good truth, we may as well be represented by his uncle's old three-corner'd hat. And as for the other member, even in his youthful days he was no better in the House of Commons than an old woman. Is there no honourable and independent man to be found in the county of Wilts, capable of sustaining such a charge? I, myself, have no doubt but there are many; but it is that cursed long purse, and an idea that the freeholders of this county will never exert themselves for their independence, that deter many from stepping forward that would do honour to the trust reposed in them. There are a number of freeholders in this county that are independent, if they would for one moment think themselves so. Then let us say we will have a man of our own choosing, as free of expense to himself as we would wish him to be honest and true to the confidence reposed in him. But if you let this present opportunity slip, I, for one, will never despair; I shall look on you with feelings of contempt and indignation; I shall wait patiently for the day when we shall be enabled to exert ourselves effectually for the preservation of those just rights and liberties that are the bulwarks of our glorious and blessed Constitution.

I am, Gentlemen, with great respect,
Your obedient humble servant,
"H. HUNT."

"Chisenbury House,
Oct. 30th., 1806."

This appeal to the freeholders of Wilts gave great umbrage to the numerous friends of Mr. LONG, or rather to the whole of the friends of the Pitt system, which evidently included Whigs as well as Tories; but it produced no beneficial effect upon the senseless and inanimate freeholders of the county of Wilts. I was considered a very impudent fellow for my pains, though the almost universal whisper amongst the freeholders was, "what Mr. Hunt says is true enough, but what use is it?" The election took place, and Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Long were chosen without any opposition. The Whig ministry, or, ironically speaking, "All the Talents," were discarded in the Spring of 1807. Lord Eldon took the seals of office, and, to the astonishment of the whole nation, Mr. Perceval was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the whole gang of Pitt's underlings came into place; and the Ministry was consequently composed of Castlereagh, Canning, Liverpool, the Roses and Longs; while, to crown the whole, Sir Vicary Gibbs was appointed Attorney General. As soon as the new Ministers were firmly seated in the saddle and settled in their places, they caused the Parliament to be once more dissolved.

During the last election, the people of Westminster, in consequence of the exertions of Mr. Paull and the able friends by whom he was surrounded, had made such a rapid progress in political knowledge, that they were quite prepared to break the trammels in which they had hitherto been bound by the two political factions of *Ins* and *Outs*, nicknamed Whigs and Tories. This change was brought about by the strenuous personal efforts of Mr. Cobbett, and by the excellent, clear, patriotic, and convincing addresses which he weekly published in his Political Register, seconded by the assistance of some very intelligent, public spirited men, amongst which number was a very worthy young friend of Liberty, Mr. ABRAHAM HEWLINGS, and the famous Mr. POWELL, the attorney, who lately cut such a conspicuous figure in the character of attorney for the prosecution of the Bill of Pains and Penalties against the Queen. By these persons the spirit of the electors of Westminster appeared to be roused to a proper sense of the power which they possessed, to return their own members in spite of the intrigues of the two factions.

Mr. Paull had become very popular by the exertions which he had¹ made to bring the Marquis Wellesley's conduct in India before the public, by an impeachment; and it was pretty generally believed that he would come in for Westminster at the head of the poll. The moment that the Parliament was dissolved, he and his friends in Westminster were upon the alert, and a meeting was called at the Crown and Anchor, to consult upon the best means of securing his return, which was doubted by no one; however, the cursed bane of all political liberty, *jealousy* interposed. Sir F. Burdett and Mr. Paull had been upon the most intimate terms, and the Baronet had strained every nerve to promote and secure the return of Mr. Paull for Westminster; and if he could have secured the return of that gentleman by *his own* interest and popularity, Mr. Paull would have been returned; but the misfortune was, that *Mr. Paull* had himself become very popular, deservedly popular, sufficiently so, indeed, to have secured his seat by his own exertions, if Sir Francis Burdett had stood neuter. But Mr. Paull had no wish of this sort; he by no means desired to push himself above Sir Francis Burdett in the scale of political popularity; neither, on the other hand, was he quite prepared to act as the tool and puppet of Sir Francis Burdett.

Mr. Paull not having the slightest idea of the working of the green-eyed monster, jealousy, in the Baronet's breast, a dinner meeting of Mr. Paull's friends was advertised for the next day, at the Crown and Anchor, *Sir Francis Burdett* in the chair. The time arrived, the party assembled, but Sir Francis Burdett did not appear; a circumstance which threw a damp upon the meeting. Mr. Jones Burdett, however, attended, and read a letter from his brother, Sir Francis, addressed to the meeting, censuring in strong language the use that, without his consent, had been made of his name, and reflecting upon Mr. Paull. This caused a very unpleasant sensation in the meeting, and an elucidation of the business was demanded by some of the party. It appeared that Mr. Paull and his friends had announced the name of Sir Francis to be in the chair, as they had frequently done on a former occasion, without previously consulting the Baronet. Following the generous and undisguised impulse of his heart, and acting upon the principle of "do as you would be done unto;" Mr. Paull had used the Baronet's name, under the firm conviction that his friend Sir Francis would hurry to his post at a moment's notice to assist him, as he, Mr. Paull, would have done, at any hour of the day or night, to have served Sir Francis. But Mr. Paull was deceived; and some of his friends, who knew Sir F. Burdett better than he did, saw that the apple of discord had been thrown down by the implacable fiend *jealousy*, they anticipated what would follow, and they retired from the contest in disgust.

Mr. Paull, having had such a gross insult offered to him by a man whom he had hitherto esteemed his friend, and being wounded at such a moment in the most sensitive part, called upon Sir Francis Burdett for an explanation; and this being refused, he demanded satisfaction in the field, as a dernier resort, when he found that no terms of conciliation were likely to be acceded to by the Baronet. They met, and on the first fire both were wounded. Sir Francis Burdett received his antagonist's ball in his thigh, and

Mr. Paull had the top of his shin bone shot away. They were both severely wounded. This caused a great sensation, not only throughout the metropolis but also throughout the kingdom. The public press, which was hostile to both the parties, made the worst of the affair; but they leaned to the Baronet, and affected to pity him, as having been stung by a viper of his own fostering. The truth was, that the press upon this occasion, as upon all others, had a leaning to the Aristocracy, and Sir Francis Burdett was no mean part of the Aristocracy. He was an old Baronet, with very large landed property, although he was supposed to have spent nearly a hundred thousand pounds, *four years of his income*, in his contests for the county of Middlesex. Sir Francis Burdett had besides endeared himself to the friends of Liberty all over the kingdom, by his public spirited exertions in and out of Parliament; and no man was a more warm and zealous admirer of the Baronet than I was. Like the great majority of his friends, I was enraged with Mr. Paull, and condemned his hasty, and, as I considered it, ungrateful attack upon the life of his patron, Sir Francis. This feeling was propagated with great assiduity by that part of the public press which was called liberal; and, taking advantage of this feeling, together with the pity excited by the severe and dangerous wound he was supposed to have received, the friends of the Baronet immediately came to a determination to propose him as a candidate for Westminster. Mr. Clayton Jennings, a barrister, took the lead, and during the contest appeared every day on the hustings as the Baronet's "*locum tenens*." However, few, if any of those who assembled as a Committee, were electors, and it was with the greatest difficulty that they could get the promise of two householders, to propose and second the nomination of Sir Francis Burdett. The great fear was, that the proposer and seconder would make themselves liable for the expenses of the hustings; and, as they had no reliance on the Baronet to indemnify them, this difficulty increased almost up to the hour appointed for the nomination. At length a Mr. GLOSSOP, a tallow-chandler, volunteered to propose the Baronet, if any one would second him; which, after a great deal of persuasion, one ADAMS, a currier and leather-dresser in Drury-lane, agreed to do. But, such was the dread of the expense, and so little acquainted was this person with the rights and duty of an elector, that, when it came to the pinch, as I am credibly informed, *he actually run from his agreement, and refused to do it*; so that the Baronet, when proposed, would have been left without a seconder, had not a young man, of the name of COWLAM, stepped forward and performed the office. I have heard poor COWLAM laugh most heartily at the timidity and meanness of this ADAMS, who, when the danger was over, claimed the merit of having seconded the Baronet at the nomination; which claim he has repeated ever since, and, on the merit of this he bravely swaggers and struts about at all the Rump dinners, he being one of the most conspicuous and notorious members of that August body. COWLAM, who was much too honest and sincere a lover of liberty to remain long either a dupe or a tool of this gang, let me into almost all the *intrigues, tricks, and gambols* of the junta of Westminster patriots, which I shall expose and lay bare to public view, as I proceed with my Memoirs.

The public mind was very much agitated by the duel of Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Paull, but the newspaper editors all appeared to throw the blame upon the latter; and even those who at the former election had warmly supported him, with very few exceptions, abandoned him. The cry was raised against him, and he was basely deserted by those who, even at the risk of their lives, ought to have supported him. In justice to a much lamented deceased individual, the late *Abraham Hewlings, Esq.*, I must state that *he* stood firmly and honestly by his friend Paull, to the last moment; but the cry was for Burdett, and his friends gathered those laurels which poor Paull had so deservedly won at the former election. If Sir F. Burdett had only stood neuter, nothing could have prevented the return of Mr. Paull; but with the support of Sir F. Burdett, similar to what he had received from him at the former contest, his election would have been sure.

The friends of the Baronet carried his election with a high hand, and he was returned at the head of the poll, by an immense majority; there having been polled for him 5,134 electors. Lord Cochrane polled 3,708; so that Sir Francis had a majority of 1,426 votes above Lord Cochrane, the other successful candidate; Mr. Sheridan polled only 2,615, so that the votes of Sir Francis nearly doubled those of Mr. Sheridan, the late member; Mr. Paull polled no more than 269 votes.

The friends of freedom, throughout the whole country, were delighted with the success of Sir Francis and Lord Cochrane; or rather with the triumph of the electors of Westminster, in having thus rescued the representation of their city out of the hands of the two great factions of the country, which had always divided the representation of that city between them; the Whigs and Tories having each returned a member. This was, therefore, considered as a great triumph for the friends of reform; for neither Sir F. Burdett nor Lord Cochrane was considered as being a Whig or a Tory, but as a friend to the liberties of the people. Lord Cochrane was certainly an officer of his Majesty's navy, but he had on various occasions, during the last Parliament, expressed himself as a friend to an inquiry into the abuses of Government, and particularly into the abuses of the navy, with which he was intimately acquainted, and to expose which he had proved himself to be both able and willing. To some of the electors of Westminster he had likewise pledged himself to support the cause of Reform in the House of Commons. He was consequently considered a more eligible member for the electors of Westminster

than the brilliant Mr. Sheridan; and he was accordingly elected with Sir F. Burdett.

I was at this time residing in Belle Vue, at Clifton, winding up the brewing concern, in which I had unfortunately embarked. I had returned home out of Wiltshire, late at night, and had lain longer in bed than usual, when the servant came to my room, and informed me that an opposition was anticipated for the election at the city of Bristol, as a new candidate had offered. This new candidate was Sir John Jarvis, an Irishman, who was the Commander of the Bristol Rifle Corps of Volunteers. I knew something of the politics of Bristol, but I could not fathom the drift of this opposition, as I could not make out what claim Sir John Jarvis had to be a more popular character than the late members, Colonel Baillie and Mr. Bragge Bathurst. To be sure Mr. Bathurst was a ministerial man, a brother-in-law of the Addingtons, and therefore very unpopular; but as Sir John Jarvis was also a ministerial man, there appeared something mysterious in the business. However, the servant informed me that the populace were drawing him round the city in his carriage, and that he was evidently the popular candidate. After all, it ought to be no great wonder that any one should have been popular that was opposed to Mr. Bragge Bathurst.

On hearing this intelligence I put on my clothes, and having taken a hasty breakfast, I proceeded towards Bristol, determined to be an eye-witness of the proceedings of the election. When I got upon the Exchange all was confusion, Sir John Jarvis was addressing the people in an incoherent, unintelligible speech, in which, however, he professed great patriotism, and vowed that he would oppose Mr. Bathurst to the last moment, and keep the poll open as long as there was a freeman unpolled. He then alighted from his carriage, and retired into the large room in the Bush tavern, where he was followed by a great number of the electors, and others; and amongst that number I made one. He was attended by a noisy blustering person, who I found was an attorney, of the name of Cornish, who also was professing what he would do, and how he would support his friend Sir John Jarvis. Hundreds of freemen pressed forward, and offered their copies of their freedom, as an earnest that they would voluntarily give him their votes; but it struck me that all was talk, and no one appeared to take any efficient steps to promote or secure the election of Sir John Jarvis, who himself appeared to be all bluster, and to be acting without the least system or arrangement, calculated to secure even the first requisites to commence an election.

I now took the liberty to ask the candidate whether he was prepared with any one to propose and second his nomination; to which he gave me a vague and unmeaning answer, apparently as if he did not understand what I meant by a person to propose and second him. I then appealed to Mr. Cornish, the worthy attorney, who answered me in a similar manner; and he evidently appeared not to be in the secret any more than myself. I next addressed the multitude, to inquire which of them was prepared to propose Sir John Jarvis, and which to second the proposition? All said they were ready to *pow!* for Sir John, but no one was engaged to perform the necessary part of the ceremony to which I had alluded, and it likewise seemed very plain that neither Sir John nor his attorney took any pains to secure any one to do this. At this critical moment intimation was given, that the Sheriffs were proceeding with the other Candidates to the Guildhall, to commence the election. Sir John and his agent were about to move very deliberately towards the scene of action, when I addressed him as follows:—"I see that you are either unaware of the forms to be observed, or you are unprepared, Sir John. If, however, when it comes to the proper time, no one else proposes you, I will: though I am no freeman of Bristol, yet I will undertake to do this, as it will give your friends an opportunity of coming forward, and it will prevent the Sheriffs from hastily closing the election, which they are very likely to do if you are not prepared with some friends to propose and second your nomination." He answered, as we went along together, "Very well, Sir." In this way we proceeded to, and entered, the Guildhall, and mounted the hustings together. The usual proclamation being read by the Under-Sheriff, an old mumbling fellow, of the name of Palmer, some one proposed Colonel Baillie, the late member, as a fit and proper person to represent the city again. Colonel Baillie was a Whig member, and Colonel of the Bristol Volunteers, being a Whig, or *Low-party-man*, as they called him. This proposition was received with very general cheers and approbation. The next person proposed was Mr. Bragge Bathurst. He being a ministerial man, the speaker was repeatedly interrupted with loud shouts of disapprobation, which continued without intermission till the conclusion of the speeches of those who proposed and seconded him. The Sheriffs were now about to proclaim these two candidates duly elected. There stood Sir John, looking as wild as a newly taken Irishman, fresh from the bogs of that country; and there stood the electors, bawling *Sir John Jarvis for ever!* while the Sheriff was very deliberately proceeding to declare the proposed candidates duly elected. As I had narrowly watched their motions, I now stepped forward, and addressed the electors in at least an animated speech, in which I proposed Sir John Jarvis as the most eligible person to represent them in Parliament. During the time that I was thus addressing them, the most dinning uproar arose. I was loudly and enthusiastically applauded by the multitude, the great body of the electors; and as loudly and earnestly opposed and hooted by the well-dressed rabble upon the hustings and its vicinity, consisting of the whole of the Corporation, the Clergy, the Attorneys, and their myrmidons; but I persisted and delivered some wholesome truths as to the state of thralldom in

which the electors had hitherto been bound and held by the two factions of Whigs and Tories, who had always in Bristol divided the representation and the loaves and fishes between them, leaving the electors nothing but the empty name of freemen. The people were in an ecstasy of joy to hear this language, which so completely corresponded with their feelings, which was so very different from that which they had been accustomed to hear from the candidates of the contending factions, and which language of truth also enraged the agents of those factions almost to a state of madness. The violence and threats of those despicable agents were open and undisguised, and exceeded all bounds; nay, some of them actually proceeded to personal violence, and began to lay hands upon me, to pull me down. As, however, I was no chicken, I easily repelled those who ventured too near, and threatened them, if they did not keep at a distance, that I would call in the aid of those who would soon make a clearance of the hustings, if they were disposed to try their hands at an experiment of that sort. The people immediately took the hint, and rushed forward to support me, and to punish those who had assailed me; but I told them there was then no occasion for their interference, as the gentry were peaceable.

I proceeded with my haranguing, and those who were not in the secret actually began to be alarmed, for fear there should be a contested election, which they had by no means expected. I eulogised Sir John Jarvis, cried his patriotic virtues up to the skies, and descanted upon his talent, his resolution, and his invincible love of religious and civil liberty. I saw that those around me were astonished at my language, and, what was rather surprising to me, I perceived that Sir John looked as much astonished as any of my hearers; and the reader will also be astonished when I inform him, that I had never seen Sir John Jarvis before in my life, to speak to him, and in fact that I knew nothing about him. I only spoke of him that which my imagination suggested to me an honest candidate ought to be; and, what is more extraordinary, as I was a stranger in Bristol, so the people were strangers to me, for I saw scarcely a single person amongst the whole assemblage whom I could call by name. I recollect there was one old Alderman, of the name of Bengough, who was almost frantic during my speech, and some of his friends were obliged to hold him down by mere force. The cry was, who is he? What is his name? Is he a freeman or a freeholder of the county? At the intervals when the multitude gained silence for me, by overwhelming and drowning the clamour of my opponents with their shouts of hear him! he shall be heard!! Bravo, Bravo!!! &c. I went on with my speech. The Right Honourable Bragge Bathurst, the White Lion, or Ministerial Candidate, stood near me in great agony, which I did not fail to heighten, by giving him a well-merited castigation for his time-serving devotion to the Ministers, his never-failing vote for war, and for every tax which was proposed to be laid upon the people. I urged the absolute necessity of the Electors of Bristol returning a member the exact reverse of Mr. Bragge, which I described Sir John to be. But these compliments to the popular Candidate, appeared to be received by no one less graciously than by Sir John himself; and instead of his giving me, by nods or gestures of assent, any encouragement to pursue my theme when I met his eye, which at first I frequently sought, I received the most chilling frowns and discouraging shakes of the head. Though I had no doubt now but I had *mistaken my man*, I, nevertheless, concluded by proposing him as a Candidate to represent the city of Bristol in the ensuing Parliament which proposition was received by nine distinct and tremendous cheers.

Silence being restored, the Sheriff demanded, in a very respectful tone, if I was either a freeman or a freeholder? I replied that I was a stranger in Bristol, I was neither as yet; but that I hoped soon to become both. This caused immense clamour, and Alderman Bengough and his supporters, some of the well-dressed rabble of the city of Bristol, roared out lustily, "turn him out, turn him out." My friends, however, or rather supporters, who were as to numbers and physical strength more than twenty to one, reiterated, "touch him if you dare!" I contended that it was not at all necessary for a Candidate to be proposed either by a freeman or a freeholder; that Sir John was entitled to offer himself without any such formality, and that if one man polled for him that made him a legal Candidate; and I urged him to do so, but he stood mute and shuffled from the point. Now, for the first time, I began to discover that it was all a hoax, and that the patriotic Irishman was nothing more nor less than a scape-goat, a mere tool in the hands of the White Lion club, or ministerial faction; a mere scarecrow, whom they had set up to deter any other person from offering himself, or rather to prevent the freemen from seeking another Candidate; and it must be confessed that their plan succeeded to a miracle. In the midst of this squabbling the Sheriffs very coolly declared that Colonel Baillie and the Right Honourable Bragge Bathurst were duly elected, without any opposition, and the return was made accordingly.

I was at that time a complete novice in electioneering matters, neither had I the least idea of offering myself, or indeed any ambition to be a Member of Parliament. I was, however, so completely disgusted with the conduct of the Sheriff, the factions, and their tool, Sir John Jarvis, that I addressed the enraged multitude, who felt that they had been cheated and tricked out of an election, and I promised them that, whenever there was another vacancy or a dissolution of Parliament, I would pledge myself to come forward as a Candidate, or bring some independent person, who would stand a contest for the representation of their city. The people were excessively indignant at the treatment which they had received, and they hooted, hallooed, and even pelted Mr. Bragge and his partizans out of the Hall, and

with considerable difficulty the latter reached the White Lion, where a gaudy gilded car was provided, as usual, in which the Candidate was to be chaired. I left the scene in disgust, and returned to my house at Clifton. Before, however, I had taken half my dinner, which was waiting for me when I reached home, a messenger arrived, either a Mayor's or Sheriff's officer, to inform me that the populace had hurled Mr. Bragge Bathurst out of his car, and that he had escaped with great difficulty into a house, which the mob were pulling down, and had nearly demolished; and that Mr. Bragge's life would certainly be sacrificed if I did not come down to Bristol and save it, by interfering with the populace to spare him.

The event which occasioned me to be called back to Bristol was not wholly unexpected; for when I left the Guildhall I had overheard some of those who appeared to take the lead, and to have influence over the populace, solemnly declare their determination to have an election, even if it were at the expense of the life of Mr. Bathurst, against whom they vowed vengeance in such a tone and manner that I thought it proper to warn his friends; and, accordingly, before I left the town, I penetrated on horseback through the crowd in Broad-street, and with considerable pains and risk gained access to the White Lion, amidst the conflicts of the populace and the constables, or, more correctly speaking, bludgeon-men, employed by the White Lion club. The blood was streaming from their broken pates, and amongst the number of the wounded Mr. Peter Clisshold, the attorney, stood conspicuous, with his head laid open, his skull bare, and the blood flowing in streams down upon the pavement, as he stood under the archway of the White Lion gate. (He will recollect it if he should read this.) I desired to see some of the Committee, who came to me immediately. I communicated to them what I had overheard, and I strongly recommended, on the score of policy, that they should not attempt to chair their friend Mr. Bathurst, for, if they did, it was my decided opinion that some serious mischief would happen. They, however, informed me that they had determined at all hazards to have Mr. Bathurst chaired immediately; and, I shall never forget the exulting manner in which Mr. Clisshold declared that they had five hundred bludgeon-men sworn in as constables, and, as they would act in concert and in a body, they were more than a match for five thousand of the mob. I replied that I had done my duty, in communicating that which came accidentally to my knowledge, and if they had not prudence enough to benefit by the information, it was their business and not mine. I then retired through the immense multitude, mounted on my beautiful grey horse, Model, the populace making way for and cheering me as I passed. As I have before stated, I no sooner arrived at home, and was seated at my dinner, than a message was brought, requesting my interference with the populace, who were demolishing the house into which Mr. Bragge Bathurst had retreated, after he had been handled so unceremoniously by the enraged people. If I had done by them as I know they would have done by me, I should have taken my dinner very quietly, and left the fury of the multitude to be quelled by those who had created it. But, actuated by the sublime precept, "do as you would that others should do unto you," I ordered my horse to be instantly re-saddled and brought to the door; and having mounted him I was in High-street, the scene of action, in a few minutes. There I found the people assembled, in immense numbers. Having broken in the windows and window frames of the house in which the hapless member, Mr. Bathurst, had concealed himself, they only waited for a cessation of throwing brick-bats and stones to rush into the house; which, if they had once done, his forfeited life would have been the inevitable price of the temerity of his friends.

The moment I galloped up there was a partial suspension of hostilities, and the multitude received me with three cheers. No time was to be lost; one moment's indecision would have been the death-signal of the Right Honourable Bragge Bathurst. I did not hesitate an instant; but, taking off my hat, I addressed them in a tone of expostulation, condemning their folly; and I then declared that I had a measure of much greater importance to communicate to them than that of wreaking their vengeance upon Mr. Bathurst, and if they would follow me, I would instantly, upon reaching Brandon Hill, communicate it to them. This was said by me with so much confidence, that they instantly assented to my proposition by three cheers. "Come, follow me, then, my Lads," I firmly rejoined, as I wheeled my horse round, and the whole crowd, consisting of many thousands, instantly began to move after me up High-street, down Clare-street, over the draw-bridge, through College Green, and upon Brandon Hill, over the high gate of which I leaped my horse. As soon as I got upon the center of the gravel walk that leads across the hill, I halted and began to address them. My only object was, to draw them from the victim of their intended vengeance. But having, by a bold and decisive effort, effected this purpose, I had now a painful and rather a dangerous duty to perform, that of satisfying the enraged multitude that I had not duped them. I therefore boldly censured their hasty and indiscreet conduct, in proceeding to such a violent measure as that of seeking the life of one who was merely the agent of a corrupt system. This was received with partial murmurs; but I, nevertheless, continued successfully to combat the indiscreet violence of the most sanguine, and, I soon found that, by dint of reason and argument, I had prevailed upon the great majority to agree with me. I then took occasion to dilate upon the consequences that must have followed the taking the life of a fellow creature, without the intervention of judge or jury. I was instantly answered, that their opponents had *taken the lives of a great many*, without judge or jury, some years before, when the Herefordshire militia, with Lord Bateman as their Colonel, had fired upon

the inhabitants during the disturbances on Bristol bridge. I was obliged to admit the truth of this, and urge the folly of following so bad and murderous an example. I then informed them who I was, and told them that I would pledge myself to come forward, on the very next election, and give those who had votes an opportunity of exercising their franchises for a Candidate who would not betray and desert them, as Sir John Jarvis had that day done. This proposition was received with cheers. I also told them I would immediately form some plan, to enable the freemen to take up their freedom, by means of a voluntary weekly subscription amongst themselves; which plan should be carried into execution without delay. And as they had done me the kindness of patiently listening to, and acting upon, my recommendation to give up the desperate project which they had formed, I begged to offer them a drink of my genuine beer, not as a bribe, but as an earnest of my intention to carry my promise into execution.

Pointing now to my brewery at Jacob's Well, at the bottom of the hill, I said, once more, with confidence, "follow me, my Lads!" Till this time I was not even known by name to one in twenty of the multitude. This proposition was received with applause, and they followed me to the door of my brewery, where I ordered three hogsheads of strong beer to be rolled out and divided amongst them. This, together with my promise of future attention to their rights of election, restored them to good humor; and, upon my addressing them again, they promised to return to their homes as soon as they had finished their beer, which they did, almost to a man, without even the slightest disturbance taking place afterwards that night. I had no sooner drawn the people from the house in which Mr. Bathurst was concealed, than he took the opportunity of escaping out of the city, in a return post-chaise, to Bath. Thus did I save the life of a man whose partizans would have put me to death, without the slightest remorse, if they had had it in their power. Many liberal-minded persons, of all parties, applauded my conduct and presence of mind; but I was informed that one of the leaders of the White Lion club said, when he was told of the means that I had used to draw the people from their premeditated victim, that he only wished the mob had broken into my cellar, and turned into the streets all my beer, amounting at that time nearly to three thousand barrels; and this was the only thanks I ever received from any of the faction, from that day to this. As for Mr. Bathurst, he never had the manliness nor the candour to acknowledge the service in any way. But the Right Honourable Gentleman possibly may have thought of the circumstance when he was sitting as one of the Privy Council, who advised the thanks that were given, in the name of the King, to the Manchester Yeomanry and Magistrates! What must have been the feelings of this Right Honourable Privy Councillor when, as one of that immaculate body, he advised the prosecution against me for attending the Manchester meeting; and advised it, that a sort of blind might be obtained for the deeds that had been committed by the military bravoës on that day! What must have been the feelings of this gentleman, if the recollection that I had saved his life came across his mind, at the time when in all probability he was one of the same Cabinet who *advised* the *length* of the *imprisonment* that the Judges of the Court of King's Bench should impose upon me! Ah, Mr. Bragge Bathurst! what will be your feelings when you read this? When your life was in jeopardy, the power of saving that life was accidentally placed in my hands; I hesitated not to save that life, at the imminent risk of my own; and how grateful has been the return! But, Mr. Bathurst, I am a million times happier a man in my dungeon than you are in a palace. It was reserved for Mr. Bragge Bathurst, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, to reward *Parson Hay* for his deeds on the 16th of August 1819, at Manchester; to reward him with the living of Rochdale, with, it is said, *two thousand five hundred pounds a year!* But I am a much happier man in my dungeon than Parson Hay, or his relation, Mr. Bragge Bathurst, is; though the one is the Rector of Rochdale, and the other Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, with all its revenue and patronage.

The news soon after this reached Bristol, that Sir Francis Burdett had been returned at the head of the poll for Westminster, by a large majority. This gave new life and spirits to the friends of liberty all over the kingdom, and no one participated more warmly than I did in the general joy which this news created, for I was one of the Baronet's most enthusiastic admirers. I immediately proposed a public dinner in Bristol, to celebrate the joyful event; but I could get no one to join me. There were several who said that if the dinner took place they would attend it, but they would not take upon themselves any of the responsibility of ordering such a dinner, nor of the risk and expense attending the getting of it up. There was, for one, a Mr. Lee, a surgeon, who was very ready to join in the dinner to commemorate the Westminster victory, but he shrank from bearing any part of the onus of setting it on foot, either in purse or in person. But, having once proposed a measure, I was not to be foiled in that way. I therefore, after some considerable difficulty in finding any one to take the order for a dinner for such a purpose, took the whole expense and responsibility upon myself, by ordering dinner for a hundred persons, at the large room in the Trout Tavern, Stokes' Croft.

The dinner was now advertised and placarded, myself to be in the chair. In the mean time, every effort was used to run down the dinner, and to intimidate persons from attending it; and on the morning of the day that was appointed for our meeting, the walls of the city were placarded with the following *notice*, from authority—"DANGER to be apprehended from the proposed dinner to be held

this day at the Trout Tavern," &c. &c. The word DANGER was printed in letters six inches long. The soldiers were ordered to be upon duty, and every species of threat and intimidation was resorted to, in order to deter people from attending the much-dreaded dinner. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, a hundred persons sat down together, not ten of whom had ever seen each other's faces before. I took the head of the principal table, and Mr. Lee that of the other. We spent a most gratifying day, in the greatest harmony, and parted with the same good humor; every one being pleased with his entertainment, which had proved "the feast of reason and the flow of soul;" in the fullest sense of that phrase. The authorities used every laudable endeavour to make a disturbance, and create that danger which they pretended to apprehend; and the time-serving despicable editors of the Bristol Newspapers joined in the cry. Nay, some of them bellowed aloud and declared that this dinner meeting, to celebrate the triumph of the electors of Westminster over the two corrupt factions, the Whigs and Tories, was the forerunner of a revolution; and they insinuated that I, who was the promoter of this dinner, was the instigator of the riots which occurred on the day of the election, and that the fellows who met to dine were the very same who assembled and threatened the life of their amiable and patriotic member, Mr. Bragge Bathurst.

These falsehoods did not, however, either prevent or disturb our dinner. The infamous hand-bill did indeed produce what its manufacturers called a mob, for the people assembled in the street, opposite the Trout Tavern, in great numbers: but upon their being addressed by me, and cautioned not to suffer themselves to be caught in the trap laid for them by their enemies, but to retire peaceably to their homes, they gave us three cheers and dispersed immediately. It was very fortunate that they did so, for it was ascertained that the tender-hearted authorities were so excessively anxious to preserve the peace which they had sworn to keep, that they had called out the military, in order to disperse, at the point of the bayonet, that multitude which they had themselves collected together by their ridiculous and evil-disposed hand-bill of "Danger, &c." My timely advice and admonition to the people had, however, deprived them of their prey, and thus the sacrifice of human blood was prevented; for when the troops marched by, with bayonets fixed, there were not ten persons more than usual in the streets. This was a great disappointment to those who had got up the precious hand-bill of "Danger to be apprehended;" and, because I had the prudence to foresee and to frustrate this brutal and sanguinary scheme of the authorities, I was set down as a most dangerous fellow, and an enemy to the Government.

I might now, in fact, be considered to have fairly entered the field of politics; for I was completely identified with this meeting and dinner, at which we passed several spirited resolutions, approving the conduct of the electors of Westminster, and strongly urging the freemen of Bristol to follow their example. Votes of thanks were passed to Joseph Clayton Jennings, Esq., and to the Westminster Committee, and a congratulatory address was voted to Sir Francis Burdett, which I, as chairman of the meeting, was desired to communicate to him. This I did immediately, which, for the first time, gave me an opportunity of opening a correspondence with the Baronet. The votes and resolutions, as well as the toasts drunk, and the speeches delivered, were published; I forget now whether by Mr. Lee or myself, but I rather think by him, as he had been in the habit of publishing a great deal before on the local politics of Bristol.

I received a very polite answer from Sir Francis Burdett, who professed to be highly flattered with the compliment we had paid him at Bristol. I likewise received an answer from Mr. Jennings, and the chairman of the Westminster Committee, expressing great pleasure at this mark of the union of sentiment existing between the people of Bristol and Westminster. On the other hand, I sent copies of our proceedings to Mr. Cobbett, who lived at that time at Botley, expressing a wish, if he approved of them, that he would insert them in his Political Register; he, however, neither inserted them nor gave me any answer, but, as it since appears, he wrote the famous letter to his friend Wright, who was a sort of hanger-on at the Westminster committee, which letter, at the last general election for Westminster, was read upon the hustings by one Cleary, an attorney's clerk, or rather a pettyfogging writer to an attorney in Dublin, who had left his native country for the same cause that had prompted many others of his countrymen to leave it before him. This person was hired by the committee of Sir Francis Burdett to do this dirty office, to shew that Mr. Cobbett entertained a different opinion of me in the year 1808, before he knew me, from that which he entertained of me in the year 1818, after he had known me and had acted with me for so many years.

What induced Mr. Cobbett to write this letter, or what were his motives, are best known to himself. But, the contents of the letter were as false, as the stile and language were gross, and the sentiments it contained illiberal and unmanly. Mr. Cobbett had at that time spoken to me but once; and as I was never in the habit of flattering any one, or disguising my opinions, I can easily conceive that he had, from this first interview, formed personally as unfavourable an opinion of me as I had of him. But he knew nothing of me or my connections. All that he could have known of me was, that I was a zealous advocate of that cause which he then professed to espouse. Therefore, what were his motives for

writing this letter must remain with himself. However, Mr. Jennings, and the gentlemen who then composed the Westminster committee, treated his advice with that contempt which such a malignant and unmanly act deserved; for they opened a communication with me immediately. As to the letter, however, it was of such a nature, that they thought it advisable to lay it by, to be produced upon some future occasion, and that occasion was the one which I have named. Now I must intreat the reader to give me credit when I say, that I never suffered the production of this letter to operate upon me, so as to shake the private friendship I had with Mr. Cobbett. What he wrote of me, or whatever opinion he entertained of me, ten years back, and previously to his knowing any thing of me, however unjust that opinion might have been, however coarsely or illiberally that opinion might have been expressed, and however basely that circumstance might, after a lapse of ten or eleven years, have been used by a contemptible hired agent of Sir Francis Burdett, upon the public hustings at an election, I never suffered it for one moment to have the slightest influence upon my public or private conduct towards Mr. Cobbett. But what I was grieved and hurt at, was, that Mr. Cobbett should have made me his dupe, by writing home to me from America, to assure me, that the letter read by Cleary upon the hustings at Westminster was a *forgery*; and not only sending me a copy of the New York paper, wherein he had declared this letter to be a forgery, but *authorizing* ME, nay, *urging* ME to pronounce it to be a forgery, which, *upon the faith of his word*, I did, at a meeting at the Crown and Anchor, where Cleary produced the letter. At this treatment I was hurt; I had good reason to be offended; but I never complained of it. The shyness and the dispute which has arisen between Mr. Cobbett and myself has arisen from a very different cause. But, for my own part, I am happy that this shyness did not happen while Mr. Cobbett was in prison, but while Henry Hunt is incarcerated in his dungeon. Although I cannot accuse myself of having ever done any thing to merit this conduct from Mr. Cobbett, yet I shall never cease to lament it, as an injury to that cause in which we had so long drawn together. But, as is generally the case in such differences between friends, there may be faults on both sides; and I am not so presumptuous as to believe that I am exempt from error. It is a lamentable truth, however, that the strongest mind is not always proof against the insinuations of *false friends*, of *go-betweens*, and the *eternal workings*, and *worryings*, and *sly malignant hints*, of the *low pride and cunning of those who are always at a person's elbow*. The reader must excuse this digression; it is, in fact, no more than I owed to the subject, and an early explanation which is due to those who honour me by reading these Memoirs.

The infamous conduct of the authorities at Bristol did not deter me from keeping the promise which I made to the people on the day of election. I immediately formed a society, and arranged a plan of weekly subscriptions, to enable those who were entitled to their freedoms to pay their fee to the chamberlain of the city, without being, as they had always hitherto been, dependent upon the bounty of the candidates when the election was about to begin. Each entitled freeman, who enrolled his name, and paid a subscription of 3_d._ per week, had, in his turn, his freedom taken up, and his fees, amounting to about 2_l_. 8_s_. paid out of the fund.

One would have thought this a most legitimate and praiseworthy association. What could be more proper than a subscription, weekly, amongst the entitled freemen, to raise a sum to take up their freedoms; to accumulate that sum by a weekly subscription which they could not at once command out of their own pockets, and the want of which had heretofore in a great measure placed them in the power of those who would only advance the money for them to obtain a promise of their votes at the election? To assist in accomplishing so desirable an object as this, any one who did not understand the principles upon which those elections are carried on by corporations, would have thought a most praiseworthy act. But in Bristol it was esteemed a great crime; and all sorts of threats and intimidations were offered to those who stood forward as the friends of constitutional liberty, and who attempted to aid the young freemen in procuring their copies to become entitled to exercise their franchises at the elections. Our society was denounced as seditious, revolutionary, and treasonable, by the corrupt newspapermongers of that city; at the head of whom stood a man of the name of GUTCH, who was the editor of the paper called Felix Farley's Bristol Journal. This was as corrupt and time-serving a political knave as ever lived. This gentleman belonged to the White Lion club; and for hire he weekly vomited forth all sorts of lies and calumnies against those who met weekly at the *Lamb and Lark*, in Thomas Street, under the pretence, as this loyal Government scribe said, of subscribing to take up freedoms; but whose real object this hireling declared to be, to overturn the Government, by subverting the constitution of the country. This was the organ, the trumpeter of the White Lion club; the Pitt faction; the thick and thin supporters of the ministers. Then there was another corrupt political knave, of the name of John Mills, who published a paper, which, if I recollect right, was called the Bristol Gazette. He was equally a thick and thin supporter of the other faction, the Whigs; he was their time-serving dirty tool; no falsehood, no absurdity, however palpable, so that it served his masters, the Whig faction, was too gross for his depraved appetite. This *gentleman*, also, was equally lavish of his abuse against me, for having dared to interfere with a privilege which exclusively belonged to the two factions; any innovation upon which was considered as high treason of the greatest magnitude.

At this time a gentleman of the name of LEE, a surgeon, and a very clever fellow, lashed the cheats of

both factions by frequent cheap publications; the severity of which made the rogues twist and writhe as snails and grubs do, when quick lime is sprinkled upon them. With this Mr. Lee I of course became acquainted, from the time of the Trout Tavern dinner. For some time we went on very well together but, by-and-bye, we quarrelled and came to an open rupture. This quarrel was excited and fermented by talebearers and go-betweens; and at length Mr. Lee commenced a paper war, directing all his talent against my views and objects. I replied: and a most vindictive political warfare raged for a while, in which we were both most magnanimously bespattered with the filth of our own creating. I was very young at this time, and where I failed in argument, I of course made up for it in abuse. In reality, there was very little argument on either side; and in default of it, downright abuse was resorted to, to the great amusement of the two contending factions. He at length retired from politics altogether, and very soon afterwards left Bristol, to reside in London, and kept his terms, I believe, in the Temple, where he now practises as a barrister. But I, however, stood my ground, and continued to support and cultivate an union, by subscribing to and attending the meetings at the *Lamb and Lark*. In fact, I took a lease of that house for the purpose; several publicans having been threatened with the loss of their licences, if they gave us the accommodation of a room, once a week, in the way of their business. The moral Magistrates of Bristol, some of whom were brewers and distillers, encouraged every species of drunkenness, and connived at every species of debauchery, so that their pockets were filled, and the customs and the excise were benefited; but they were alarmed and shocked at the monstrous crime of the freemen meeting once a week to subscribe their pence, to procure their freedoms, independent of every political faction.

I now resided at Clifton, in lodgings, during the winter, and attended to the collecting together of the scattered remains of my wreck of a brewery. The reader may easily conceive that, if I had been disposed to carry on the concern (which, by-the-bye, I was not), I should have had very little chance at Bristol, amongst a set of the most illiberal and selfish tradesmen and merchants in the universe. But, the truth was this, I brewed my beer from malt and hops only; I had fairly tried the experiment, and the result was, that no one could brew with malt and hops for sale, *without being a loser*; and as I was determined not to use any drugs or substitute, I made up my mind to get out of the concern as soon as possible. No man could have had a fairer opportunity of trying the experiment than I had; I grew my own barley, which was of the very best sample; I made my own malt, and I bought my hops at the best hand, for ready money. If any one could have brewed beer from malt and hops, to have made a profit from it, I could have done it. I brewed excellent beer, *but I lost money* by every brewing. I therefore take leave to caution my friends against being poisoned by genuine beer brewers; the worst sort of quacks and impostors. Mark what I say—a brewer may brew, and sell genuine beer, made from malt and hops; but, if he does not become a bankrupt in three years, or if he contrives to sell *genuine beer*, and grows rich, or pretends to grow rich, let me advise you not to drink any of his genuine beer. No! no! my friends, if you must drink beer and porter, drink that brewed by the common brewer, who does not profess to be any honester than his neighbours. Drink the porter of Messrs. Barclay, or of Messrs. Whitbread, and take your chance with the common herd of beer and porter drinkers. When I see an advertisement of any gentleman "Bung" having made an affidavit before the Lord Mayor, that his beer is brewed only with malt and hops, I look regularly for his name in the Gazette, and if I do not soon find it, there, or hear that he has cut and run, I set him down for a successful impostor.

I now enjoyed the society of a few select friends, who visited in my family, when I was living at Chisenbury House, in Wiltshire, or at Clifton; and I had nearly got rid of all my old pot-companions. Those who now visited me, did so for the purposes of friendship and rational society; as I had now completely put an end to all drinking carousals in my family, neither did I mix with them in others. When I was in the country, I used to enjoy the pleasures of the field, both as a fox-hunter and an expert shot. As a shot, I fancied myself at that time a match for any man in the kingdom, having challenged to shoot with any gentleman sportsman in the united kingdom, five mornings, at game, for fifty guineas a morning; which challenge I sent to the Sporting Magazine, but whether it was published or not, I do not recollect.

One circumstance I forgot to notice, relative to the general election which took place in the beginning of this year; which was, that Major Cartwright offered himself, and stood a contested election, for the borough of Boston, in Lincolnshire. The Major offered himself upon the pure principles of representation, without spending any money. The Major only polled *eight votes!*—This shews the state of the representation of Boston at that time. Mr. Maddox was elected, having polled 196 votes. But the Major stood upon real constitutional principles, and therefore only polled eight votes.

On the 29th of June, Sir Francis Burdett was chaired through the streets of Westminster, and such a multitude was scarcely ever before seen together. All the streets through which the procession had to pass were thronged to excess, and every window was full of admiring and applauding spectators. This certainly was the triumph of Westminster, by purity of election. At five o'clock the procession arrived at the Crown and Anchor, where it is said nearly two thousand persons gained admittance to dinner. This

must have been a fine harvest for the landlord, and those who had the management of the twelve shilling tickets. After dinner, the following toasts were drank:—

1. The King, the Constitution, the whole Constitution, and nothing but the Constitution.
2. The People.
3. Purity of Election, and may the Electors of the whole kingdom take a lesson from the Westminster School.
4. The Health of that Honest and Incorruptible Representative of the People, Sir Francis Burdett.
5. The Electors of Westminster.
6. The 5134 Electors who so nobly stood forward to assert their own Rights, and to excite the People of England to assert theirs.
7. Those Electors of *Bristol* who, on the 2nd of June, with MR. H. HUNT at their head, assembled to celebrate the return of Sir Francis Burdett.
8. May the ineffective of the Regiment be speedily disbanded, and the Red Book reduced to its proper dimensions.
9. Mr. Jennings, our worthy Chairman.
10. The Election Committee.

This charring and dinner-meeting excited the attention not only of the metropolis but the whole kingdom. It was the real triumph of Westminster, and Sir Francis Burdett was that day in sober earnestness, and in the honest sincerity of their hearts, the pride of the people. It was no joke; but, in fact and in truth, Sir Francis Burdett was on that day "*Westminster's Pride, and England's Glory.*" All was peace and good order, every face beamed with good humor, and upon every brow sat a sort of conscious pride, as if each person felt that he had performed a duty, by offering a tribute of devotion to the Honourable Baronet. This being the case, one would have thought that there was no occasion for the interference of the military; but, as the troops had been called out at Bristol, in consequence of our *dinner of one hundred*, to celebrate the election of Sir Francis, of course the myrmidons of power in the metropolis did not, or pretended they did not, think themselves safe without the aid of the military. The different guards about the palace, and also about the offices at Whitehall, were doubled, and supplied with ball cartridges. The several regiments were drawn out in the morning and kept under arms, and a great body of the horse artillery corps was kept ready harnessed in St. James's Park, to draw the cannons to the scene of action, if necessary!—The volunteer corps were also summoned to muster, and the police were put in motion; in fact, the Government appeared determined to be ready with a military force to act promptly upon an emergency, if one should arise, as some persons, perhaps, hoped would be the case. All this, however, proved to be totally unnecessary. The fear of the Ministers arose solely from the sense of their own unworthiness; a conviction in their own breasts that they merited the hatred and the execration of the people. Every thing passed off quietly, and the dinner party broke up in peace, after having passed the day in the greatest hilarity and unanimity. Such a dinner-meeting was never before witnessed in the metropolis; hundreds were contented to take a scanty meal standing, and no one grumbled at his fare.

The reader will see that, at this dinner, the *only* toast drank, unconnected with the election of Westminster, was the seventh, "The Electors of Bristol with MR. H. HUNT at their head," &c. Indeed the only names mentioned in the toasts, which had been drawn up with great care by the Committee, were Sir F. Burdett, Mr. H. Hunt, and Mr. Jennings, the chairman; so that, with the exception of the chairman and Sir Francis Burdett, I was the *only man in England* whose name was honoured by being publicly drank by this the largest dinner-meeting ever assembled in England. I was not at that time known to Sir Francis Burdett; I was not known to Mr. Jennings, or to any of the Committee, yet my exertions in the cause of Liberty at Bristol had attracted the attention of its real friends in Westminster, and my health was toasted accordingly.

The first time, however, that I came to London after this, I was introduced to Mr. Jennings, and all the Westminster heroes, by my worthy friend Henry Clifford. They all received me very cordially, and I was invited to a public meeting at the Crown and Anchor, that was held about that time, I forget upon what occasion, Mr. Jennings in the chair, myself having a seat appropriated for me by the Committee next to him, on his left hand, Clifford being seated at his right. My health was drank with great applause, and I returned thanks in a manner that met the approbation of the whole meeting.

Thus was I, in the year 1807, fairly drawn into the vortex of politics. My worthy friend Clifford publicly claimed me as his disciple, and ventured to predict that I would some day become one of the most able champions of the cause of Liberty. Sir Francis Burdett was not in town, therefore I was not introduced to him, which both Jennings and Clifford were anxious to do.

I do not recollect that Lord Cochrane's name was ever mentioned at either of these meetings. His

health was not even drank at the great meeting for Westminster, on the 29th of June, to celebrate the purity of election, although he was one of the Members for Westminster, was returned as the colleague of Sir Francis Burdett, and polled above a thousand votes more than Mr. Sheridan. Nay, I do not think that he even attended this dinner of his constituents. Indeed, had he attended, his health would have been drank of course, as one of the Members. Lord Cochrane was a bold, enterprising, and successful officer; but, as to politics, I believe the real state of the case to be, that he was suspected, at that period, not to have made up his mind upon them.

This fact is worthy to be recorded, that, when the electors of Westminster held their great public dinner to celebrate the triumph and purity of election in their city, though Lord Cochrane had been elected one of their representatives, yet so little faith had Sir F. Burdett or his friends in the sincerity of Lord Cochrane's principles, that they never drank his health, or even mentioned his name. *Let this be marked down as a curious fact.* Lord Cochrane had not been kicked into a thorough patriot by the Government, which, at this time, looked upon him as still being one of their regiment, and they rather rejoiced than otherwise at his being elected for Westminster; it being very clear that, during the election, he received considerable support from the friends of the ministers.

Now I call the circumstance to my recollection, I believe that, immediately after the election, Lord Cochrane went to sea as the commander of the Imperieuse. At all events it is certain that his health was not drank. The fact is indisputable, that at a dinner-meeting of the electors of Westminster, one of the Member's health not drank, and that Member LORD COCHRANE, who had been in the House before, as a Member for Honiton; and let it be recollected, to his honour, that when he was elected for Honiton, he gave a pledge in the face of the nation, that he never would, as long as he lived, accept of any sinecure or emolument, either for himself or any relation or dependent; and that he never would touch the public money in any way, but that of his profession as a naval officer. He had also made a motion in the House, respecting places, pensions, and emoluments, held or received by Members of the House of Commons, or by his relations. This motion was of the greatest public importance, and of much more real service to the cause of public liberty, and the purity of the Members of the House of Commons, than any motion that Sir Francis Burdett had ever made in the House; and one would have thought that this alone would have been a sufficient earnest of his future honesty, at any rate would have entitled him to have had his health drank at a public dinner-meeting of his constituents, the electors of Westminster! —It is a very curious and remarkable fact that *my* health was drank at this meeting, and that Lord Cochrane's health was not; and what makes it the more extraordinary was, that I was a perfect stranger to the electors of Westminster, and Lord Cochrane was one of their representatives.

As for poor Paull, although he was laying wounded, on a bed of sickness, his name was never mentioned. I always thought, and I always said, though I did not know Mr. Paull, that Sir Francis Burdett would have appeared more amiable in my eyes if he had condescended to notice with marks of kindness his vanquished adversary, or at least his antagonist, who had been defeated upon the hustings, although not in the field. But, alas! poor Mr. Paull, who had contributed, largely contributed to rouse a proper spirit of independence amongst the electors of Westminster, and who was a very *Idol* amongst them at a former election, was now so deserted, neglected, and despised, as at this meeting never to have been noticed in any way whatever, merely because he had quarrelled with Sir Francis Burdett, or rather because Sir Francis had quarrelled with him. But Sir Francis Burdett was now become the great political Idol, a political God; and I was one of his most enthusiastic worshippers, one who would have risked my life at any moment to have saved his, although I was at the time personally unknown to him. On the 10th of July, a numerous and respectable meeting of the freemen, freeholders, and inhabitants of the city of Bristol, was held in the large room at the Lamb and Lark, in Thomas Street, for the express purpose of inquiring into the state of the elective franchise, Henry Hunt, Esq. in the chair. It was unanimously resolved, "1st. That the elective franchise is an object of the highest importance, as it is the basis of our laws and liberties. That in the free and unbiassed exercise of this great and yet undisputed privilege, depends our best interests and dearest rights as free-born Englishmen. 2nd. That if any club or party of men whatever, arrogate to themselves the power of returning a representative for this city, whether designated by the title of the White Lion Club, or the Loyal and Constitutional Club; if they threaten, persecute, and oppress a voter, for the free exercise of his judgment in the disposal of his suffrage, they are enemies to their country, by acting in direct opposition to the sound principles of the British Constitution. 3rd. That we view with painful anxiety the contracted and enthralled state of the elective rights of this city, and we are fully convinced of the existence of such unconstitutional clubs as are mentioned in the foregoing resolution; that their evil effects have reduced this great city to a level with the rottenest of rotten boroughs; therefore we are determined, by every legal exertion in our power, to interpose, and adopt such constitutional and effective measures as may appear most conducive to the recovery and firm establishment of the freedom of election in this city. 4th. That the following declarations of the Westminster Committee, contain the great constitutional principles on which we ought to act, namely,—'That as to our

principles, they are those of the constitution of England, and none other; that, it is declared by the Bill of Rights, that one of the crimes of the tyrant James, was that of interfering, by his Ministers, in the election of Members of Parliament; that, by the same great standard of our liberties, it is declared that the election of Members of Parliament ought to be free! That by the act which transferred the crown of this kingdom from the heads of the House of Stuart, to the heads of the House of Brunswick, it is provided, that, for the better securing of the liberties of the subject, no person holding a place or pension under the Crown, shall be a Member of the House of Commons; that these are constitutional principles; and as we are convinced that all the notorious speculations, that all the prodigal waste of public money, that all the intolerable burdens and vexations therefrom arising; that all the oppression from within, and all the danger from without, proceed from a total abandonment of these great constitutional principles; we hold it to be our bounden duty, to use all the legal means in our power to restore those principles to practice. That though we are fully convinced, that, as the natural consequences of the measures pursued for the last sixteen years, our country is threatened with imminent danger from the foe which Englishmen once despised, and, though we trust there is not a man of us who would not freely lay down his life, to preserve the independence of his country, and to protect it from a sanguinary and merciless invader; yet we hesitate not to declare, that the danger we should consider of the next importance, the scourge next to be dreaded, would be a packed and corrupt House of Commons, whose votes, not less merciless, and more insulting, than a conqueror's edicts, would bereave us of all that renders country dear, and life worth preserving, and that too, under the names and forms of Law and Justice; under those very names and those very forms which yielded security to the persons and, property of our forefathers.' 5th. That, in following the glorious example of the citizens of Westminster, by choosing men of corresponding sentiments and undeviating public virtue, we shall, as far as rests with us, restore the blessings of our Constitution, and the just rights and liberties of the people. 6th. That the freeholders, freemen, and entitled freemen and inhabitants of this city, who have united themselves, for the laudable purpose of supporting each other in the free and unbiassed exercise of their judgment in the choice of their representatives, merit the approbation and applause of all their fellow-citizens; and that we do now form ourselves into a body, to be called the "Bristol Patriotic and Constitutional Association," to co-operate with them, in counteracting that unwarrantable influence, manoeuvre, and deception, which have reduced the electors of this city to mere political cyphers, to passive spectators of the general wreck, freemen with no other appendage of freedom but the empty name; we therefore pledge ourselves, individually and collectively, to assist and protect them in the recovery of our just and constitutional liberties. 7th. That a public subscription be immediately opened, to raise a fund for the purpose above mentioned, for defraying the expenses of a room for the association, printing, &c. and that a list of the subscribers and subscriptions be regularly kept, and that proper books be provided for that purpose. 8th. That these resolutions be signed by the chairman, and that they be published. Signed HENRY HUNT, Chairman."

These resolutions were published in the Bristol and London newspapers; and also, in Cobbett's Political Register, the 8th of August, 1807, (page 211, vol. 11th.) The reader will see the political ground which I took, and the stand which I made, almost single-handed, in the city of Bristol, against the corrupt and barefaced influence exercised by both the contending factions of Whigs and Tories, over the freemen of Bristol. I have inserted these resolutions for a twofold purpose; first, that of shewing that I have never shifted my ground, that I have never deviated from the straight path of publicly and boldly advocating the rights and liberties of the people against the corrupt influence of all factions; and second, to prove that Mr. Cobbett was so well pleased with my exertions, and so well satisfied that those exertions were calculated to serve the cause of public liberty, that he voluntarily gave them a place in his Register, and thus early held me up to notice, as worthy of public confidence and public support; and this he did, recollect, although I was not personally known to him, and had never seen him, with the exception of the slight call which I made on him in Duke Street, which I have before mentioned.

Mr. Cobbett had already published in his Register my address, of the 18th of October, 1806, to the freeholders of Wiltshire; he had published an account of my health being drank, at the largest public dinner ever held in England, on the 29th June, 1807; and on the 8th of August, in the same year, he published the foregoing resolutions, with my name to them, as the chairman, and which resolutions he knew were drawn up by *me*; therefore, I must seriously ask the reader how I am to account for the scurrilous letter being written by Mr. Cobbett to Wright, cautioning the committee of the electors of Westminster to *beware of me*? If this letter be not a forgery, Mr. Cobbett was *openly* recommending me to the notice of the public, in his Political Register, while he was *privately* vilifying me by letter, and recommending the Westminster committee to beware of me, as I was a sad fellow. For the honour of human nature I should yet hope that this letter was a forgery, either of Wright's or Cleary's.

Let it, however, be whichever it may, it had not the desired effect. These exertions of mine in the city of Bristol, and my boldly avowing the principles acted upon by the Westminster committee, and professed by Sir Francis Burdett, met with the approbation and sanction of both, and a correspondence

was kept up between us. The baronet professed to be greatly delighted with what I had done, and urged me to persevere in so laudable an undertaking as that of putting myself at the head of the independent electors of Bristol, to prepare them for following the example so nobly set by the electors of Westminster. I have preserved all the Honourable Baronet's letters, with the exception of three or four, that he ever wrote to me during our political connection, which may now be said to have commenced. Though as yet we had never had a personal interview, he, nevertheless, corresponded with me with great frankness and confidence; which *confidence*, I beg him to make himself perfectly satisfied, shall never be basely betrayed by me, even if he should behave to me worse than he already has done; even if he should employ his hopeful paid agent Cleary to read upon the hustings a private letter a day, for the remainder of his life. I will, at a proper period, state my reason for destroying two or three of his letters, in the spring of 1817. But he may rest assured that I will not betray any of his private communications to me; I will not follow his example by basely exposing a *private letter*; even should he again hire James Mills to propagate a report, which he, Burdett, as well as his agent, knew to be a falsehood totally without foundation; namely, that I had a government protection in my pocket when I attended the great public meeting at Manchester, on the 16th of August, 1819. Even if the baronet should hire a fellow to propagate another such a cowardly and infamous fabrication as that, yet I will not publish any of his private letters to me about —.

But I beg the reader not to misunderstand me; most of the baronet's letters to me were of a *public nature*, and those that were private, were not about my business, but his own. Thank God! he has no letters from *me*, about any *money transactions*; for I hereby most distinctly state, that the only money transaction we ever had, the only money that ever passed between us, was, that I, at his request, once purchased for him a galloway, for twenty-five pounds, which money he paid me; and I bought of him a horse for forty-five guineas, which I paid him for at the time. The horse turned out not worth forty-five shillings. I believe the Baronet knew that he was good for nothing when he favoured me with him; but he never offered to make me any allowance, neither did I ever expect it, or apply for it. I never blamed him for this—it was not his fault, it was my own; he had the horse to sell, and I purchased it and paid for it, and when I found him out, I disposed of him as well as I could to a horse-dealer; I certainly did not oblige a friend with him. After all the Baronet may have thought him a very good horse; he may have been deceived, or may have been a bad judge of a horse. I was the fool for believing that he wished to part with a *very good* horse.

I mention this circumstance, not as any thing against the Baronet, because it was my business not to have taken any one's word, not to have bought a "pig in a poke;" but I mention it, merely to show the reader that, although I was, for many years, intimately and closely connected with Sir Francis Burdett, this is the only money transaction we ever had, with the exception of his having given me cash for a country banker's draft on his banker in London, made payable to my order, at seven or fourteen days, I forget which it was. Although I was comparatively a poor man, and he a most wealthy one, I was never indebted to him a guinea in my life, nor ever solicited the loan of a guinea from him.

I have said that I will never publish any of his private letters, but I hereby authorize him to publish any one or every letter he ever received from me in his life; and if he does not choose to do this, yet wishes it to be done, and will send them to me, I will publish verbatim, in the Memoirs, any or every letter I ever wrote to him. During the history of the next ten years of my life, I shall have frequently to record circumstances that have occurred between the Baronet and myself; it is, therefore, but justice to myself, as well as to the reader, to make the above declaration, as a prelude to that part of my Memoirs, as it may save the Rump the trouble of circulating a great number of falsehoods, of which they will ultimately, with many other base transactions, stand convicted. When I say I was never indebted to or solicited any loan from the Baronet, I mean to include all his family and connections, *Rump and all*.

I have before mentioned, that I was invited to, and attended, a public dinner, held at the Crown and Anchor, Mr. Jennings in the chair. At this dinner I was introduced to the worthy, the venerable and patriotic Major Cartwright, who invited me to his lodgings, to take some coffee after the meeting was over, whither I accompanied him, either with Clifford, or some other friend. There the worthy old Major produced for my inspection, the *pike* which he had invented, and recommended in his "England's Aegis," to be used for the national defence. It was of a very curious and ingenious construction, with a sort of double shaft, to protect the hands of him who used it from the blows of a sabre, &c. The Major was in high spirits, and exhibited to us all the various purposes of attack and defence for which it was calculated. I was highly delighted with the old Major, at this first introduction and interview, and this exhibition added very much to the gratification which I felt in being known to a man of whom I had so often heard and read, as the steady and inflexible friend of reform, and public freedom. I returned home to my inn exceedingly gratified, the old Major having created a very favourable opinion in my breast of his patriotism and public virtue.

During this year, a considerable sensation was created, by the military inquiry which was going

forward. Many nefarious peculations, and many scandalous abuses, were detected and exposed; but, as is generally the case in these parliamentary inquiries, the expenses of the commissions are ministerial jobs, that cost the country more than the sums which are saved by these detections.

The bill for the abolition of the slave trade was brought into the House of Lords, by Lord Grenville, and after warm debates passed both Houses; this, to the immortal honour of the Whigs, was effected by them, and must be recorded as one good act passed during their administration. The old saying is, that "Charity covereth a multitude of sins;" so, the passing of this act by the Whigs has, with many, covered a multitude of *their* sins.

In July, General Whitelock was sent to attack Buenos Ayres; but he was disgracefully repulsed, with great loss. His conduct and defeat became the subject of public investigation, and the General was disgraced in the eyes of the whole world. The Americans issued a proclamation prohibiting British armed vessels from entering the ports of the United States, which was followed by the English laying an embargo on their ports in return. In the month of August, of this year, the first introduction of gas lights into the streets took place, in Golden-lane, in the city of London; and in October, the King of France, Louis the Eighteenth, landed at Yarmouth, and, under the title of the Count de Lille, took up his residence at Gosfield Hall, in Essex. It was also in this month that the philanthropic Sir Richard Phillips, the new Sheriff of London, made a strict inquiry into the prison abuses of the metropolis. He and his colleague, Mr. Smith, employed themselves with incessant application in visiting and inspecting every part of every prison in the metropolis. I always admired Sir Richard Phillips, for his humane and persevering endeavours to correct the innumerable abuses that were found to exist in these sinks of filth, misery, and immorality; but I never fully knew the value of his praiseworthy endeavours, till I began to employ myself in a similar undertaking, in this infamous Bastile. I now know how to appreciate the value of his labours for the benefit of the prisoners and the country. He rectified innumerable abuses, and caused the whole of the gaols to be cleansed and improved; he also made it his business to investigate the extortions practised in those receptacles of misery and misfortune, the lock-up houses; which places he put under the strictest regulations, to protect the unfortunate persons who are placed in them from the infamous rapacity of those who keep them. These things come immediately under the cognizance of the Sheriffs, whose peculiar duty it is to protect from extortion and torture those unfortunate persons whom the law has placed in their custody, either as criminals or as debtors. Sir Richard Phillips performed the duty of Sheriff of London with great honour to himself, and to the great advantage of the whole community. I have no hesitation in saying, that he performed more good acts, while he held the office of Sheriff of London and Middlesex, than have been performed by all the Sheriffs that have held it ever since. In fact, his whole life has been devoted to acts of benevolence and kindness towards his fellow-creatures; but the great services which he rendered to the cause of humanity and justice, while he had the power, while he filled the office of Sheriff of London and Middlesex, entitle him to the gratitude of this country; and, at some future day, his merits will be, I trust, recorded on a monument, by the side of the benevolent Howard, in St. Paul's. Sir Richard Phillips is a modest, unostentatious man; he makes but little skew and parade; but the hand of oppression seldom bears heavily upon a fellow-citizen, that Sir Richard is not found, in some way or other, endeavoring to alleviate his distress. I speak feelingly, for my persecutions brought me acquainted with the real character of this worthy citizen of London. To speak of Sir Richard Phillips, so as to do him justice, requires a more able pen than mine, and it is absolutely necessary to read a very interesting and valuable work, written by him, and printed by T. Gillet, Crown Court, in 1805. It is a letter, which he addressed to his constituents, the *Livery of London*, relative to his views in executing the office of Sheriff of London and Middlesex; and, as I know of no better method to delineate his character for humanity and public spirit, I will give an extract from this work in his own words. "I am now," says he, "about to treat of that subject which is not only of the greatest importance in connection with the office of Sheriff, but which is that department of the Sheriff's duty about which the feelings of my own heart were the most deeply interested when I entered into the office. I had long viewed these places, particularly the crowded prisons of the metropolis, as mansions of misery, in which were often united in the same person the whole dismal catalogue of human woes. The deprivation of liberty alone is a heart-rending punishment to every human being, however luxuriously he might be provided for in his prison, and however little may be the effect of that imprisonment upon his dearest connections. But in the prisons of the metropolis, there are superadded to the overwhelming idea of personal restraint, the loathsomeness of the place, the immediate contact of kindred miseries; want of food and every other necessary; loss of character; dread of future consequences; wives, children, and frequently aged parents involved in one common ruin, and plunged in shame and wretchedness; the prisoner suffering at the same instant the complicated tortures of despair, remorse, and unavailing repentance! How inglorious and how cowardly, to add to such a load of misery, by unnecessary privations and reproaches! How interesting the task of lightening it, by attentions, by charities, by administering pity, and by infusing hope!

"Such were the impressions and the feelings under which I entered into the office of Sheriff, and by

which I am still influenced, after twelve months intercourse with the prisons, notwithstanding the cabals and misrepresentations of which I have found myself the object."

The reader will perceive by this, that, in the performance of these praiseworthy, honourable, and humane duties, the worthy Sheriff had to contend against cabals and misrepresentations; in fact, every obstruction was thrown in his way by those whose duty it was to have assisted him, and to have rewarded him for his labours; he was opposed and misrepresented by the whole gang of miscreants, who had heretofore made a market of the misfortunes of their fellow creatures, and swelled their infamous hoards by plundering and robbing all those who came within the vortex of their rapacity. He was also sneered at and thwarted, by those creatures in office, those caitiffs "dressed in a little brief authority," who luxuriate in the misery of the captive, and whose greatest bliss appears to be derived from persecuting and inflicting torture upon those whose misfortune it is to be placed in their power. But his reward is the approbation of the wise, the virtuous and humane; and, what is still more valuable, the delightful sensations of an approving conscience.

Sir Richard Phillips likewise made many excellent regulations as to the choosing and summoning of Juries, and pointed out those defects, and that unconstitutional management in packing of Juries, that have led to the recent inquiries and alterations in the Jury lists of the city of London, which render it possible that a fair and honest unpacked Jury may now be obtained in that city, in spite of the arts and tricks of those who have made it their business to convert them into every thing that is corrupt and partial. Without having read the address of Sir Richard Phillips to the Livery of London, which address he published as soon as he was out of office, it is absolutely impossible for any person to be aware of the good done, and the still greater good attempted to be accomplished by Sir Richard during his sheriffalty. This work should be read by all future Sheriffs, as offering to them an example highly worthy their best attention. In fact, the office of Sheriff of the city of London and Middlesex is a most important office, it gives a man the power of doing an infinity of good, of rendering the most essential service to the cause of liberty, justice, and humanity, as was clearly demonstrated by Sir Richard Phillips.

Before I have done with this subject of Sheriffs, I will relate an anecdote of one of the late Sheriffs. I believe I have mentioned, in this work, that the Sheriff of London and Middlesex, Robert Albion Cox, Esq., was committed to Newgate, by the House of Commons, for partiality to Sir Francis Burdett at the Middlesex election, in 1802. This was the present Alderman Cox, who was at that time a zealous friend of reform, and whose great zeal and anxiety to promote that cause was supposed to have made him overstep the bounds of prudence, so far as to prevent him, in his capacity of Sheriff, from being able to conceal his ardent desire to serve his friend, Sir Francis Burdett. He was accused, by the House of Commons, of having, in the warmth of his friendship, been guilty of partiality to his friend, in the admission of votes at the hustings. For this the House committed him to Newgate. I recollect that, at the time, the friends of reform in the country, although they could not justify the proceeding on the part of the worthy Sheriff, yet they felt a great sympathy towards him, and were much more disposed to condemn a corrupt majority of the House of Commons, for dealing harshly with him, than they were to censure the Sheriff; who, if he had committed an error, had done so from the best of intentions—the desire to serve the cause of reform. I well remember, that we all in the country said, that the worthy Sheriff's imprisonment would be a mere nominal punishment; that he would be surrounded by his friends; and we had no doubt but Sir Francis Burdett and his party would take care that his time should pass lightly away, by their gratefully attending to his every wish, while he remained in prison.

But the truth shall now be told. Alderman Cox paid me a visit here, some time back, and upon my joking him, on his having deserted the cause of reform, and gone over to the enemy, he frankly told me the whole story of his secession from our ranks. He was, he declared, as sincere a friend of reform and rational liberty as he ever was; but, during the time of his imprisonment, he found those with whom he had acted during his youthful ardour, so treacherous and so ungrateful, that the moment he was at liberty he resolved to have nothing more to do with them; and he, therefore, quitted city politics altogether, and went to reside in Dorsetshire, out of the reach of all their turmoil and unprofitable labour. "When," said he, "I was committed to Newgate by the House of Commons, I certainly did expect that I should have received the attention and kindness of those whom I had endeavoured to serve, and of those who professed to be the friends of that party in the city of London, where I was imprisoned; and especially, I expected every attention from Sir Francis Burdett; which attention, indeed, I conceived I was entitled to from him, not merely for my having run such a risk, and got myself imprisoned, by striving to do him a service, but from the double tie of friendship and politics—a friendship which we had contracted while at school together." Having experienced the nature of the Baronet's friendship, I anticipated what was coming. "Will you believe me," said he, "Mr. Hunt, during the whole time that I was in Newgate *he never wrote to me, never called upon me, nor ever once sent to inquire about me.* I was in prison, yet all the city party with whom I had acted, kept away from me, and not one came near me. At length I sent for Waithman, who came at my request. I complained to

him of the ingratitude of Sir Francis Burdett, and he appeared to concur with me, and to regret that I should be so treated; but he added, that he had no power to compel the Baronet to do his duty. He was full of professions, and said he would do any thing to serve me; that I had been treated cursedly ill, and that something ought to be done for me. Upon this I urged him to call a Common Hall, and take the sense of the Livery upon the harsh proceedings of the House of Commons; and if he could get a vote of thanks for me (which I knew he had only to propose to carry), that would be some consolation to me in my imprisonment. He hemmed and har'd, and at length declined this measure, for fear it might not be carried, for fear he might be outvoted. Well then, said I, will you get a piece of plate voted to me, by a few of our friends, whom you can easily call together at a private meeting? The answer was, that he had no objection to doing so, but that all our friends were so very poor, that he doubted whether he should be able to raise a sum sufficient to purchase a piece of plate worth my acceptance. I replied, that the value of the piece of plate was of no consequence, as *that* was not the object; but, to set that question quite at rest, and to make his mind quite easy upon it, I desired him to get the piece of plate voted, and I would take care to send him the money myself to pay for it. He went away, saying he would see what could be done; and I never heard from him, or saw him afterwards, until I left Newgate: upon which I washed my hands of the whole of the ungrateful set, and I have never had any thing to do with them since." This fact speaks for itself, and is a fair specimen of the conduct of the worthy politicians of that day.

At the latter end of this year, 1807, our magnanimous ally, the Emperor of Russia, suddenly broke off all communication with Great Britain; and, on the 1st of November, declared war against us. War was also declared, at the same time, between England and Denmark. In the mean time, our ally, the King of Portugal, was so alarmed at the hostile movements of Napoleon, that he embarked with all his Court on board a fleet, which was joined by an English squadron, under Sir Sidney Smith, and sailed for the Brazils, immediately afterwards. The day after this, the French army, commanded by General Junot, entered Lisbon. At the same time Jerome Buonaparte was proclaimed King of Westphalia, and Napoleon was formally acknowledged King of Naples.

Napoleon having now actually subdued and made peace with all his enemies upon the Continent, he had nothing to do but to turn his attention to the suppression of English trade; which he did by issuing decrees, declaring England in a state of blockade; which were answered by England issuing Orders in Council, for blockading all the ports of France and her allies. This was the state of England at the end of the year 1807. The average price of the quartern loaf had been ten-pence three-farthings through the year.

The year 1808 began with Napoleon making an offer to treat for peace with England. This offer was, as usual, rejected; upon which he, and the Emperor Alexander, strove with all their united might to embarrass England in all her continental connections. The secret articles signed between these two Emperors, at Tilsit, plainly indicated their intentions to aggrandise themselves at the expense of England and her allies; Russia in the north, and France in the south. The throne of Naples was now transferred to Murat, the brother-in-law of Napoleon. The Papal dominions were completely subjected to France, and the Pope was placed in confinement.

The state of Spain at that time is worthy of notice. The Spaniards were in a deplorable situation. They were governed by, or rather had at the head of the government, an imbecile monarch, Charles the Fourth, a profligate Queen, notoriously intriguing with and led by Godoy, Prince of the Peace, prime minister; while, on the other hand, Ferdinand, the heir to the Crown, who was plotting and intriguing against his father, was weak in understanding, destitute of every noble quality, and totally incapable of governing a people who were emerging from the gloom of superstition, and becoming enlightened with the age. Ferdinand having joined in a conspiracy, headed an insurrection against his father, whom he compelled to abdicate the throne in his favour. This disgraceful conduct on the part of a son to his parent, speedily met with its due reward; for he was compelled to surrender up his pretension to the throne, and resigned the crown into the hands of his father, who once more resumed the reins of government, while the beloved Ferdinand retired, loaded with ignominy.

Charles the Fourth, however, very soon again abdicated his throne, not to his son Ferdinand, but in favour of his friend and ally, the Emperor of France; and the beloved Ferdinand and his brothers issued a solemn proclamation, renouncing all right and claim to the Spanish throne. But the Spaniards were not disposed to be transferred thus, like cattle, without being consulted on the subject. A formidable insurrection broke out, at Madrid, on the second of May. The inhabitants fought with a bravery and perseverance which did them infinite honour; but, after a desperate and sanguinary struggle, they were overpowered by the numerous French army which was under the command of the governor, General Murat. Nothing daunted by this failure at Madrid, the people of the Asturias, Andalusia, and other provinces of Spain, hurried to arms, and resolved to expel the invaders, or perish in the attempt. Juntas were formed, to direct the popular efforts, eloquent and animating proclamations were issued, and every thing that the time and circumstances would permit, was done to prepare for the approaching

tremendous contest.

The British Government had appeared to be panic struck by the intelligence that Napoleon had seized on Spain. It, however, in some measure, recovered its spirits, on the arrival of two Spanish noblemen, with the news that the people of Spain were determined to resist to the last; and it instantly promised the most effectual assistance to those welcome allies. All the Spanish prisoners of war were released and sent back to Spain in English ships, and a treaty of peace and alliance was made with the Spanish patriots. The merchants of London gave the Spanish deputies a grand dinner at the London Tavern, and every lover of Liberty wished the cause of the Patriots complete success.

In England, meanwhile, considerable dissatisfaction prevailed. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the city of London, petitioned both Houses of Parliament for reform, and the abolition of sinecure places and pensions. The foreman of the grand jury of the county of Middlesex, in conjunction with Sir Richard Phillips, the Sheriff, petitioned the House of Commons, against the conduct of the officers of the house of correction in Cold Bath Fields, and the treatment of the prisoners confined therein. In compliance with the petition of the citizens of London, a bill passed the House of Commons to prevent the granting of places in reversion; but it was opposed and thrown out by the Lords. Petitions for the restoration of peace were likewise presented from numerous towns in the manufacturing districts of the north, which were laid upon the tables of the Houses; but no further notice was taken of them.

The disaffection which distress and misgovernment had already excited in those districts was naturally increased by this contemptuous neglect of their petitions. At Manchester there were some serious riots. At Rochdale there had been some disturbances, and some of the rioters were seized and thrown into prison; but the people rose in great force, burned down the prison, and released their associates. These misguided men had not then been taught to look for redress by obtaining a reform in the representation. Those who had urged the people on to commit depredations upon the friends of Liberty, during the early part of the French revolution, the aiders and abettors of Church and King mobs, now began to taste the bitter fruits of their dastardly and cowardly conduct. The time was not yet come, though it was rapidly advancing, when the people were to see their error, and to recover from the dreadful state of political ignorance and delusion in which they had been intentionally kept by the authorities; and the consequence was, that those who had kept them in such ignorance, and trained them to violence, found their own weapons turned against them, and reaped the reward of their own folly and baseness. The weavers at Manchester and the neighbourhood created great disturbances, on account of their wages; they endeavoured to accomplish that by force, which could only be legally obtained by an alteration of those laws, and that system, which had brought them into the dilemma. During the period of Church and King mobs, they had been taught to carry into effect the wishes of their employers by force, and they at length thought it time to set up for themselves in that trade which they had been taught by their masters and employers. Having had no one to instruct them in political economy; or advise them how to obtain, by legal means, their political rights, was it wonderful that they should resort to acts of riot to obtain their domestic rights—a rise in the price of their wages, in proportion to the rise in the price of provisions, and all the necessaries of life, which had been caused by the excessive increase in taxation?

Let it be observed here, that the maxim will always hold good, that those who are careless of their political rights will always be sure to suffer and be imposed upon in their domestic rights. Those who have robbed the people of their political liberty, will not fail to rob them of that proportion of their earnings, to enjoy which, can alone make life worth preserving. The people who do not endeavour to possess and enforce the power of appointing those who are to make the laws, by which they are to be governed, have but little right to complain, if laws are made to enrich the few at the expense of the many. They must not be surprised at combination acts, corn laws, and banishment acts. They must not be surprised, if a *select few* have the privilege of choosing those who are to make laws; and if the laws that are made by persons so appointed tend to benefit those select few to the injury of the whole community. The mechanics and artizans, if they have no voice in electing Members of Parliament, must not be surprised if, under the title of combination laws, they see laws made to prevent them from obtaining the fair market price for their labour, while their masters are permitted, nay, encouraged, to combine and conspire together to keep down the price of their wages. Again let me impress on the mind of the reader, that a people who are careless and negligent of their political rights, are always sure of being plundered of a great portion of what they earn by the sweat of their brows; they imperceptibly become slaves of the basest cast; and, like slaves, when they become infuriated with their oppressions, they commit the most wanton and brutal acts of cruelty, in their fits of desperation.

Britain had, as I have already stated, made peace with the Spanish Patriots, whose devotion to the cause of their country excited the most lively interest in the bosom of every friend of freedom throughout the civilised world; and the people of England, as well as the English Government, felt a sincere desire to render them every assistance in their power. I am induced to notice the affairs of

Spain particularly, because it is delightful to behold a bigotted and enslaved people struggling to free themselves from the galling yoke of religious as well as political slavery. In pursuance of the resolution of the Government to give vigorous assistance, an army was sent by England, to attack the French in Portugal. This army was placed under the command of Sir Hugh Dalrymple. On the 21st of August 1808, the French troops under General Junot were routed by the English, at the battle of *Vimiera*. So complete was this victory that it was expected the French general must have surrendered the remains of his army as prisoners of war; but, while the people of England were looking with anxiety for this event, their hopes were suddenly blasted, with the news of the *Convention of Cintra*; by which Junot had prevailed upon the English Commander, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who negociated the terms of the Convention, not only to permit the French troops to retire from Portugal with all the honours of war, but actually to engage to provide a passage for them in *English ships*. This news caused a universal expression of disapprobation of the conduct of the English Commander, and meetings were held to petition the King, for an inquiry into this disgraceful transaction.

The disgrace of General Whitlocke, which had been inflicted upon him so recently, by the following sentence, it was hoped would have so operated upon British military officers as to have prevented the recurrence of such infamous conduct. His sentence was delivered on the 18th of March, in the following terms: "The Court adjudge that the said Lieutenant General Whitlocke be cashiered, and declared totally unfit and unworthy to serve his Majesty in any military capacity whatever." The principle upon which the law inflicts punishments is an example to deter others from committing the same offences. But it is a melancholy fact, that even capital punishments will not deter the hardened thief. As it is frequently the case that pickpockets are detected in the act of robbing at the very moment that one of their own fraternity is being launched into eternity, at the Old Bailey; so it appears that the punishment of General Whitlocke had very little effect upon the conduct of these heroes of Cintra.

The Lord Mayor and Common Council met and petitioned the King for an immediate and rigid inquiry into the conduct of those who made what was generally considered a disgraceful treaty; a compromise of the honour and character of the country. The King returned an equivocal answer. A public county meeting of the freeholders of Hampshire was also held, at Winchester, called by the High Sheriff, in consequence of a requisition signed by the aristocratical Whigs of that county, to address the King, upon the same subject. Mr. Cobbett, who had bought an estate and lived at Botley, attended this meeting, and in an address, replete with good sense, sound argument, and correct principles, moved an amendment to the resolutions proposed by Lord Northesk, and seconded by Mr. Portal, of Frifolk, two of the old Whig faction. The address to the King, which Mr. Cobbett moved, was seconded by the *Reverend Mr. Baker*, (quere, is this the Parson Baker of Botley?) A Parson Poulter, one of the Winchester "*cormorants*," moved an adjournment; arguing that the address was not necessary, as the King had given an answer to the Corporation of London. This amendment was scouted by an immense majority, not above ten hands being held up in its support. Upon a show of hands upon Mr. Cobbett's amendment to Lord Northesk's resolution, the Sheriff declared it to be so equally balanced that he could not decide which had the majority, and a shuffle was resorted to; Mr. Cobbett, being a young hand at these meetings, was not aware of the tricks of the Whigs. The Sheriff proposed that all parties should proceed into the open Hall *for a division*; but, as soon as a considerable number of those who had voted for Mr. Cobbett's amendment had retired into the open Hall, the cunning Sheriff caused another division in the Court, and declared the question to be carried by a majority in favour of Lord Northesk's address, which was accordingly presented to the King. This appears to have been the first effort of Mr. Cobbett at a public county meeting, and a very successful effort it was, as far as it consisted in ascertaining the real opinion of the freeholders of the county of Hants. At this meeting Mr. Cobbett proved that he was not only a good writer, but that he was also a very eloquent speaker; and a great majority of those who listened to him were evidently in favour of his address, which was much more to the purpose than that proposed by Lord Northesk. I had read the Weekly Political Register from its commencement with great pleasure, but the account of this meeting caused me to feel an increased desire to become better acquainted with the author. No occasion, however, of that sort offered for some time to come.

Previously to this period I had been living alternately at Bath and Sans Souci Cottage, in Wiltshire. When I was at the latter place I enjoyed incessantly the sports of the field. When at Bath, I frequently met and encouraged the young freemen of Bristol, to take up their freedom by means of weekly subscriptions, a considerable number having already procured their copies as certificates, in this way. The authorities, as they are called, or, in more intelligible terms, the leaders of both factions in the Corporation, the Whigs and the Tories, had their eye constantly upon me. I was regarded as a very suspicious personage, for meddling at all in their affairs; but I kept quite clear of both sides, and only mixed occasionally with the people; for I had promised the young freemen that, whenever there was a dissolution of Parliament, or a vacancy, I would offer myself as a Candidate for the representation of their city, unless some more eligible person could be found, who would honestly oppose the intrigues of both the juggling parties—the White Lion and Talbot clubs, the former of which supported the

ministerial, and the latter the opposition faction.

Some time in the month of September the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander met at Erfurth, where they jointly offered to treat for peace with England; but these pacific overtures were, as usual, rejected by the British ministers. The whole force of Great Britain appeared to be directed to assist the Spaniards for the purpose of driving the French troops out of Spain, to accomplish which object a British army, under Generals Moore and Baird, was sent to that country, which now began to be devastated by a war between the partizans of England and France. On one side, that of the English, were ranged the pride of the old grandees, the arts and prejudices of a cunning and intelligent priesthood, and the intolerable stupid superstition of the most ignorant and priest-ridden part of the people. On the other side, there was a small party of the more liberal minded, who supported the French, because they had abolished the Inquisition, and all the old monastic humbug with which the country had been cursed for so many ages. Joseph Buonaparte, who had been made King of Spain, but who had been obliged to retreat from Madrid, was now restored by Napoleon, who entered Spain at the head of the French army, defeated the Spaniards in many engagements, and finally became once more master of the Spanish capital, where he reinstated his brother Joseph as Sovereign, that monarch having transferred to Murat, his brother-in-law, the throne of Naples. The Parliament of England had voted an army of 200,000 men for the land service, besides 30,000 for the marine; and *fifty-four millions* were voted out of John Bull's pocket for the supplies; and a subscription to the amount of 50,000 *l.* to assist the Spaniards, was raised in London, in addition to the formidable regular force. The militia consisted of upwards of 100,000 men.

In the midst of this mad career and profligate expenditure, trade continued to decline, and the manufacturers were in the greatest distress. To appease the enraged nation, a sham court of inquiry was ordered by the King to assemble at Chelsea, under the pretence of an investigation into the Convention of Cintra; but this was so barefaced a job that it deceived nobody.

I have given a brief outline of the political state of the country, in the year 1808, before I enter more immediately upon my own domestic history, which, at this period, was become considerably mingled with politics and public affairs. I had quitted the large farm which I occupied at Chisenbury, and had built myself a sporting cottage upon my own estate at Littlecot, in the parish of Enford, which I called *Sans Souci Cottage*, from its situation resembling the description given of *Sans Souci*, the retreat of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia. Here, as I have already hinted, I devoted the summer and autumn to the sports of the field, particularly shooting, of which I was passionately fond, and which this country afforded in the greatest perfection. Having a house at Bath, which was occupied, I furnished it from the house which I had quitted at Clifton, and at Bath I spent the winter months. The liberal principles which I at all times evinced, were by this time too notorious to escape the attention and hatred of the Tory gentlemen of that part of the county of Wilts in which I resided. There had, in fact, always been amongst them a conspiracy against me, ever since I had quitted the Wiltshire regiment of yeomanry cavalry, and challenged Lord Bruce, the Colonel. But my calling on the county members to explain their parliamentary conduct; and my doing this publicly, when, on the dissolution of Parliament, they offered themselves for the representation, had greatly added to the antipathy which the Tories had before evinced against me; and it was determined that I should be *put down*, by the lords of the soil, who surrounded my property at Enford.

My old friend Astley, of Everly, was at the head of this worthy band, and he was the first to commence operations, by bringing an action of trespass against me in the name of one of his tenants. This was, in truth, his second trick of the kind; he having, soon after I quitted his troop, brought a similar action against me, in the name of one of his tenants, who keeps the Crown Inn at Everly, and who rented a farm of him. I defended that action, and pleaded in justification a *licence*; meaning, that I had leave of his tenant to sport over his land; but his attorney, who was a *flat*, carried this suit into Court, under the idea, that I justified upon the ground of having taken out a game licence. The fact was, that this was a *quibbling plea*, suggested by my attorney, and it succeeded; the bait took. When we came into Court they easily proved the trespass; and when they had gravely done this, I called two witnesses, who proved that the tenant had not only given me leave to go over his land, but had even invited me to do so, as his adjoining neighbour. Upon this the plaintiff, my worthy neighbour Astley, was nonsuited. I believe that I employed Mr. Pell, the present Mr. Sergeant Pell, and I believe, too, this was the first single brief he ever had upon the western circuit.

To beat my rich and powerful neighbour Astley, in a court of justice, although he had got a rare packed jury for the occasion, I considered as a great victory. On the next occasion, however, his attorney took care to be safe; for he brought the action in the name of one of the squire's mere vassals, a farmer of the name of Simpkins, who at that time was obliged to say or do any thing and every thing that he was ordered. I suffered judgment to go by default, and a writ of inquiry was executed at Warminster, to assess the damages. One witness was called, merely to prove the trespass; and he swore that I had been six yards off my own open down land, upon that of his master, Simpkins, which

adjoined it.

When the writ of inquiry was executed, I attended at Warminster in person, and this I did in consequence of having discovered, that there was a conspiracy against me amongst the neighbouring aristocrats, who, as I had ascertained, had made a *common stock purse*, in order to defray whatever expenses might be incurred in carrying on actions or prosecutions against me. I became acquainted with this fact in a very curious way. This junto of conspirators against the quiet and fortune of an individual had given a general retainer to Mr. Burrough, the counsel, the present Judge Burrough, who had, *over the bottle*, to an acquaintance of mine, who had been dining with him, slipped out this curious secret, intimating that his clients were so rich that they were sure to ruin me with expenses, even if I gained two out of three of the causes against me. My acquaintance having communicated to me this detestable plot, I made a solemn resolution to become my own advocate, let whatever actions might be brought against me. And now, for the first time in my life, I began to cross-examine a witness. That witness was Simpkins's shepherd, the only witness called by Astley's attorney. Upon his being asked by me, whether there was any boundary between Simpkins's down and mine? he answered, *no*; that there might be some old *bound-balls* at the distance of half a mile apart, bound-balls that might have been thrown up many hundred years back. He admitted that, at the time when the trespass to which he swore was committed by me, from two to three hundred of his master's sheep were grazing over the mark upon *my down*; that this was frequently the case either way between neighbours' sheep on the open downs in Wiltshire, and that it could not be well avoided. Upon my asking him what damage I had committed upon his master's land, the fellow grinned, and replied, "damage, Sir! why, none at all, to be sure:" being still further examined, he said that I had not done sixpenny worth of damage, that I had not done a farthing's worth, nor the *thousandth part of a farthing's worth* of damage, for it was impossible to do any damage if I had walked there for a month. This the fellow stuck to in his re-examination; and he being the only witness, and that witness called by the plaintiff, it struck me that it would be impossible for honest jurymen to give *any damage*, they being bound upon their oaths to assess the damages agreeable to the evidence. It was an intelligent jury, and in my address to them, I appealed to their honour, as men of character, whether they could conscientiously give a verdict of any damage, when the only witness called swore that there was not a *thousandth part* of a farthing damage done? I told them, that I believed a verdict of *no damages* would bring an additional expense upon me, as the Courts might set it aside; yet I would on no account wish them to violate their oaths to save me an expense; and I called upon them to discharge their duty conscientiously and manfully, let the expense fall on whom it would. The Under Sheriff, before whom the inquest was held, did every thing that man could do to prevail upon the jury to return a verdict of a *farthing damages*, contending that they must return a verdict of some damage. The foreman very sensibly remarked, "if you have called a witness who has sworn that there was not the *smallest particle* of damage done, how can we, upon our oath, say there was some damage?" The jury retired for half an hour, and returned a special verdict of "*no damages*."

This verdict I considered as another victory over the leader of the stock purse subscription. A motion was, however, made in the Court of King's Bench, for a rule to shew cause why this verdict should not be set aside, and a new writ of inquiry held to assess the damages. This rule was instantly granted by Lord Ellenborough. Upon my receiving notice to shew cause, as it was a mere point of law to be argued, I gave instructions to my attorney to employ my friend Henry Clifford, to oppose the rule. The motion came on in the Court, and Mr. Clifford argued that unless they had violated their oath, the jurors could not possibly come to any other conclusion. As they were sworn to assess the damages agreeable to the evidence, and as the only witness called had sworn that there was not the *thousandth part of a farthing* damage done, how could a conscientious jury give any damage? It was merely contended, on the other side, that I had admitted the trespass, by suffering judgment to go by default; and therefore the jury were bound to give some damage. In this wise and just doctrine Lord Ellenborough, and his brethren upon the bench, fully and unequivocally concurred; and his lordship was quite severe upon Mr. Clifford, and wondered how, as a lawyer, he could have the face to argue to the contrary. The Court consequently ruled, that a new writ of inquiry should be issued to assess the damages; the plaintiff first paying the costs of the former writ of inquiry, and this application to the Court.

I was now served with a notice, that the writ would be executed at Devizes, at seven o'clock in the evening, on the third day of the sessions, and that counsel would attend. I merely said to the attorney, who served me with the notice, "well! if the Court of King's Bench has so ruled it, so it must be." The sessions arrived; the third day came; and, as I did not appear in the town, it was generally understood, amongst the barristers and attorneys, that there would be no sport, as I should make no attempt to obtain another verdict, in opposition to the opinion of the Court of King's Bench.

The magistrates, counsel, and attornies had all taken their dinner and were sitting very snugly enjoying their wine, when the Under-Sheriff, with an attorney of the name of Tinney, of Salisbury, whom he had employed to preside for him, retired to the Court, to hold the inquiry, intimating at the

same time to their guzzling companions, whom they left enjoying their good cheer, that they should very soon rejoin them, as they should dispatch the affair in about half an hour. They sent word to Mr. Casberd, their counsel, that they would send for him as soon as their jury were sworn; Mr. Tinney informing him that his attendance would be required only for a few minutes, as it would be a matter of form, merely to prove the fact, and direct the jury to give a shilling nominal damages.

This was the Michaelmas sessions, 1807. I was residing at Bath at that period, and having taken an early dinner I got into my carriage, at half past four o'clock, with my son, then about seven years of age, and desired the post boy to drive to Devizes. When he came to the turnpike, at the entrance of the town, he inquired if he should drive to the Bear? I told him to drive me to the Town Hall. When I reached that building, I stepped out of the carriage, and, with my son in my hand, I walked into the Court, to the great astonishment of as snug a little band as ever assembled to perform such a little job, to assess damages upon a writ of inquiry. The Sheriffs deputy's deputy, Mr. Tinney, had taken his seat upon the bench; the jury were in the box, and the last man of the jury was just about to kiss the book, when I begged the officer to repeat the oath once more, deliberately, before the juryman was sworn. He did so, as follows—"You shall well and truly try, &c. &c. and a true verdict give *according to the evidence*." Mr. Casberd, the counsel, had arrived in the interim, and was adjusting his wig. These, together with the plaintiff's attorney, and about a score of the inhabitants who lived in the immediate vicinity of the Hall, formed as pretty a select party for such a job, as ever was assembled upon any occasion.

The execution of this new writ of inquiry had created a considerable sensation in the town, and the rehearing of the famous cause, which had produced a discussion in the Court above, had excited a considerable interest amongst the gentry of the profession; but as it was understood that I should not attend, and that it would go off, as a matter of course, undefended, or at least unresisted by me, the interest that it had at first excited had completely subsided, and if I had not come it would have been, as Mr. Tinney had anticipated, over in ten minutes. But the news of my arrival spread like wildfire, and the bench was instantly crowded with magistrates, the green table with counsel and attorneys, and the whole Court was crammed as full as it could hold.

Instead of the usual course being followed, by the counsel for the plaintiff opening his case, the Jury and the Court were favoured with an address from the chair, by Mr. Tinney, who acted as sheriff. In the most unfair and unjustifiable manner he informed them, that the same writ of inquiry had been executed once before, and that the defendant had prevailed upon the jury to give a verdict which was not warranted by law; that the Court of King's Bench had set that verdict aside, and Lord Ellenborough had ruled, that, as the defendant had suffered judgment to go by default, he had admitted the trespass, and therefore the jury were bound to give some damage; and he cautioned them not to listen to any thing I might say to the contrary, and told them that when they had heard Mr. Casberd, they would give nominal damages.

I listened to this pretty prelude with great unconcern, and without offering the least interruption to the speaker. Mr. Casberd now began to address them, and very properly said, that the sheriff had *left him but little to do*, as he had explained to them the nature of the duty they had to perform. He, however, went over the same ground, and strongly urged them not to be warped from their duty, by any thing I might say. At this period I strongly suspected I should have no defence to make, that they had been advised not to call any witnesses, that they meant to rely upon my having suffered judgment to pass by default, and, on that ground, to call on the jury to give merely nominal damages. But my suspicions were soon removed by the learned counsel saying, that he should call one witness, merely to prove the fact of the trespass, and that he should then claim a verdict of some damages from their hands, as it had been ruled by the Court above, that the jury must give some damages, the defendant having suffered judgment to go by default, and by so doing admitted the trespass.

My old friend, the shepherd, was now called, and sworn; and having deposed to the fact, that on such a day of the month, he saw me six yards upon the down of his master, Mr. Simpkins, he was told that he might withdraw. This he was hastily doing, when I hailed him, and desired him to honour us with his company a few minutes longer, as I wished just to ask him a question or two. The impartial judge, Mr. Tinney, said he should protect the witness from answering any improper questions. In reply to this very acute remark, I observed, that it would be quite in good time to do that when any improper question was put. After a great deal of squabbling with the worthy judge upon this occasion, I got the worthy witness, although he had been well drilled, to admit that he had sworn at Warminster, that there was not the *thousandth part of a farthing damage* done by me in walking six yards over his master's down. This, he at length admitted to be the fact, and that no damage whatever was done.

In a speech, which took up about an hour, I now addressed the jury, all the individuals of which were perfect strangers to me; and I strongly urged them to give a conscientious verdict, agreeable to the oath they had taken, and to assess the damages *according to the evidence which they had heard*.

During this address, I was repeatedly interrupted by Mr. Tinney, who presided; but when I concluded, after having made a forcible appeal to their honour as men and as Englishmen, there was, on my sitting down, an universal burst of applause, upon which, Mr. Deputy's deputy ordered the officers to take all the offenders into custody. This impotent threat caused an universal laugh, and the enraged and mortified judge proceeded to sum up, as he called it, in a fruitless and weak, though laboured attempt, to refute what I had said in my address. In fact, he acted as a zealous advocate for the plaintiff, or rather as a stickler for the absurd rule of court, to make the jury give a verdict of damages, notwithstanding the only witness produced, swore, that there was not the thousandth part of a farthing damage done.

The jury turned round, and were about to consider their verdict, but Mr. Deputy's deputy peremptorily ordered them to withdraw, to consider their verdict. I expostulated against this; and while the discussion was going on, the foreman of the jury said, they were unanimous in their verdict, which was that of "NO DAMAGES." This enraged Mr. Deputy to such a degree, that he exposed himself to the ridicule of the whole Court; he insisted upon their withdrawing to reconsider their verdict, said that he would not accept any such verdict, neither would he record it, and he peremptorily ordered the officer to take them out, that they might reconsider it. Several of the jury had got out of the door, and all of them were removing but one old gentleman, who sat very firmly upon the front seat, and never offered to rise. The officer with his white wand tapped him several times upon the shoulder, and desired him to withdraw. The old man, whose name was DAVID WADWORTH, a baker of the town of Devizes, answered each tap with "I sha'nt." Mr. Deputy's deputy now rose, and with an affected solemnity, ordered the old man to withdraw, and reconsider his verdict. He replied, "I sha'nt reconsider my verdict! I have given one verdict, and I sha'nt give any other!" *Deputy*.—"You have given a verdict of NO DAMAGES, which is contrary to law, and which I will not receive; therefore go and reconsider your verdict, for I insist upon your giving some damage." The reader will easily conceive that I did not hear this in silence; I exclaimed, "For shame! what a mockery of justice!" Mr. Deputy threatened; I smiled a look of contempt and defiance. Mr. Deputy turned round to the officer, and peremptorily ordered him to turn the old man out; and he began to follow his instructions, by taking him by the collar. The old gentleman, however, was not to be trifled with, for he sent the officer with his elbow to the other end of the jury-box, and exclaimed, "I won't go out; I won't reconsider my verdict." *Deputy*.—"I *will* have some damage, if it be ever so small." Old man.—"I won't give any damage. Why, did not the shepherd swear there wa'n't a mite of grass for a sheep to gnaw? Then how could there be any damage? T'other'em may do what they like, but I won't stir a peg, nor alter my verdict. I won't break my oath for you, nor Squire Astley; nor all the Squires in the kingdom."

This speech caused a burst of laughter and universal approbation. Mr. Deputy's deputy now ordered him into custody, and said he would commit him. Against this I loudly protested, declaring it false and arbitrary imprisonment. "False imprisonment" resounded through the Court, and great confusion arose; the candles were put out by the audience, and such indignation was levelled at the mock judge, this jack-in-office, that Mr. Deputy and his companions took the prudent course of making a precipitate retreat, proving to a demonstration that a light pair of heels, upon such an emergency, is a very valuable appendage even to a deputy's deputy. The cry was to chair me to the Inn; I with a stentorian voice exclaimed "*NO!*" chair David Wadworth to his home; and taking advantage of the general confusion, I and my son stepped into my carriage, which I had ordered to be in waiting, and we arrived at my own door, in Bath, just as the clock struck twelve. On the first day of Term, the sixth day of November, Mr. Casberd, after stating a most pitiful case to the Court of King's Bench, moved for a rule to shew cause why this second verdict of "*no Damages*" should not be set aside, and a new writ executed. This rule was instantly granted; but the plaintiff was ordered to pay the costs of the inquiry held at Devizes, and of the present motion, as a punishment, I suppose, for not having managed matters better. As soon as I received the notice, I repaired to London, to consult Mr. Clifford upon opposing the motion; and, as I thought, with additional grounds of success. But, upon hearing the case, my friend Clifford absolutely refused to shew cause against the rule; declaring that it was useless, and that he would not a second time encounter, upon the same subject, the sarcasms of Lord Ellenborough. "Well then!" said I, "I will myself attend and shew cause against the rule." I shall never forget poor Clifford! I shall never forget his look of astonishment. He seemed to be absolutely struck speechless. After a considerable pause, however, he exclaimed. What! will you go into the Court of King's Bench, to argue a point of law with the four Judges, against their own decision? "Yes," said I, "I will, even should there be four hundred judges; and I will state that I have done so, in consequence of your refusing to do it." "By G—d," said he, "if you do so, they will commit you." I smiled, and told him I thought he knew me better than to suppose that I should be deterred from doing what I conceived to be my duty, by the dread of being committed, or of having any other punishment inflicted upon me. "Well," said he, "you may do as you please, but, by G—d, Lord Ellenborough will surely commit you." I replied, that I supposed he would not eat me; and even if I thought he would attempt it, I would go and see if he would not choke himself. Clifford then asked if I had studied the law upon the subject; upon which I begged him to turn to some act of parliament, to shew that a jury were bound to give a verdict directly

in the teeth of the evidence. Clifford admitted that there was no law upon the point; but argued, in the language of Lord Ellenborough, that it was a rule of court, and that the Judges would not listen to me for a moment.

The day arrived, I attended the Court; at length it came to Mr. Casberd's turn, to say, (in answer to the inquiry of the Chief Justice, whether he had any motion to make,) "My Lord, I move for the rule to be made absolute, which I obtained the other day, in the case of Simpkins and Hunt; and I call upon the defendant's counsel, my learned friend, Mr. Clifford, to shew cause why the second verdict, 'No Damages,' should not be set aside, and why a fresh writ of inquiry should not be executed before a judge at the assizes for the county of Wilts.

Mr. Clifford now got up, and said, that he had no instructions; but that the defendant himself was in Court, and, as he understood, meant personally to offer something for their Lordships' consideration. When he had concluded, I rose immediately; my Lord Ellenborough, and his brothers upon the bench, darted their eyes at me, as if they meant at once to abash and deter me from saying any thing. I, however, was not to be put down in this manner; and I began, in my homely strain, to address them. But, before five words were out of my mouth, Lord Ellenborough interrupted me, and in one of his stern tones, demanded, if I came there to argue a point of law, upon which they had already decided? I answered firmly, "I am summoned here to shew cause why a second verdict, given in my favour, in the cause of Simpkins against Hunt, should not be set aside, and why a third writ of inquiry, in the same cause, should not be executed; and if your Lordships choose to hear me I will do so to the best of my ability." "Well, go on," was the answer, in a very rough uncouth voice, and with a frown, and a roll upon the bench, which set all the learned friends in a titter.

I was proceeding to say something, and, I suppose, in rather an awkward and confused manner, when with a sneer on his face, the bear of a judge bellowed out, "Mr. Casberd told us, that the jury at Devizes were influenced by your *persuasive eloquence*! I see nothing of it here!" This insult roused me; I began now to speak as loud as his lordship, and demanded to be heard without interruption. The amiable judge next inquired, whether I had any affidavits in answer to those filed against me on the part of the plaintiff? I answered "Yes, I had many; but I wished to proceed in my own way." But this was refused to me. The judge demanded to see the affidavits, and I consequently produced one made by myself, as well as one from nearly every one of the jurors who had sat upon the two former writs of inquiry. These affidavits, one and all, declared, that the jurymen had given a verdict agreeable to the oath which they had taken, and to the only evidence produced by the plaintiff; and they added, that they could not conscientiously give any other verdict. The jurors who sat upon both the inquests hearing of the rule that was obtained to set aside the second verdict, had voluntarily sent me up these affidavits in the most handsome manner. I had, however, no sooner read one of them half through, than Lord Ellenborough, who had been whispering with one of his worthy brothers, endeavoured to stop me, notwithstanding which I proceeded, till he jumped up in a violent passion, and in a stentorian voice declared, that I should not read those affidavits; that they were not admissible, and he would not hear them. I began coolly to argue the point with him, and contended that they were not only applicable but material to the justice of the case; and without the Court would hear them it would be deciding in the dark. The affidavits were, I said, couched in respectful and even humble language, and I maintained that the Court was bound in justice to listen to them. I had by this time overcome the awkward feeling which I first experienced at being placed in such a situation as that of the floor of the King's Bench, which is, as it were, between a cross fire of gowns and wigs; and I said this in a firm and deliberate manner.

Stung by my coolness and perseverance, Ellenborough jumped up once more, and, with the most furious language and gestures, began to browbeat me, actually foaming with rage, some of his spittle literally falling on Masters Lushington and another, who sat under him. I own that I could scarcely forbear laughing in his face, to see a Judge, a Chief Justice, in such a ridiculous passion. In a broad north country accent, he exclaimed, "Sir, are you come here to teach us our duty?" He was about to proceed, when I stopped him short, and in a tone of voice, a note or two higher than his own, I replied, "No, my Lord, I am not come here with any such purpose or hope; but, as an Englishman, I come here, into the King's Court, to claim justice of his Judges; and I *demand* a hearing; therefore, sit down, my Lord, and shew me that you understand your duty, by giving me your patient attention." I said this in such a determined way, that he instantly sat down, and folding his arms, he threw himself back in his seat, where, for a considerable time, he sat sulkily listening to what I had to say; in fact, till I had almost finished.

I now went on to argue that there was no law to compel a jury to give a verdict contrary to evidence, and I dared them to find twelve honest men in the county of Wilts who would do so. "Nay," said I, "if there be but one honest man upon the jury, I will pledge my life that that jury will give a similar verdict—your lordships may decide what the verdict shall be, and what damages I ought to pay; but you will never get a jury, if there be but only one honest man upon it, who will give any damages. If you have

hampered yourselves by a ridiculous rule of your own Court, the sooner you do away with such a rule the better for the character of the Court. I will abide by any decision that you will please to give; but, for God's sake, never grant a rule, never make a rule absolute, expressly for the purpose of trying the experiment, whether you cannot compel twelve honest men to perjure themselves, merely to comply with an absurd rule of Court."

The Chief Justice had been biting his lips during the whole of my address; but this was too much, it was the truth in plain language; and accordingly he rose up once more, and having recovered himself, he, in rather a more dignified tone, called upon me to forbear, and not insult the Court, or he should be obliged to stop me, which he was unwilling to do, he being anxious to promote the ends of justice, and hear what I had to say. Thus, after having, for nearly an hour, done every thing in his power to browbeat me, to put me down, and to prevent my being heard at all, *now*, forsooth, *now* that he found I was not to be intimidated, he was anxious to promote the cause of justice, and to hear what I had to say! After going over the tender ground again and again, I declared, in conclusion, that if they did make the rule absolute and send it before a judge and another jury, that I should feel it incumbent on me to attend, and exhort that jury to do their duty, and not to perjure themselves. They might, I told them, send it down to the assizes, but, as they could not have a *special jury*, I would pledge my life that they could not pick out twelve common jurymen in the whole county, who would give a verdict which would in effect say that the twenty-four of their countrymen, who composed the two former juries, had been guilty of perjury. I implored the judges to settle the verdict themselves, in which case I would abide by it; but not to try the experiment upon another jury, who would be sure to give a similar verdict of "No Damages."

Lord Ellenborough made a long palavering speech, urging the necessity of not departing from their former practice, and he expressed his opinion that the rule ought to be made absolute, in which, as a matter of course, his three brethren upon the bench agreed. The rule was therefore made absolute, and a new writ of inquiry ordered to be executed, before the judge of assize for the county of Wilts; the plaintiff first paying the expense of the former writ of inquiry, and of this application to the Court.

My argument and the decision were published in all the newspapers, and created a considerable sensation throughout the country, amongst the practitioners of the law; and although there were a variety of opinions held as to the legality of the verdict, it was the universal opinion in the county of Wilts, that if I attended, and took the same ground as I did upon the two former occasions, any other jury would give the same verdict. As I did not disguise my intention of attending for that purpose, a question arose amongst the attorneys, the friends of the plaintiff, whether it was not possible to prevent my being present when the writ was executed; but, as I was determined, this was considered to be impracticable; and I own, whenever I heard such a proposition discussed, I treated it with contempt, being convinced that such a plan could never be executed. I knew, indeed, that all sorts of schemes were openly canvassed at the time, but I paid no attention to them, little dreaming of any plot being formed for carrying them into effect. It will, however, be seen hereafter, that I was much too confident, and that I was ultimately defeated, by means of a most infamous conspiracy. Relying upon my own straight-forward and upright conduct, I was totally neglectful of the machinations against me of the *stock purse* conspirators, who, I have since learned, never let an opportunity slip to draw me into a scrape; and, as they spared no pains or expense, and as they employed a host of emissaries, it was not at all surprising if they succeeded in some of their attempts, as I was a sanguine sportsman, and devoted to the pleasures of the chace, and was likewise an excellent shot; and it was in my zeal in following these field sports that they placed their greatest reliance of catching me upon the hop, they being ever on the watch to take the meanest advantage of the slightest trespass or other occurrence, upon which they could find an action, regardless whether it was tenable or not.

I was riding out one morning, shooting with a friend, and as we were passing along a lane, a public high road, I suddenly felt a smart blow on the side, and at the same moment some one seized me by the flap of my shooting jacket, and nearly pulled me off my horse. When I recovered myself, and turned round, my friend, the late Mr. John Oakes, of Bath, who had seen the attack made upon me, was demanding of a ruffian the reason for such outrageous conduct. This ruffian was a fellow of the name of Stone, a game-keeper to Mr. John Bennett, of Pyt-House, of Corn-Bill notoriety, one of the present members for the county of Wilts. Stone stood grinning defiance, with a double-barrelled gun, cocked, in his hand. Indignant at the atrocity of the assault which, without the slightest provocation, had been committed upon me, I sprung from my horse, and laid down my own gun on the bank, and walking deliberately up to the scoundrel, I first seized his gun with one hand, and with the other I struck him three or four blows; upon which he let go the gun and fell. This fellow was a notorious fighter, and, as he has since confessed, was hired to commit this assault upon me, with the expectation that I should resent it, which would afford him an opportunity to give me a severe drubbing. His goodly scheme was, however, frustrated; for my first blow, after I came in contact with him, was planted so effectually, and followed up so rapidly, that the hireling bruiser was defeated, before he could make any successful

attempt to retaliate.

Having discharged his gun, I returned it to him, and the gentleman walked off, or rather sneaked away, not only having himself received a sound hiding, such as he had intended and undertaken to give to me, but apparently perfectly ashamed and sensible of his folly. It appears, however, that after he had gone home, about a quarter of a mile, and washed himself and taken his dinner, he, on the same afternoon, walked to Pyt-House, a distance of thirty miles, to inform his master of the awkward and unexpected result of the experiment which he had been making. After due deliberation, he was advised to return, and to prefer at the sessions a bill of indictment against me for the assault. If he could procure any witness to confirm his story, so much the better; but, as no other person was present but myself and my friend, this was no easy matter to be accomplished. The bill was, however, found at the quarter sessions, and the indictment was removed by *certiorari* into the Court of King's Bench, to be tried at the assizes.

This was considered as a great point gained by my enemies; and the members of the stock-purse association were greatly rejoiced, that they had got me into what was considered by some of them as being a serious scrape. Others openly expressed themselves in this way, "That they would much rather have paid their money to Stone, if he had given me a good thrashing, than to have me punished by legal proceedings." And one of them, a parson prig, had the insolence and the folly to tell me, that they would get a *better man* for me next time, for that they were determined to bring down one of the *prize-fighters* to give me a drubbing. This fellow was then, and still is, an insufferable cockscorn, and I remember very well my answer to him. I told him, that I knew all the prize-fighters of any note, and they knew me; and that, with the exception of GULLEY and CRIBB, who I was certain would not undertake any such office, I was sure that if any one of them made the attempt, I should serve him in the same way that I had served Stone.

Another of the stock-purse gang, MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, of Netheravon, one of the M. P.'s for Cirencester, had brought an action of trespass against me, which was also to be tried at the same assizes; so that, with this, and the writ of inquiry in the case of Simpkins and Hunt, which was for the third time to be executed before one of the judges, my hands were pretty full of law business. This circumstance, however, did not deter me from doing my duty to the public, when occasion offered. I was very well aware that I had drawn down the indignation and the hatred of the aristocratical upholders of a corrupt system of government, by the open and avowed hostility that I had always expressed, in public and in private, against the supporters and abettors of the system; and I will now proceed to shew the reader, which, perhaps, I ought to have done before, the main cause of this inveterate hostility against me, and of the stock-purse conspiracy being formed, for the declared purpose of putting me down, and, if possible, driving me out of the county.

It will be recollected that I stood forward publicly at the county meeting, that was held relative to Lord Melville's peculations, and that I had afterwards called the county members to account for their conduct, in not opposing the two shillings a bushel additional duty that was imposed upon malt. These were mighty offences, not easily to be forgiven; but the grand offence, that which was so unpardonable, that it was never to be expiated, was, that I had caused a requisition to be signed, and procured a county meeting, in order to censure the Duke of York, and to send up a vote of thanks to Colonel Wardle, for his having detected and exposed the infamous transactions practised by the famous Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, and the Commander in Chief, with regard to promotions and exchanges in the army.

The Parliament of Great Britain assembled on the 19th January this year, 1809. The King's speech, which was delivered by commission, announced the offer of peace made by the Emperors of France and Russia, and the reason for rejecting it, which was, that his Majesty had entered into a treaty of friendship with the Spanish government. In this speech he relies on his faithful Commons to grant him the supplies for pursuing the war with vigour, congratulates them upon the complete success of the plan for establishing a local militia, and urges them to take steps for maintaining the war in Spain, by increasing the regular army as much as possible, without weakening the means of defence at home. The ministers carried every measure with a high hand, and the *faithful Commons*, by very large majorities, granted the supplies for 120,000 seamen and 400,000 soldiers. Thus the ministers, aided by the faithful representatives of the people, were plucking John Gull, and emptying his pockets, by almost turning them inside outwards, while they were tickling John's brains with promises of glory, and a number of other fine things.

Charges were now made, and supported by authentic reports, as to the misconduct and speculation of the commissioners of Dutch property. These charges were brought forward by the regular marshalled opposition, the Whigs, as well as various other charges, as to the abuses existing in the military and naval departments; but, as these were mere regular opposition sham fights, the ministers put them down, by a negative to all their motions, and they even caused a bill to pass, to allow the army to recruit from the militia.

While, however, they were going on in this way *ding dong*, a real opponent to their measures started up in the House, a man who was not one of the regular gang of the Whig opposition. On the 27th January, Colonel WARDLE, in pursuance of a notice which he had given, rose up in the House, and, after having in a clear and straight-forward speech, detailed a series of the most nefarious and disgraceful practices, between the Duke of York, the Commander in Chief, and his mistress, Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, as to the disposal of patronage in the army, by Mrs. Clarke, for large pecuniary douceurs, which she received while living with his Royal Highness, &c. &c. he concluded by moving for the appointment of a Committee, to inquire into the conduct of the Commander in Chief, with regard to promotions and exchanges in the army, and other points. Sir Francis Burdett seconded the motion. The Ministers, as well as the regular old stagers of the opposition, appeared to be in the greatest consternation; yet they all professed to be rejoiced that his Royal Highness would now have an opportunity of clearing away these insinuations, which had been so basely levelled at him, for some time past, by the jacobinical part of the public press; which attacks Mr. York, Mr. Canning, and Lord Castlereagh asserted to be the effect of a *conspiracy* against the Royal Family.

The Ministers argued strenuously for the appointment of a parliamentary commission, in which they were joined by the artful and cunning suggestions and canting palaver of Mr. Wilberforce. The cry of a jacobinical conspiracy was loudly raised, and Colonel Wardle was reviled, taunted, and menacingly reminded of the great responsibility which he incurred, by making such charges against the illustrious Commander in Chief. The cunning, hypocritical Whigs all joined in this cry, and disclaimed any connection with the brave and manly Colonel Wardle. Mr. Sheridan went so far as to declare in the House, that, as soon as Colonel Wardle had given notice of this motion, he had sent to him, and urged him not to persevere in so dangerous a course!—The famous Mr. Charles Yorke, after threatening the honourable mover with the *heavy responsibility* that he had brought upon himself, congratulated the House that they had at last got some charges made against his Royal Highness, the Commander in Chief, in a *tangible form*; and he hoped the House would do its duty to itself, the country, and the Royal House of Brunswick. Mr. Yorke declared that he believed there existed a *conspiracy*, of the most atrocious and diabolical kind against his Royal Highness, (loud cries of *hear! hear! hear!*) founded on the *jacobinical* spirit which appeared at the commencement of the French revolution. Mr. Canning, in a flaming speech, declared, that *infamy* must attach either upon the *accuser* or the *accused*. The whole of the ministerial side of the House attacked the brave Colonel, and most of the sly Whigs joined in the clamour. Little Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir Vicary Gibbs, the Attorney General, flew at the honourable member like two terriers at a badger; but Colonel Wardle never shifted his ground. Nothing daunted in a good and honest cause, he relied upon his own courage and integrity, and coolly set all their threats at defiance. Sir Francis Burdett certainly seconded his motion, but he said but little, very, very little, upon the occasion. The only one who, in the first instance, appeared at all to stand honestly and boldly by the honourable member, was Lord Folkestone. In answer to Mr. Perceval's threats and insinuations, the Colonel very deliberately made fresh charges, instead of retracting any of those that he had preferred; in addition to these charges against the Duke, he stated, that there was a regular office in the city, held under the firm of Pollman and Heylock, in Threadneedle-street, for effecting transactions of a similar nature, and these were effected by Mrs. Carey, the present favourite mistress of the Duke of York; and that two of the members of the cabinet, the Lord Chancellor Eldon, and the Duke of Portland, were implicated in such negotiations.

This motion created in the public mind such a sensation as an earthquake would have created; and the country rung with it from one end of the land to the other, from north to south, and from east to west. This is an ample demonstration, as we shall by and by see, of what can be done by *one* member in that House, however corrupt it may be, provided that the member possess *courage*, *industry*, and *perseverance*. The Honourable House was now fairly fixed, and it was compelled to come to a vote, that the whole inquiry should be had in public, and the witnesses should be examined at the bar, before the whole House. Bravo, Honourable House! Bravo, Colonel Wardle! Mrs. Clarke was called to give her testimony at the bar of the Honourable House, and her evidence, which exhibited such a scene as was never before brought before the public, was inserted in every newspaper in the two islands; it was published and read in every village, in every pot-house, and, in fact, in every house in the united kingdom, from the palace to the shepherd's hut. And yet Sir Francis Burdett is constantly asking, "what can *one man* do in the Honourable House." I ask, "What is there that one honest, courageous, and persevering man could not do in the House of Commons?" Colonel Wardle, it is true, had at the outset the support of but very few members of the Honourable House, perhaps, honestly and fairly, of not one, except Lord Folkestone; for, very soon after this inquiry began, Sir Francis Burdett was laid up with the *gout*. Whether it was a *political gout* or not, the honourable Baronet is alone able to say; nor is it here worth my while to inquire. Colonel Wardle, however, found that he could do without even his support, upon which he certainly calculated when he commenced the inquiry. But if Sir Francis Burdett had the gout, the whole nation had not; Colonel Wardle found himself supported and backed by the whole nation, and this support carried him through with his task, as it always will any man and every man who takes the same honest, upright, straight-forward cause that he did.

It came out in evidence that this said Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke lived in the most luxurious and extravagant manner, during the time that she was what is called "kept" by the Duke; she said that she had never received more than a thousand a year from his Royal Highness, which was barely sufficient to pay servants' wages and liveries, but that the Duke told her,—*"if she was clever, she need never want money."* Twenty thousand a year was not more than enough to defray all the expenses of this extravagant lady, and of the Gloucester-place establishment where she lived.

The whole of this sum must have been obtained in the way described by the evidence produced; that is to say, must have been got by her from persons who procured promotion in the army, through her influence over the Commander in Chief. As an instance of her extravagance, it was proved, that her wine glasses, out of which she and the Duke drank, cost a guinea a piece!

After all, as might have been expected, a majority of the House of Commons acquitted the Duke of York, upon the following motion of Colonel Wardle, for an address to the King, which address expressed the opinion of the House, *"That the Duke of York knew of the abuses, which had been proved to have existed, and that he ought to be deprived of the command of the army."* A hundred and twenty-five members voted for this motion, and three hundred and sixty-three against it; Colonel Wardle and Lord Folkestone were the tellers. Sir Francis Burdett, being ill in the gout, was not present, and therefore did not vote at all. Upon Mr. Bankes's motion, which stated *that the Duke of York must at least have had a suspicion of the existence of the corrupt practices, and a doubt whether the chief command of the army could with propriety, or ought with prudence to remain in his hands;* upon this motion there were a hundred and ninety-nine for, and two hundred and ninety-four against it. On the 17th March, Mr. Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought forward a motion, *"That it was the opinion of the House, that there was no ground to charge his Royal Highness with personal corruption, or with any connivance at the corrupt and infamous practices disclosed in the evidence."* For this, the minister's motion, there were two hundred and seventy-eight ayes, and a hundred and ninety-six noes; giving to the King's servants a majority of eighty-two, out of nearly five hundred members who were present.

With this decision the country was not at all satisfied, and public meetings were called all over the kingdom, for the purpose of voting thanks to Colonel Wardle, and expressing their opinion upon the foregoing proceedings of the honourable and faithful representatives of the people. Such was the unequivocal and unanimous manifestation of public feeling upon this extraordinary decision of the Honourable House, and such was its effect, that, on the 20th of March, the said Mr. Perceval informed the House,—*"That the Duke of York had that morning waited on his Majesty, and resigned the office of Commander in Chief."*

Thus did the united voice of the nation produce the dismissal, or, in other words, cause the resignation of the Duke of York from the situation of Commander in Chief, in spite of a corrupt ministerial majority in the House of Commons. The Ministers advised this measure, in the hope of silencing the public clamour against their barefaced corrupt proceedings in the House; but this rather confirmed the public in the opinion as to the necessity of the people's meeting to express their opinions. I sincerely believe that Mr. Cobbett, by his able and luminous weekly publication, the Political Register, which was now very generally read, did more than all the public writers in the kingdom to keep this feeling alive, and to draw the attention of the public to just and proper conclusions, as to the evidence, as well as to the views and objects of those who cut a prominent figure in conducting the proceedings in the House; and he most successfully and most triumphantly defended Colonel Wardle, Lord Folkestone, and Sir Francis Burdett, from all the malignant attacks that were made upon them by the venal and hireling press of the metropolis; his ability, industry, and zeal in this affair, were above all praise; and, next to Colonel Wardle, he merited the thanks of his countrymen. By these irresistible productions of his pen, however, he drew down upon himself the implacable hatred and mortal enmity of the Ministers and the Government; and I have no doubt that Sir Vicary Gibbs, the Attorney-General, received instructions to keep a most vigilant look-out after him, as the Ministers had marked him for the victim of their vengeance.

It is worthy of notice that Lord Stanley and Samuel Horrocks, Esq., the members for Preston, voted for the motion of Colonel Wardle, and they were the only members from the county of Lancaster who voted on that side of the question. There were only two or three lawyers who voted in the minority, namely, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. C. W. Wynne, and Mr. Horner; one military officer, General Fergusson; and one naval officer, Admiral Markham.

I have been thus particular in describing this transaction, because many of my young readers must have but a very faint recollection of the circumstance; a circumstance that created full as powerful a sensation in the country, at that day, in 1809, as did the persecutions of Queen Caroline, in 1820. Every friend of justice, every lover of freedom, and every man and woman of spirit in the country, wished to render a tribute of praise to Colonel Wardle, for his manly and patriotic exertions in the House. It was

not to be expected that the House of Commons, which was composed of such faithful representatives of the people, who voted, by a considerable majority, against Colonel Wardle's motion, would agree to a vote of thanks to him, although it was talked of by some of the honourable members. Mr. Canning, as the organ of the ministers, put a negative upon such a measure, by saying that, if it were proposed, he should feel it his duty to resist it; in which opposition Mr. Whitbread, the organ of the Whigs, concurred. But the people were actuated by a more honest and more generous feeling, and the brave men of GLASGOW and its vicinity set the noble example. The authorities there refused to comply with an application to call a public meeting; the friends of liberty then proposed an address to be signed; but the venal editors of the newspapers refused to advertise it. This, nevertheless, did not deter those who wished to promote so praiseworthy a measure; they printed hand-bills, and posted them, announcing "a just tribute to Colonel Wardle," and calling upon the inhabitants to come forward and sign an address to the honourable member, as follows:

"That Colonel Wardle, by first stepping forward, and by his conduct throughout the whole of the investigation now pending in the honourable the House of Commons, relative to his Royal Highness the Duke of York, has proved himself to the world, to be one of the most magnanimous, patriotic, firm, and candid men in his Majesty's dominions."

These placards were posted on the 14th of March, and at the end of four days the address was forwarded to Colonel Wardle, with four thousand signatures. The city of Canterbury followed the example by a public meeting, at which they passed a vote of thanks, and presented him with the freedom of their city. London, Westminster, and ten or fifteen other cities did the same; Middlesex and ten other counties also met, and unanimously passed the highest tributes of praise to Col. Wardle. A requisition was signed and sent to the sheriff of the county of Hants, at the head of which was the name of Mr. Cobbett, who addressed a letter to the independent people of that county, calling upon them to attend the meeting, and emulate the example set them by the people of Middlesex and other counties.

The meeting was held at Winchester, by the appointment of the High Sheriff, on the 25th of April; John Blackburn, Esq. sheriff, in the chair. Before the meeting commenced, Mr. Cobbett made an unsuccessful effort to unite with the Whigs, that their proceedings might be carried unanimously. But Lord Northesk and Mr. Poulett would not agree to support his resolutions. The publicity which, in Mr. Cobbett's Register, as well as in the London and country papers, was given to the holding of this meeting at Winchester, excited a considerable sensation and great interest all over that part of the kingdom. As I had made up my mind to get a requisition signed in the county of Wilts, I made a point of attending the meeting at Winchester; first, because it was the adjoining county; second, because I wished to make myself well acquainted with the form of proceedings for holding a county meeting; and, third, because I was anxious to become better acquainted with the celebrated Mr. Cobbett, who I expected would be the hero of the day. I was then residing at Bath; but I took my horse on the evening before, and went to Sans Souci Cottage, a distance of thirty miles; and the next morning I rode on to Winchester, thirty miles further, and got there in time to attend the opening of the meeting. As, at that period, I had no property in the county of Hants, I did not go upon the hustings, or rather into the grand-jury-room, out of the windows of which the speakers addressed the multitude, who stood in the large area below; amongst whom I took a convenient position, to hear what passed.

As soon as the sheriff had opened the meeting, Mr. Poulett Poulett addressed the assembly, and proposed a string of resolutions, which were seconded by the Honourable William Herbert, brother of Lord Carnarvon. These two gentlemen were known to be supporters of the regular Whig faction, and, although their resolutions breathed a more liberal spirit than usual, yet the *cloven foot* of the party peeped out, as they contained more of an attack upon the ministers than an abhorrence of the system. Mr. Cobbett then came forward, and, in a speech at once clear, argumentative, and eloquent, which was received with raptures of applause, and appeared to carry conviction to the breast of every one present, with the exception of two or three parsons, who were in the crowd, and who sometimes expressed a sort of disapprobation, by talking and endeavoring to interrupt the business of the day; moved a series of resolutions, as an amendment to those proposed by Mr. Poulett. These resolutions were seconded by Mr. Chamberlayne, of Weston, and supported by Mr. Jones, of Sway. Such speaking as this I had never before heard, and I sincerely believe that the speech of Mr. Chamberlayne was never surpassed by Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, or Burke; it was truly beautiful, and was received from beginning to end with the most unbounded applause.

While these speeches were making it was very evident which side would have the majority. During the whole of the time the three parson prigs continued their interruptions at intervals; although they had been repeatedly admonished to conduct themselves in a more decent manner, one of them a little short squat fellow, in boots and leather breeches, made himself particularly obnoxious by his noise. At length I made my way through the dense crowd, and got alongside of them, and by a very determined remonstrance I kept the others quiet, while, by dint of placing my elbow in the little reverend's side, when he began to open his mouth, the pressure of which made his ribs bend again; I at the same time

exclaiming, "for shame, Sir, be quiet," he was ultimately reduced to silence, and made to conduct himself something like a rational being; although I could see that he gnashed his teeth with rage every time of the application of my elbow to his ribs; a discipline which, in spite of his remonstrance, I never failed to inflict upon him, whenever he offered any interruption to the proceedings. I had the repeated thanks of those around me for thus keeping this little buck in order; but whenever he had an opportunity he was disposed to be scurrilous.

A division being called for, in which those who were in favour of Mr. Cobbett's amendment were to hold up their hats, the three black-coated gentry were the only persons who kept their hats on in that part of the meeting where we were standing. The thought now struck me, that I would punish the little chattering hero; and having my own hat in my left hand, I whipped his off with my right, and continued to hold it so high, that with all his efforts he could not reach it to pull it down. He was in a most outrageous passion, which he exhibited to the great amusement of all those who surrounded him. Mr. Cobbett's amendment was carried almost unanimously, at least two thousand hats being held up for it, and not twenty against it.

This was a great victory obtained over the Whigs of that county, who retired to their inn in great dudgeon, while the successful party, the friends of Mr. Cobbett, flocked in great multitudes to his inn, where a dinner had been provided, and I should think about a hundred and fifty persons sat down to one table in the great room. This party I joined, and once more came in contact with Mr. Cobbett. Though it was a public meeting, yet I contrived to have some private conversation with him; during which I informed him, that I intended to get a requisition signed for a public meeting, in the county of Wilts, and I requested him to attend it, to assist me in arranging the proceedings. Of my procuring the meeting, he very much approved, but he declined to give his attendance, or to interfere; his reason was, that he was neither a freeholder nor a resident in the county. He concluded by saying, "I will publish your proceedings, and if I were a freeholder I would cheerfully come forward; but, as I am not, you must not expect me."

The day was passed with great conviviality, and the bottle went so freely round, that I was mortified and shocked to hear some of those who, in the morning, had delivered the most eloquent, the most brilliant speeches, now, in attempting to speak, utter such trash and balderdash, as would almost have disgraced an idiot: it made such an impression upon me as will never be eradicated. I had formerly been in the habit of taking my glass occasionally (although not to excess), but this specimen which I had before my eyes, sunk so deep into my heart, that from that time forward I resolved within myself to refrain from taking any intoxicating, deleterious liquors. I cannot, even at this distant moment, banish the recollection of the scene from my mind. To behold and to contemplate the dreadful ravages that wine had made upon the most brilliant and enlightened human intellect, was sickening to the very soul. I had then a relation living at Winchester, and I remained there till the next day. In the morning I became acquainted with one of the most staunch and steady friends of Liberty that I ever knew—Mr. Budd, of Newbury, an attorney, and, I believe, clerk of the peace for the county of Berks. He is a freeholder of the county of Hants, and in consequence attended the meeting at Winchester. I returned to Salisbury that evening, drew up a requisition to the sheriff of the county of Wilts, and, having signed it myself, I got it signed, before I went to-bed, by upwards of twenty freeholders; at the head of whom was that excellent, honest, and public-spirited gentleman, William Collins, Esq. I started the next morning, and took Warminster in my road, and, ere I reached Bath, I had got a hundred signatures to the requisition. From Bath I wrote to Sir Charles Ware Malet, the sheriff of the county, who lived at Wilbury-House, near Amesbury; stating that such a requisition was signed, and requesting that he would appoint a day on which he would be at home, that I might wait upon him with it, to know his pleasure as to when and where he would call the meeting. By return of post I received a public answer, which fixed an early day; and on that day, accompanied by a friend, I attended with the requisition at Wilbury-House.

Sir Charles Malet had lived for many years in India, and had returned with a princely fortune; he lived like a nabob, in a beautiful place at Wilbury, and he received us in the most polite manner possible. Having briefly premised the object of our visit, I handed him the requisition, which he read over; and then, casting his eye over the number of signatures, he said, "Really, Mr. Hunt, I know of no other course to pursue but to comply with the request of yourself and your brother freeholders, who have signed the requisition. Without pledging myself to any opinion upon the subject, I consider it my duty to attend to the legitimate request, made by such a respectable number of freeholders of the county of which I am the sheriff. But," added he, "before we consult together where will be the most convenient place, and what will be the most convenient time, to hold the meeting, both for you and me, I have one request to make to you; which is, that after your ride you and your friend will take some refreshment, which I have ordered to be laid for you in the next room. If you will follow me, I shall be happy to partake of it with you, and we will then talk the matter over." He now led us into a magnificent saloon, where there was a cold collation spread before us, fit for a prince and his suite. It

consisted of every delicacy of the season, and some most beautiful fruit, the production of his extensive hot-houses. The butler drew the corks of some sparkling Champagne and fine old hock; but my friend, who was a worthy farmer, requested a draught of ale, in preference to these delicious wines, neither of which did he relish equal to some home-brewed old stingo. This was instantly produced, and in it the Baronet heartily pledged my companion. When we had regaled ourselves, he proposed that we should take a walk round his domain and gardens, and return to an early dinner, so that we might get home in good time in the evening. The first part of the invitation we accepted; but as we had already fared so sumptuously, I declined the invitation to dinner. After he had shown us round the gardens and park of Wilbury, we agreed that Salisbury would be the most proper place to hold the meeting; and, at my request, he fixed the day for Wednesday, the 17th of May; a distance of time which would allow the notice of the meeting to be advertised twice in the Salisbury Journal. Thus, to a perfect stranger, did Sir Charles Malet conduct himself; seeking only to do his duty openly, honestly, and conscientiously, without being guided or warped by party feelings, or factious views or motives. There was no high-sounding title among the requisitionists, but they were men, and they were freeholders; and, as he justly observed, it was not his business to inquire whether they were Lords or Commoners, his only study was to do his duty; which he would endeavour to perform conscientiously.

The next day I sent for my attorney, and instructed him to prepare a conveyance, a deed of gift of a freehold tenement and garden, which I wished to be delivered immediately to Mr. Cobbett; which he promised to do at Salisbury, on the morning of the 17th of May, if Mr. Cobbett would meet him there. I directed him to write to that gentleman, to request him to meet us there for that purpose, and I also wrote to him to say, that I begged his acceptance of a freehold in the county of Wilts, that he might no longer have the same excuse for not attending our county meeting, which he gave to me when I met him at Winchester, and invited him to meet me on the appointed day. I received an answer from him, to say, that he would attend; and, in consequence of this, before we went into the Hall in the morning, I met him at the Antelope, where my attorney was waiting with the deeds, which I signed, and made a present of to Mr. Cobbett; thus conferring upon him, for his patriotism, a freehold estate, which, although a small one, made him, nevertheless, a freeholder of the county, and entitled him not only to be present as such at our meetings, but also to a vote for the members of the county.

I had prepared the resolutions, which were similar in effect to those which were passed at the Hampshire meeting; but Mr. Madocks having, in the intermediate time, on the 11th of May, made his famous motion in the House of Commons, distinctly charging Mr. Perceval and Lord Castlereagh with having actually sold a seat in Parliament to Mr. Quinten Dick, and with having endeavoured to prevail upon Mr. Dick to vote against Colonel Wardle's motion, in the case of the Duke of York; and the Honourable House having declined to inquire into it, Mr. Cobbett proposed to notice this circumstance in the resolutions. This was immediately done, and we proceeded to the Council-House, where Sir Charles Malet opened the business, in the most crowded assembly that was ever witnessed in that city. As soon as he had done this, I addressed the meeting, which address was received in the most flattering manner, and I closed it by proposing the following resolutions. They were seconded, in an able speech, by the late William Collins, Esq. of Salisbury, and supported by Mr. Bleek, of Warminster, and were carried by an immense majority, many thousand hats being held up for them, and not above a dozen against them. They were inserted in the 15th volume of Cobbett's Register, page 855; but it may be necessary, perhaps, to insert them here, as all my readers may not have access to that work.

"COUNTY OF WILTS.

"At a meeting of the Freeholders, Landholders, and other Inhabitants of the County of Wilts, convened by the High Sheriff, and holden in the Council-Chamber in the City of New Sarum, on Wednesday, the 17th of May, 1809, Sir Charles Warre Malet, in the chair;

"It was Resolved,

"That the thanks of this meeting be given to Gwillim Lloyd Wardle, Esq. for having instituted the recent inquiry in the House of Commons, relative to the conduct of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, as Commander in Chief: for having, unconnected with, and unsupported by, any party or faction, prosecuted that laudable undertaking with unexampled magnanimity, talent, zeal, temper, and perseverance; and especially for having had the resolution to discharge his duty, in defiance of threats and prejudices excited against him by the King's Ministers, and many of the leaders of the opposite party.

"That the thanks of this meeting be given to Sir F. Burdett, Bart. who seconded Mr. Wardle's motion; and also to Lord Viscount Folkestone, for the active and able assistance he afforded to Mr. Wardle during the whole of the inquiry.

"That the thanks of this meeting be given to Lords Viscount Milton and Althorpe, Lord Stanley,

the Hon. T. Brand, Sir Samuel Romilly, Knight, Major-General Fergusson, S. Whitbread, T. Curwen, T. W. Coke, H. Martin, T. Calcraft, and C. W. Wynne, Esqrs. who, during such inquiry, stood forward the advocates of impartial justice; and also to the whole of the minority of 125, who divided in favour of Mr. Wardle's motion; amongst whom, we, as Wiltshire men, observe with pleasure the name of that venerable and truly independent senator, William Hussey, Esq. who, for nine successive Parliaments, has represented the city of New Sarum with ability and perseverance, and with undeviating integrity and independence: of Thomas Goddard, Esq. Member for Cricklade; and of Benjamin Walsh, Esq. Member for Wootton Bassett, in this county: while we observe with indignation and regret, that the name of neither of the Members for this county does appear in that honourable list: and we also lament that, with the exception of Lord Folkestone, William Hussey, Thomas Goddard, and Benjamin Walsh, Esquires, we do not recognise in that list the names of any of the THIRTY-FOUR Members who are sent to Parliament by the various boroughs in this county.

"That, in reverting to the cause of the disgraceful acts revealed and demonstrated during this inquiry, this meeting cannot help observing, that in the Act of Parliament, commonly called the Act of Settlement, in virtue of which Act only His Majesty's family were raised to the throne of this kingdom, it is declared, 'That no person who has an office or place of profit under the King, or receives a pension from the Crown, shall be capable of serving as a Member of the Commons' House of Parliament: but that, notwithstanding the wise precautions of this Act, which is one of our great constitutional laws, and which, as its preamble expresses, was made for the further limitation of the Crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject, it appears from a report laid before the House of Commons, in the month of June last; in consequence of a motion made by Lord Cochrane, that there are in that House EIGHTEEN placemen and pensioners, who, though part of what they receive was not stated, are in the said report stated to receive 178,994 l. a year, out of the taxes paid by the people, and out of that money, to watch over the expenditure of which they themselves are appointed.

"That we observe the names of all those Placemen and Pensioners voting against Mr. Wardle's motion.

"That, in the Act called the Bill of Rights, it is declared, 'That the election of Members of Parliament ought to be free:' and in the same Act it is declared, 'That the violating the freedom of election of Members to serve in Parliament, was one of the crimes of King James the Second, and one of the grounds upon which he was driven from the throne of this kingdom;' but that, notwithstanding that law, this meeting have observed, that on the 14th instant, Mr. Madocks did distinctly charge Mr. Perceval and Lord Castlereagh with having sold a seat in Parliament to Mr. Dick, and with having endeavoured to prevail upon the said Mr. Dick to vote against Mr. Wardle on the case of the Duke of York; and that Mr. Madocks having made a motion for an inquiry into the said transactions, the House, by a very large majority, decided that there should be no such inquiry. "That, from these facts, as well as numerous others, notorious to us and the whole nation, this meeting have a firm conviction, that in the House of Commons, as at present constituted, exists the great and efficient cause of all such scandalous abuses, in various departments of the state, as have in other countries alienated the subject from the sovereign, and ultimately proved the downfall of the state.

"That, therefore, this meeting, anxious alike for the preservation of His Majesty's throne and legitimate authority; for the restoration of the rights and liberties bequeathed them by the wisdom, the fortitude, and the valour of their forefathers, hold it a duty which they owe to their sovereign and his successors, to themselves and to their children, and to the safety, happiness, and renown of their country, to declare their decided opinion and conviction, that no change for the better can be reasonably expected without such a Reform in the Commons' House of Parliament, as shall make that house in reality, as well as in name, the representative of the people, and not an instrument in the hands of a minister. And we further declare, that, from the proof we have always had of His Majesty's love for his people, we have full confidence in his Royal support and protection in our constitutional efforts against a faction, not less hostile to the true dignity and just prerogatives of His Majesty's throne, than they are to the interest and feelings of his faithful, suffering, and insulted people.

"That Henry Penruddock Wyndham and Richard Long, Esquires, the representatives of this county, have, by their late conduct in Parliament, proved themselves undeserving the confidence of their constituents, and of the future support of this county.

"Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the High Sheriff, for calling the same, and for his impartial conduct in the chair."

This being the first public meeting which, within the memory of man, was ever held in this county for

any other purpose but that of an election; and this meeting being called by a requisition of the yeomanry of the county, without the names or influence of either of the factions of Whigs or Tories; and these resolutions being also proposed by me, and carried most triumphantly, by an immense majority, I have thought proper to record them, at full length, in the pages of my Memoirs. Mr. Cobbett, who attended the meeting, expressed himself in language of very high approbation, as to the manner in which the proceedings were conducted. This might truly be called the triumph of the people over faction, and we celebrated it by dining together at the Three Swans Inn. An excellent short-hand writer, of the name of Willett, attended our meeting, and he also had attended all the county meetings held at that time, upon this very important question, an account of which proceedings was given exclusively in the Statesman newspaper, of which he was the proprietor, and by whose means that paper was established.

From this period I may date the commencement of my political intimacy with Mr. Cobbett, who, in his next Register, spoke in very exulting terms of the respectability and good order of our meeting, and the great unanimity with which the Resolutions were passed. This was on the 17th May, 1809—eleven years after, on the 17th May, 1820, I passed by Salisbury on my road to this Bastile. I had long been a staunch advocate for a Reform in the representation of the Commons' House of Parliament; but the infamous practices which had been developed by Mr. Madocks, and the rejection, by a large majority, of his motion for an inquiry into those disgraceful practices, so thoroughly rooted in me a conviction of the absolute necessity of such a Reform, that I came to a determination within myself, never to cease from my endeavours to obtain it; being perfectly satisfied that, without an effectual and Radical Reform in the House of Commons, the boasted Constitution of England would soon become a mere mockery, and the scoff instead of the envy and admiration of surrounding States.

For the same reason that I insert the foregoing Resolutions, passed at the County Meeting for Wiltshire, I will now insert the charge made by Mr. Madocks, in the Honourable House, on the 11th of May, 1809. Mr. Cobbett observed, in his Register of the 20th of May following, that "It ought to be printed "in all shapes and sizes; and be perpetuated in all the ways in which any act can be perpetuated. A concise statement of the *charge* and the *decision* should have a place in all the Almanacks; all the printed Memorandum Books; in Court Calendars; Books of Roads; and I see no harm in its having a place upon a spare leaf in the Books of Common Prayer. It should be framed and glazed; and hung up in Inns, Town Halls, Courts of Justice, Market Places, and, in short, the eye of every human creature should be, if possible, constantly fixed upon it." I will, therefore, as far as I have the means, hand down the charge and the decision, by recording it in my Memoirs, for the benefit of my young readers, who are not old enough to remember the sensation which it excited at the time, as well as for the information of those who shall come hereafter. The charge, in Mr. Madocks's own words, was this: "I affirm that Mr. Dick purchased a seat in the House of Commons, for the Borough of Cashel, through the agency of the Honourable Henry Wellesley, who acted for and on behalf of the Treasury; that, upon a recent question, of the last importance, when Mr. Dick had determined to vote according to his conscience, the Noble "LORD CASTLEREAGH did intimate to that Gentleman, the necessity of *his either voting with the Government, or resigning his seat in that House*; and that Mr. Dick, sooner than vote against principle, did make choice of the latter alternative, and vacate his seat accordingly. To this transaction I charge the Right Honourable Gentleman, MR. PERCEVAL, *as being privy, and having connived at it*. THIS I WILL ENGAGE TO PROVE BY WITNESSES AT YOUR BAR, if the House will give me leave to call them." The Honourable Member, after making an eloquent and forcible appeal to the House, *moved for an inquiry*. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, (Mr. Perceval) addressed the House, and humbly declared that, "whether at *such a time*, it would be well to warrant such a species of charges, as merely introductory to the agitation of the great question of Reform, he left to the House to determine:" he then made his bow and retired. Lord Castlereagh did the same. Mr. Madocks then explicitly moved, that the said charge against the Right Honourable Spencer Perceval, and Lord Viscount Castlereagh, should be heard at the bar on Monday next. LORD MILTON said, "he would oppose the motion, if he thought it would tend to promote the question of Parliamentary Reform. But, although he would vote for the motion in part, still in whatever way it was decided, *he would not think one jot the worse of either of the Right Honourable Gentlemen accused, or that they were in any degree more criminal than all former Governments*." Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, in supporting the motion, said, "if the House refused to inquire into the transaction, or if any Gentleman within its walls contended these practices formed part of the Constitution, then he must say that Buonaparte had a "better ally within their walls than he had any where else." MR. TIERNEY opposed the motion, and said, "*it would be great injustice to render a few individuals the victims of a system which did not commence with them*." MR. WHITBREAD manfully supported the motion, and said, "*if such a case as this were overlooked, the House might as well, in his opinion, expunge its Journals, burn its Statutes, and blot out the Constitution*." MR. PONSONBY, in opposing the motion, said, "*he would appeal to all who heard him, whether many seats were not sold, and that being NOTORIOUS, he never could persuade himself to take advantage of such a circumstance in a political adversary, for the purpose of running him down*." LORD FOLKESTONE warmly supported the motion, and said, "*that resisting*

inquiry only served to strengthen the influence and extend the limits of suspicion, by comprehending all those who connected themselves with such resistance." MR. WINDHAM Opposed the motion, and in the following words impudently justified the practice. He affirmed that *"these things were, in fact, so interwoven with the Constitution, and that Constitution itself was such a complicated system, that no wise statesman would venture to tear them out, lest he should take out something very valuable along with them."* MR. CANNING called upon the House *"to make a stand THAT NIGHT, against the encroachments of the factious. To-night it was summoned to make an immolation of TWO upon his side of the House, and perhaps, if successful now, it would on the morrow be summoned to sacrifice two stately victims from the other side."* Sing Tantararara, Rogues all!!! The House divided, and the question was taken upon Mr. Madocks's motion FOR AN INQUIRY into the matter, when EIGHTY-FIVE members voted for the motion, and THREE HUNDRED AND TEN members voted against all inquiry—Majority against inquiry, TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE. Such was the *charge*, and such was the *result*.

After having read the above, will any honest man say, that a Reform in the House of Commons is not necessary? It was this memorable transaction to which I alluded, in the resolutions that I proposed, and which were unanimously adopted at the County Meeting at Salisbury; and, by being the principal, or, I may say, the sole cause of such meeting being called, I rendered myself so completely obnoxious to the Government, that every means were put in practice by their agents and underlings, to annoy, perplex, and harrass me; amongst which number the *stock purse* combination took the most prominent part.

At the Michaelmas Sessions 1809, as I have before stated, a Bill of Indictment was found against me, for an assault upon Stone, the ruffian gamekeeper of John Benett, Esq. of Pyt House, which indictment was moved by a writ of *Certiorari*, into the Court of King's Bench. Michael Hicks Beach had also commenced an action against me, in the name of Mr. Jenner, one of his tenants, for a trespass, in following Colonel Thornton's stag hounds over a portion of his property, after I had received a notice, warning me off. Both the indictment and the action were to be tried at the ensuing Spring Assizes, to be holden at Salisbury, in March, 1810.

The Attorney-General had, in the mean time, moved for, and obtained a Criminal Information against Mr. Cobbett, for an article which he inserted in his Register, on the 1st of July, 1809, upon the subject of flogging the Local Militia in the Isle of Ely. The account of this flogging was published in the Courier newspaper, on the 24th of June, which account, as follows, was taken by Mr. Cobbett as his motto: "The mutiny amongst the LOCAL MILITIA, which broke out at Ely, was fortunately suppressed on Wednesday, by the arrival of four squadrons of the GERMAN LEGION CAVALRY from Bury, under the command of General Auckland. Five of the ring-leaders were tried by a Court Martial, and sentenced to receive five hundred lashes each; part of which punishment they received on Wednesday, and a part was remitted. A stoppage for their knapsacks was the ground of complaint which excited the mutinous spirit, which occasioned the men to surround their officers and demand what they deem their arrears. The first division of the German Legion halted yesterday at Newmarket, on their return to Bury." This transaction of German soldiers superintending the flogging of English Local Militia-men, who were scarcely to be called soldiers, and who were, indeed, only one remove from the volunteers, caused a considerable sensation throughout the country, and Mr. Cobbett wrote a spirited article in his Register, in which he indignantly expressed the natural feeling of an Englishman, upon hearing that German troops were employed for such a purpose. This publication was seized with avidity by the Attorney-General, Sir Vicary Gibbs, who not only moved for a Criminal Information against Mr. Cobbett, the author, but also against his printer and publisher.

To make the young reader completely acquainted with the subject, it is necessary here to observe, that some time previous to this, a large body of German troops, called the German Legion, had been introduced into the country, by a vote of the faithful guardians of the people's rights and liberties, contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, and in direct violation of the Act of Settlement. The admitting of these German troops excited strong suspicions in the breast of every friend to freedom, and every lover of the Constitution; and their being employed in such a service as that of superintending the flogging of Englishmen, was a most disgusting and revolting sight, which was contemplated with feelings of the utmost abhorrence by every man who had the least regard for the honour of his country or the character of his countrymen.

The fact was, that the Government had placed arms in the hands of so many volunteers and local militia-men, that they became alarmed at the power which they had themselves created; and these whiskered German troops were, therefore, called in for the purpose of keeping them in subjection. So that the Ministers took care to have plenty of German troops, who, in conjunction with the Irish regiments of militia, were to watch over the movements of the English, particularly those newly raised volunteers and local militia, who, in many instances, manifested rather a turbulent disposition, and an impatience of being bilked in the same manner as some of the regulars were, by their officers. An instance of this I witnessed in Bath, where the Somerset local militia were quartered. Great

dissatisfaction had for a day or two been strongly expressed by the men, in consequence of a stoppage of some portion of their pay having been made for gaiters. What was the sum stopped, I forget; but I recollect that as I was walking of which the prison stood. I hastened to the spot with a friend, and we got there just in time to see the soldiers come out of the prison with their comrade, whom they had rescued, mounted upon their shoulders; and in this manner they bore him in triumph to his quarters. Some of the officers arrived, and one of them drew his sword; but he was instantly disarmed, and pelted with mud, so that, while he escaped with some difficulty, he looked more like a person just released from the pillory than like an officer who had the command of troops. During the whole evening the streets swarmed with crowds of people, and the injustice of the extortion for the men's gaiters was the universal topic of converse amongst them. As almost every one was expressing his indignation at the conduct of the officers, and swearing that the men should not be punished, affairs bore such an alarming appearance, that dispatches were sent off, in all directions, for more troops to come to the assistance of the officers. Very prudently, there was no attempt made that night to take into custody the man who had been rescued, or those who had rescued him. As all the men concerned in the transaction were known, it was reported that they would be brought to a drum-head court-martial ear up the street, I heard some of the men inquiring at a shop the price of a pair of gaiters, which they were told by the tradesman was about half as much as had been stopped out of each man's pay. The men had complained loudly to the non-commissioned officers, without obtaining any redress. The next day they made a stand upon parade, which was called a mutiny. The ring-leader was seized, and conveyed immediately, under a military escort, to the town prison. This circumstance ran like wildfire all over the city, and when the troops were dismissed from the parade, which was incautiously done soon after, the militia-men proceeded in a body to the gaol, and demanded their comrade; and compliance with the demand being refused, they seized a long piece of timber that lay in the street, near the prison, and this they used as a battering-ram against the door of the gaol, which they soon forced off its hinges. I was sitting in the back dining-room at my house, No. 1, Lady Mead, and I witnessed the transaction myself. About the third effort with the battering-ram, each of which was cheered by the populace, I saw the prison doors fly open, and the soldiers enter. By this time an immense multitude, consisting of many thousand persons, had assembled in Grove-street, at the bottom, early the next morning, and punished. Orders were given for their being upon the parade the next morning at four o'clock; and all attended, together with about four or five thousand of the Bath populace, resolutely swearing that the man should not be punished. There was no *German Legion* at Bath, or blood would have been spilt. Happily the whole passed off without any bad consequences. After the offenders had been admonished, one of the officers informed the populace that they were forgiven, upon which they peaceably departed to their homes. I believe that a proper abatement was made in the price of the gaiters, and thus this affair was settled before the arrival of any other troops, many of which (Somersetshire Yeomanry) came galloping into the city in the course of the day. This year, the arms of Great Britain were, to say the least of it, very unsuccessful. The army in Spain, under Sir John Moore, made a very inglorious retreat, or rather flight, before the French troops, which, after being continued for two hundred and fifty miles, ended in the battle of Corunna. In that battle the English Commander fell, and the remains of the army, after having sustained immense loss, were compelled to embark on board their fleet; not less than six thousand troops having been sacrificed upon the occasion. On the 27th of January, the French entered Ferrol, and took seven sail of the line; Saragossa also surrendered to their arms. In May there was a revolution in Sweden, and Gustavus the Fourth, one of the legitimate race of old kings, was deposed. War was again declared by Austria against France. In April, the English fleet, under Lord Cochrane, destroyed four sail of the line in Basque Roads. On the 13th of May, the French entered Vienna. Russia also declared war against Austria. Buonaparte beat the Austrians in various battles, and effected the passage of the Danube in July, and finished the campaign by a total defeat of the Austrian army at the battle of Wagram; upon which the Emperor Francis was obliged to sue for an armistice. It was granted by Napoleon, although the prostrate legitimate was, with his whole dominions, completely in the power of the French Emperor. Thus did Napoleon show him that mercy which the deadly Austrian had not the magnanimity or the honour to return when Napoleon had fallen into misfortune. This was one of Napoleon's greatest faults; he appeared to delight in conquering and subduing tyrants, and then reinstating them on their thrones, that he might conquer them again. This is one of the greatest stains upon his character. He had it in his power to exterminate the tyrants of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, and by that means to bring the English Government to a sense of its duty to the people of England. This he failed to do, and his reward was perpetual imprisonment, lingering torture, and a premature death, inflicted upon him by the very same sovereigns that he had spared from annihilation. The old proverb, of "Save a thief from the gallows and he will cut your throat," was never more truly verified than in this instance.

On the 27th of July, the Battle of Talavera was fought between the English and the French, in which Sir Arthur Wellesley pompously claimed a victory, although he and his whole army retreated before day-break the next morning, *leaving the whole of the sick and wounded behind them*. Such was the rapidity of this retreat, that they scarcely ever stopped to refresh themselves, till they had passed the boundaries of the Spanish dominions, and entered into Portugal.—Notwithstanding all this, it was

trumpeted forth in all the ministerial papers that Sir Arthur Wellesley had gained a GREAT VICTORY; and, to complete the humbug, the Ministers carried the hoax so far as to create the said Sir Arthur Wellesley either Baron or Viscount TALAVERA! This was the way in which the English Ministry gulled John Bull; and as John swallowed this title so readily, from that time I have designated, and I shall always designate him, by the title of JOHN GULL, instead of John Bull; GULL being a most appropriate title, with a very significant and truly characteristic meaning.

Blake's army from Valentia was also at this period completely dispersed. The English Ministry likewise sent out two expeditions this year, both of which ended in defeat and disgrace. One was dispatched from Sicily to the South of Italy, and the other was the memorable and fatal expedition to Walcheren, commanded by the renowned Lord Chatham, the elder brother of Pitt, who, from his fondness for lying in bed, had obtained the nick name of the *late* Lord Chatham. This was a most calamitous undertaking, and reflected the highest disgrace upon the characters of those who planned it, as well as of those who were selected to carry it into execution. I recollect that at the time it was confidently asserted that the redoubtable Commander, Lord Chatham, spent three parts of his time in bed; at all events, he proved to be a most unsuccessful, if not a sleepy commander. The famous city-gormandizer, Sir William Curtis, accompanied this expedition, thus making one, as it were, of a party of pleasure, while, from exhaustion and disease, the troops were perishing in the pestilential swamps of the country. In fact, this proved a mere wanton sacrifice of British treasure and British blood.

In consequence of these disasters, there arose such great dissensions and heart-burnings in the British Cabinet, that at length it produced a duel between two of its most conspicuous members, Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, in which Mr. Canning was badly wounded. In better times, the dispute possibly would perhaps have been settled much more conformably with the principles of justice, by both of them being impeached for their mal-administration, and their wanton and lavish waste of the best blood and treasure of their country.

In September the new theatre at Covent-Garden was opened; and, in consequence of the managers having increased the prices, a riot commenced, which continued night after night for nearly three months. It was universally known by the name of "the O. P. row;" that was, a contention for *old prices*, by the audience, and a determined struggle on the part of the managers, to enforce and continue the new and increased prices. I may be asked by some, "what has this to do with your Memoirs, or with the political history of the times"? I answer, it has nothing to do with my Memoirs, as I was not in London during the whole of the row; but I shall by and by show, that it had a great deal more to do with political matters, or rather with a *political party*, than was at the time imagined, or than is even now suspected. I believe that, in the first instance, the spontaneous expression of public opinion was the cause of the row which took place; but I *know* that it was afterwards taken under the special protection of that August body, the WESTMINSTER RUMP, by whom the regular, well-organised plan for the interruption of the performance, was framed and constantly kept up. It will be remembered that my worthy friend, Henry Clifford, took an active and conspicuous part in these proceedings. Mr. Clifford was a warm partizan of Sir Francis Burdett, and, although he possessed too noble a soul to belong regularly to such an illiberal faction as that of the Rump, yet, as they had not then discovered the *cloven-foot* so unblushingly as they have since done, he was one of the number who frequently joined in their deliberations. This may, in some measure, account for their endeavoring to keep up the semblance of impartiality and fair-play, while he had any thing to do with them. Those who can recollect the circumstances, will also recollect, that Mr. Cowlam took a very prominent part in the row; and poor Sam Miller, the shoemaker, in Skinner-street, was another staunch attendant at all the O. P. deliberations. Cowlam was the man who seconded the nomination of Sir Francis Burdett, when the baronet was first proposed for Westminster; at the time that Currier Adams, of Drury-lane, slunk from the office of seconder, after having previously pledged himself to undertake it. Like Falstaff, however, in this point, though not in wit, Adams has, ever since poor Cowlam's death, had the meanness to claim the honour which belongs to another. Cowlam also rode the white horse, as the 11 emblem of purity," at the epoch of the first chairing; which unlucky animal *Mister Cleary* has since mounted! These, together with others of the Rump, held their meetings regularly every day, as well as every night after the performance was over. At length, when their resources were nearly exhausted (which, by the bye, I understood were furnished by a certain Baronet), and they were upon the point of retiring from the contest, poor Miller hit upon the expedient of the O.P. dinner, which was held at the Crown and Anchor; at which dinner Mr. John Kemble attended, and an arrangement and compromise was made between him and Henry Clifford; the one on the part of the theatre, and the other on the part of the public. Thus ended this mighty struggle, which, at times, bore a very alarming appearance, and was the subject of universal interest throughout the country. I have no doubt but that, under the rose, the managers of the theatre encouraged the proceeding, as it filled their coffers, there being a bumper, that is to say, a full house, almost every night. The cockneys enjoyed the fun, and every stranger who came to London must go to Covent-Garden, one night at least, to "see the row," and to carry an account of it into the country.

On the 25th of October a Jubilee was held, to celebrate His Majesty's entering the fiftieth year of his reign. Upon this occasion a pardon was issued to all deserters, and a great number of Crown debtors were discharged from prison.

The year 1810 commenced, by the Citizens of London, in Common-Hall assembled, having voted a petition to be presented to the King. The Sheriffs and City Remembrancer had waited upon the Secretary of State (Marquis Wellesley), to ascertain when it would be His Majesty's pleasure to receive it. Upon which the Noble Secretary informed them, that he would take His Majesty's pleasure upon the subject; and at the following levee he let them know, that it was His Majesty's pleasure that it should be presented through the Secretary of State.

Since the BRUNSWICKS came to the throne of England, this was the first instance of a petition agreed to at a Common-Hall being refused to be received in person by the King.

Alderman Wood, who was one of the Sheriffs, requested that he might be admitted to a private audience of the King. This was refused; and the Sheriffs having called another Common-Hall, they laid the report of the affair before the assembled livery, who passed a series of spirited resolutions, asserting their right to deliver their petitions to the King on the throne, and instructing their representatives to move an address in Parliament, to be presented to the King, to inquire into the violation of the right of petitioning. Mr. Sheriff Wood received an unanimous vote of thanks from the Common-Hall; while the conduct of his colleague, Atkins, evinced his character, and was a pretty faithful index of his future subserviency to the "powers that be." Petitions were now presented to the King, not only from the city of London, but from Berkshire, and other parts, calling for an inquiry into the disgraceful Walcheren expedition. When Parliament met, the war in Spain and the expedition to Flushing were warmly canvassed; but, of course, the Ministers carried every question with a high hand and large majorities, and the business ended in a vote approving of the conduct of Ministers, in planning and executing that disgraceful and costly expedition.

Mr. Perceval, an insignificant lawyer, now suddenly became First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the astonishment of the whole nation. During the Walcheren inquiry the debates ran very high in the House of Commons, and a member, Mr. Charles Yorke, cleared the gallery of the strangers. This act being discussed in a debating society, Mr. John Gale Jones, who was acting as the president, was committed to Newgate, by a Speaker's warrant, for having been guilty of a breach of privilege. This proceeding drew from Sir Francis Burdett an address to his constituents, which was a very able and spirited composition. It was also voted to be a breach of privilege, and a libel upon the House, and the Speaker's warrant was issued for the apprehension and committal of the Honourable Baronet to the Tower. Great riots took place in London, which lasted two days, in consequence of Sir Francis Burdett resisting the execution of this warrant, and barricading the doors and windows of his house in Piccadilly. At length, however, he was taken to the Tower under military escort: on their return from the Tower the military were hissed and pelted, upon which they fired on the people, and three men were killed. The coroner's inquest sat upon the bodies, and in two of the cases brought in a verdict of wilful murder, and in the third, a verdict of *justifiable homicide*. As in a late instance, however, the murderers were allowed to remain not only unpunished but untried.

Sir Francis Burdett was at this time the most popular man in England, and he was idolized by every lover of freedom in the united kingdom. In his resistance to the illegal warrant, he had barricaded his house, into which the Serjeant at Arms had made several unsuccessful attempts to gain admission; and it was expected that the latter would attempt a forcible entry, as he had received positive orders from the House to execute his warrant by force. I shall here relate an anecdote on the subject, which came to my knowledge soon afterwards. A Noble Lord, a gallant naval officer, and M.P. called upon the Baronet one morning, attended by a friend, in a coach, out of which a cask was handed into the Baronet's house; and, as a friend, he was admitted of course by old John, the porter. Upon his Lordship's entering the Baronet's room, he communicated his plan for the defence of the castle, in case any attempt should be made to effect a violent entry. He very deliberately proposed to undermine the foundation of the front wall, and deposit there a cask of gun-powder, which he had brought with him for the purpose, so that he might blow the invaders to the devil, in case they should attempt anything like a forcible entry. At this proposal, which was made with every appearance of sincerity, Sir Francis Burdett started, and answered that he had not any intention of resistance any farther than trying the question, to see whether they would break open the house or not. The gallant tar then retired, apparently very much disconcerted, and he was particularly requested to take away with him the cask of gun-powder, which he did immediately. The next morning the Serjeant at Arms and his attendants broke open a window-shutter in the front area, entered without the least resistance, and conveyed their prisoner to the Tower. While these things were going on in London, I had been busily engaged in the country, defending myself in the Courts of Law at the assizes for the county of Wilts, which were held at Salisbury. As the indictment preferred against me by John Benett, Esq. on the part of his gamekeeper, Stone, was intended to be made a serious charge against me, I was prevailed upon to confide the

conducting of my defence to counsel. Much against my own inclination and judgment, did I give up this point, to oblige my friends, who were most earnest in their solicitations upon the subject. Mr. Burroughs (the present Judge) and Mr. Casberd, were employed for the prosecution; and I at length suffered my attorney to give a brief to Mr. Sergeant Pell. The cause was called on, and Stone positively swore to the assault, which he declared had deprived him of his senses, and that he had not been well since. Another person, who never saw one atom of the transaction, and who was never near the place till it was all over, swore to the same facts, and confirmed Stone's evidence; and although I knew this fellow was swearing falsely, and though I pointed the fact out to Sergeant Pell, that the witness was not near the place, yet he was so alarmed, or pretended to be so alarmed at the case, that I could not prevail upon him to cross-examine the witness. The next witness who was called swore that he was a surgeon, that he lived at Amesbury, the adjoining town; that he had attended Stone, whose life had been in danger; that Stone had been greatly and seriously injured in his health; and that, in his opinion, he would never recover it. This appeared to stagger and confound my counsel more than ever, and I could not get him to ask the man a single question; although it struck me that this witness was grossly perjured. Well! Mr. Sergeant Pell made what he called a speech, which, in my opinion, admitted a great deal more than was necessary. My friend, Mr. John Oaks, was then called, who positively swore that the ruffian, Stone, had assaulted me first, by striking me and nearly pulling me off my horse, without any provocation whatever. My friend, however, who had never given evidence in a court of justice before, was a very awkward, hesitating witness, and he received a very severe cross-examination from Mr. Burroughs. Baron Graham summed up, and charged the Jury that I had, by my own showing, been guilty of an assault. He had, he said, no doubt but the man Stone had struck me first, as sworn by Mr. Oaks; but he thought that I had given the man more than a sufficient quantum of beating in retaliation, as I had struck him three times: if it had been proved that I had only struck him once, in return for the blow he gave me, he should have charged the Jury to acquit me; but, as it was, they must find me guilty of the assault. He, however, totally acquitted me of that with which I was charged by the counsel against me, namely, of having acted with inhumanity and cruelty. The Jury, of course, gave a verdict of guilty; and the Baron took my word that I would attend in the Court of King's Bench, in the next term, to receive judgment.

The next day was fixed for trying the action which Michael Hicks Beach had commenced against me, for a trespass. A similar attempt was made, by my attorney and my friends, to induce me to leave the conducting of any cause to counsel. Little Frederick Williams, the barrister, was employed, or he volunteered his services, to prevail upon my family to persuade me to leave my defence to Mr. Sergeant Pell. I heard all that they had to say, but I resolutely resisted all their intreaties; and declared that I would not only defend myself, but that, as long as I lived, I would never employ a counsel. I would, I told them, endeavour to manage my own affairs in the Courts, let what would happen. To this resolution I have ever since most inflexibly adhered; and I am sure that I shall continue to do so as long as I have strength and power of utterance. I believe that Mr. Erskine once observed, that "a man who pleaded his own cause, had a fool for an advocate." This was reported to me; and my answer was, "that it might be very true, but I had a great consolation in knowing that I had not a rogue for a counsel."

The cause was at length called on; and as it was known that I intended to plead my own cause, it excited great interest, and the Court was crowded to excess. Mr. Burroughs opened the case against me, in a very vindictive speech, in which he travelled widely out of the course to find matter to attack me. The Judge ought, in strictness, to have stopped him; but I believe the worthy Baron (Graham) who presided, gave me credit for being quite a match for Mr. Counsellor Burroughs, and therefore it was that he suffered him to proceed. After having proved that notice not to go upon the lands of the said Hicks Beach had been served upon me, Burroughs called as his first witness a fox-hunting parson, of the name of Williams, who was the Curate of Netheravon, and dubbed chaplain to the squire. The clerical witness proved the trespass, that I had, in following Colonel Thornton's fox-hounds, in company with the rest of the sportsmen who were out, ridden over a part of the land belonging to Beach, and in the occupation of Farmer Jenner; which land I had received notice not to trespass upon. This toad-eating parson I knew well, and I was well acquainted with his occupation; which was literally that of whipper-in to the squire's hounds. He was as much at the squire's beck and command as one of his menial servants in fact, I had often seen him obey such orders as no servant would have obeyed. I have heard Mr. Beach, when a hound skirted, halloo out, "d--- my blood, Williams, don't you see that bound! flog him in, or cut his liver out," &c. &c. Then his reverence would ride like the very devil; and this was such a common thing, that I have heard the huntsman order him about in the same way. I have heard the latter say, "d--- it, Sir, why do you not ride and head the hounds?" and he has frequently observed to me, and other sportsmen, "By G-d, that d---d Parson stuffs himself so at master's table, that he is got as lazy as a cur." I therefore did not fail to give this reverend sporting witness a pretty severe cross-examination, although the Baron tried hard to protect him. I made him confess, upon oath, that he was the time-serving tool which I have above described; and all that I wanted I drew out of *him*, in order to save myself the inconvenience of calling any witness of my own; by which means I prevented any rejoinder to my reply to the famous speech of Counsellor Burroughs. He, the witness, admitted, that the

hind that was named "Mrs. Clark," was turned out several miles from the land of Mr. Beach, and that she accidentally ran that way; that Mr. Beach himself was one of the horsemen who joined in the chace; that he never complained of my riding over his tenant's farm; and that, during the chace, the said Squire Beach had actually *rode nearly a mile over one of my farms*, without any interruption from me.

Upon these facts I grounded my defence, and in a speech which occupied about an hour, to which great attention was paid by the Judge, I urged the Jury to consider their oath, and acquit me of any wilful trespass. In the course of this speech I replied to the observations which fell from the learned counsel, and took occasion to retort upon him with some severity, with respect to those points which he had so unfairly introduced in his speech. He rose and claimed the protection of the Court, and trusted that his Lordship would not sit there and hear him attacked in such a way. Baron Graham smiled, and very coolly replied, "Brother Burroughs, I am very sorry that *you* travelled so much out of the record; although I was loath to interrupt you, yet I assure you it was very painful for me to hear it; but, as *you* did so, I should ill perform my duty if I were to attempt to prevent the gentleman who is the defendant from repelling those assertions which you made, of which you offered no proof, and for which, by the shewing of your own witness, there was no foundation; therefore, Brother Burroughs, I must beg that you will not interrupt Mr. Hunt, but suffer him to proceed—Go on, Mr. Hunt." Mr. Burroughs jumped up in a passion, and said, in a peevish, angry tone, "Well, my Lord, if you do not choose to protect me, you will not, at any rate, compel me to stay in Court to hear myself abused;" and then, tucking his gown under his arm, he made a hasty retreat out of the Court, foaming and muttering all the way to his lodgings.

The worthy Baron summed up strongly for a verdict for the defendant, broadly stating that there was no pretension to say that it was a wilful trespass; and adding, after having recapitulated most of the arguments which I had urged in my speech, that he was much more inclined to believe it to be a malicious and frivolous action, than he was to say that it was a wilful trespass. I gave the said Michael Hicks Beach a pretty sound dressing, which the Baron not only recapitulated and concurred in, but he also gave him some very wholesome advice, and a very severe admonition.

It was an "especial jury" of brother magistrates and brother game- preservers; and it is, therefore, not wonderful that they returned a verdict for the plaintiff, with a shilling damages; which, in a wilful trespass, was always held to carry costs, provided the Judge would *certify*. Mr. Sergeant Lens now rose, and informed the Judge, that his Brother Burroughs, before he left the Court, had requested him to apply to his Lordship to "certify." The Baron pretended not to hear him; the Sergeant repeated the application in a louder voice; and Baron Graham then replied, "it is not necessary for me to certify in Court, I believe, Brother Lens?" "Yes, my Lord," said Lens, "I never knew a Judge refuse to do so, upon a verdict of trespass after notice." "Brother Lens! Brother Lens!" retorted the Baron, "I do not feel justified in my own mind to certify, upon my oath, that this was a wilful trespass, although the Jury have returned a verdict, upon their oath, that it is so; at all events I shall not certify in Court; I shall take time to consider of it."

Baron Graham never certified to this hour, and my vindictive opponent had to pay his own costs, which, I understand, amounted to upwards of eighty pounds. This is an instance of the upright inflexible honesty of Baron Graham; and this is the Judge, I understand, who, together with Baron Wood, are about to be laid upon the shelf—and a precious pair of tools we shall have in their place, I'll warrant you!

On the next day, I enclosed a shilling in a letter to Squire Beach, admonishing him, in the language of the worthy Judge, and advising him to prepare for war, for I was determined upon retaliation. Unfortunately for me, my attorney was a most artful, plausible, cunning fellow; and at the same time that he openly professed to advise me not to go to law, he insidiously held out the most luring baits to draw me into the meshes of his net, in which he was too successful. I was a rare pidgeon, and he never failed to pluck me well.

I kept my word with Mr. Beach, and in a few days I had an information laid against his whipper-in Parson, and one of his tenants, Thomas Horne, for sporting, they not being qualified; and as soon as they were convicted in the penalties, I followed it up by commencing an action against each of them for a similar offence. I also served in the same way another fellow, who was a friend of Beach's, one Edmond Stegg, of Chisenbury; in all of which suits I got a verdict; and, to be even with him, I brought his second son, William Beach, before a bench of Magistrates, to make him prove his qualification; which he at length did, with considerable difficulty and expense. The famous Richard Messiter, an attorney, of Wincanton, came all the way from that place in a chaise as a witness; and John Ward, an attorney, of Marlborough, attended as another witness; so that this chap got out of the scrape at an expense to his father of about fifty pounds. Messiter, who was called at that time *honest Dick Messiter*, swore that he had advised his father to make a conveyance of an estate to him, to qualify him, the deed of which was executed only the day before the action was commenced against him. The Squire was also

obliged to qualify his whipper-in Parson, which he did by procuring for him a living; so that it is an ill wind that blows no one any good. But all this while my cunning attorney was the bird that was feathering his nest charmingly. He took care to fleece all that came within his grasp. What voracious sharks are these attorneys! I was successful in all these actions, yet, every now and then, I had a long bill to pay to my attorney. I do not say that this limb of the law was any worse than the rest of his profession (always admitting that there are *some* most honourable exceptions); but I must say that this worthy had the address to manage his matters better, and to cast his net with more cunning and adroitness than any one of the fraternity that I ever met with. I was a thousand times forewarned of him, by some of his *old friends*; but I was over confident, and I met my reward, as my eyes were not opened till I had suffered to the amount of many thousands of pounds by my credulity.

At the latter end of May, I was called up to the Court of King's Bench for judgment, for the assault upon Stone the gamekeeper. I did not employ counsel, but offered in person what I had to urge in mitigation. I put in affidavits, to prove that the witnesses who gave evidence upon the trial were perjured; and that the doctor, who attended and swore that he lived at Amesbury, was an impostor; that no such person had ever lived there, or had ever been heard of before or since. The sentence was, that I should be committed to the custody of the Marshal of the King's Bench for three months. During the time that Mr. Justice Grose was passing sentence, Ellenborough leant back in his seat, and said to Le Blanc, loud enough for me to hear him, "He will not go down to Salisbury to attend the writ of inquiry, and get another verdict of *no damages* this time."

I had forgotten to mention, that the writ of inquiry was not executed at the Spring Assizes, it having been put off by the parties, to see whether I should not be caged during the Summer Assizes, when they might have an opportunity of bringing it on in my absence. As soon as I was sent to the King's Bench, I received notice, from Astley's attorney, that the writ of inquiry would be executed before the Judge of the Summer Assizes, to be held at Salisbury. I immediately employed Henry Clifford to move the Court to delay the inquiry till the following Spring Assizes; as it was necessary to the due administration of justice that I should be present. This application was refused. I then got Mr. Clifford to move for a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, that I might be taken down to Salisbury, at *my own expense*, to attend the inquiry. This application the upright Court also refused! At the Assizes the writ was therefore executed before the Judge. The witness, the shepherd, the same witness, was called, and proved the fact, that I was upon the plaintiff's down, and as the case was totally undefended, the Judge directed the Jury to give a shilling damages. The Jury hesitated; every man amongst them well knew the facts; they retired, and, after an hour's deliberation, they returned a "*farthing damages*." If I had been present to ask the witness one question, the Jury would have inevitably returned a verdict of "*no damages*;" the same as the two former Juries had done. In fact, one of them told me, that they gave in the verdict of one farthing very reluctantly; and, as they knew the case, they very much regretted that they had not themselves put the question to the witness, as, if he had once sworn that there was no damage done, nothing on earth should have induced them to have given any damage.

Thus ended the struggle for the *right of English Juries* to give their verdict agreeable to the evidence, as they were bound by their oaths to do, in spite of the equivocal rules of Courts, or the arbitrary dicta of Political Judges. I have no doubt that the conspiracy against me by the stock-purse gang, in the instance of Stone's assault and indictment against me, was got up for the sole purpose of getting rid of this question, as to the rights of a British Jury to give a verdict agreeable to the evidence, in spite of a ridiculous and illegal rule of Court, made at the arbitrary will of corrupt Judges. The truth is, that Stone confessed that he was hired and well paid to assault me, for the purpose of procuring an indictment against me; and by that means I was to be got out of the way, that this dirty job might be executed in a court of justice in my absence. Stone being discharged from his situation, offered to hire himself as my game-keeper, and to divulge the whole plot, and appear as a witness against his former employers. I, however, rather chose to put up with the loss which I had already sustained, than to employ such a treacherous villain, and to encounter fresh law expenses, which I now began to feel were most ruinous, notwithstanding I conducted my own business in the courts. I had, besides, ascertained that the stock-purse gang were always delighted when they found they had entrapped me into a law suit, although my late successes had caused a heavy drain upon the subscribers, some of whom began to grumble at the expense, and to declare off.

As soon as I was conducted to the King's Bench, I began to look out for apartments; I having made up my mind to remain the three months within the walls, as I did not feel justified in making the indispensable sacrifice (the usual fee to the Marshal) for residing without the walls. Several prisoners, who were in distressed circumstances, offered to give up their rooms at various prices, in proportion to their eligibility; but, as the prison was excessively crowded, none of them struck my fancy or suited my taste. I therefore applied to Davey, who kept the coffee-house, and immediately agreed with him, at a reasonable price per week, for a bed and the sitting-room over the coffee-room. This is the very apartment that Colonel Bailey, the uncle of the Marquis of Anglesea, lately inhabited, whose application

to the Court of King's Bench was argued the other day, on his complaint of the conduct of Mr. Jones, the Marshal, and Poole, the coffee-house keeper, and of various interruptions and insults which he received from the prisoners who frequented the coffee-room; by which means, Poole (who, by the bye, was the person who attended me here) lost his situation. Nothing could exceed Poole's civility to *me*, and I have always heard that he was a very civil, well-behaved, obliging fellow. I can only say, that the whole time that I lodged in these apartments, which was six weeks, I never received the slightest interruption from any one, or the slightest incivility or insult from any one of the prisoners.

The Marshal was not at home when I arrived, but as soon as he came to his office in the morning, I received a polite message from him, requesting to see me, and being disengaged, I immediately waited upon him. When I came to his room he accosted me in a very kind manner, expressing regret for my sentence, but he added, that he should feel great pleasure in rendering my imprisonment as little irksome as possible, and that he should be happy in doing any thing for my accommodation. I own that I did not, at the first view, give this worthy man the full measure of credit that was due to him; for I could not help feeling a strong suspicion that he had an eye to his usual fee for indulgence. In consequence I addressed him as follows:—"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Jones, for your kind and friendly offers of accommodation; but, to tell you the truth, Sir, this is the case—When I was last committed to your custody, which is now nearly ten years ago, I had more money than wit; and I paid you very cheerfully for the accommodations that you afforded me, for which I was very grateful; but the case is altered, I have now more wit than money, little as the former may be. To speak without metaphor, since I was last your prisoner, I have had many a hard tug at any purse in my endeavours to support my independence: prudence, therefore, compels me to remain within the walls, and to forego (however reluctantly) your proffered kindness." Mr. Jones took me by the hand, and looking me steadily in the face, he replied, "Mr. Hunt, you have misunderstood me. I am fully aware of the truth of your observations. I am not altogether ignorant of what has occurred, but it would ill become me, in the situation I am placed, to give any opinion upon your case. This, however, I know, that while you were under my care you conducted yourself like a gentleman, and acted towards me with the strictest honour, and in return I can only say, you are welcome to reside without the walls, but I will not accept a penny of your money, neither will I put you to the slightest expense of giving any security. Your word, as a man of honour, to be forthcoming when called upon, is perfectly satisfactory to me, and you are at liberty to go out whenever you please. The only thing I will accept is, (I know you are a sportsman) when you return into the country, send me a basket of game, and I shall be perfectly satisfied." I thanked him sincerely for his handsome behaviour, but I told him that I had procured very comfortable lodgings at his old coachman's, Davey's, over the coffee-room; and as I did not expect my family in town for a month or six weeks, I would remain where I was till that time, when I would accept his offer. "Very well," said he, "please yourself;" and ringing the bell he called the Deputy Marshal, and said, "Recollect, Sir, to see that Mr. Hunt is properly accommodated at Davey's, whilst he remains here, and in the meantime, till his family comes to town, take care that he has the run of the key." That is, to pass out and into the prison whenever I pleased. The Deputy Marshal left the room, and after some time spent in conversation upon the occurrences of the day, I bid him good morning and took my leave; the door was opened, and I walked into the street, whence I returned into the prison.

This was the treatment which I received from the Marshal of the King's Bench Prison. I did not forget to send him a handsome basket of game, not only that season, but many following; and I regret that I ever had the negligence to omit doing so. However, if this should meet the eye of any of my numerous sporting friends, which I know it will, he that sends in my name a basket of game directed to William Jones, Esq. Marshal of the King's Bench Prison, London, will confer a lasting obligation upon, and afford great pleasure to, the "Captive of Ilchester," particularly if he will drop me a line to say that he has done so.

Sir Francis Burdett was now a prisoner in the Tower, and I was a prisoner in the custody of the Marshal; but as I had the run of the key, and as the Baronet had not, a very few mornings elapsed before I paid him a visit, entering my name at the lodge of the Tower, as Mr. Hunt of the King's Bench—this might be said to be impudent enough. When I was committed to the King's Bench in 1800, I paid a visit to poor Despard in the Tower; while I was there in 1810, I frequently visited Sir Francis Burdett in the same place.

At this time there were a great many young men of fashion within the walls of the King's Bench for debt, with some of whom I frequently associated, and joined in the game of fives. The Hon. Tom Coventry was an expert player, as he had been an inmate several years. Young Goulbourn, the brother of the Under Secretary of State, was also there. I was invited, and frequently made one of their parties. Goulbourn and I were generally pitted as opponents, both in politics and at rackets; he was a clever young man, and the author of the *Bluviad*, a satirical poem, which he had written upon his brother officers of the regiment of Blues, for which he was either indicted or had an action brought against him for a libel, I forget which. This young buck, of whom I recollect many an anecdote, the last time I was in

London I saw stuck up upon the benches of the Court of King's Bench, with a large wig upon his head, amongst the junior counsel behind the bar. I do not recollect ever seeing his name mentioned, as being employed in any cause; neither do I remember ever seeing him with a brief while I was in the Court. As, however, his brother is now appointed Secretary to Marquis Wellesley, the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, I dare say that this Gentleman will have some employment found for him, better, or at least where he can earn his money more easily, than drudging at the bar.

The feeling excited all over the kingdom, by the arbitrary proceedings of the House of Commons, in committing Sir Francis Burdett to the Tower, had, instead of diminishing, increased in a ten-fold degree, and might be said to be now at its height. The City of London, or at least the Livery, went in grand procession, preceded by Mr. Sheriff Wood, to present an address to Sir Francis Burdett in the Tower. Resolutions, petitions, and remonstrances, were also passed at many other places; for instance, at Southwark, Coventry, Liverpool, Nottingham, Sheffield, &c.

While this was going on in London, Napoleon divorced the Empress Josephine, and married the young Archduchess Maria Louisa, and the nuptials were celebrated in Paris with a degree of splendour and magnificence surpassing any thing of the sort ever before witnessed. Many of Napoleon's best friends and warm admirers highly blamed him for this match with the House of Austria, the deadly enemy to every thing that bore the slightest resemblance to liberty. Others blamed him for divorcing the Empress Josephine—but to those it maybe replied, he openly avowed his purpose to be that he might have a family, and leave a heir to the throne of France. Instead of following the example of other Monarchs, who had gone before him, and who, when they had wished to gratify their caprices or their lusts, did not hesitate to rid themselves of their wives by accusing them of some crime, and procuring perjured villains to swear against them, by which means the unfortunate females were divorced or had their heads taken off. Napoleon boldly avowed his love for Josephine, and acquitted her of all suspicion of blame; instead of becoming the dastardly assassin of her character, that he might aim a blow at her life, he continued to cherish and to protect her to the last.

Mr. Cobbett was tried and found guilty of a libel in the Court of King's Bench, and was ordered up for judgment on the 5th of July; when, after a hearing of the Attorney-General, Sir Vicary Gibbs, he was remanded to the King's Bench, to be brought up again on the 9th, and he was unexpectedly brought down thither while I was sitting writing a letter. I heard that he was in the Marshal's house, endeavoring to make some arrangement for his accommodation. I instantly hastened to my friend, and desired him to make himself quite easy upon that subject, as I had possession of the best apartments with-in the walls, which I would give up immediately for the accommodation of himself and family, and I would shift for myself in the best way that I could. This he accepted without ceremony, and what was very satisfactory to me, was, that he made no annoying apology for the inconvenience which, in the mean time, I might be put to, in finding a situation for myself. There was one great pleasure in obliging such a friend, as he never put me to the blush by making any scruples about accepting one's offer, or by using any unmeaning palaver, about being afraid of his friend's putting himself to an inconvenience on his account. I must give Mr. Cobbett the credit for being totally free from any squeamish fears or apprehensions of this sort; and I beg to declare that, on this very account, I always felt a great additional pleasure in obliging him. Some persons may be ill-natured enough to miscall this selfishness, and I know those that have been illiberal enough to do so; but, as for myself, I could never be induced to view it in that light, as I always thought him a man of superior mind and great talent; it was not at all surprising that he felt his own superiority; and, to accommodate such a man, his friends never thought any sacrifice too great; at least I never did. At all events, I felt great pleasure that I had it in my power to contribute to the convenience of himself and his family; and I was perfectly satisfied to put up with a very small bed-room, in which I could scarcely stand upright, for the four days that he remained there.

While Mr. Cobbett was in the King's Bench, he was violently attacked by some of the writers belonging to the public press, and accused of having offered to compromise with the Government, by giving up his Register, and undertaking to write no more upon politics. Amongst this number was Mr. Leigh Hunt, of the *Examiner*. No man felt more indignant at this attack upon my friend than I did; and as I was made to believe that there was not the slightest foundation for the calumny, I lost no opportunity to condemn, in the most unqualified terms, all those who had been guilty of such base conduct as that of falsely accusing a man, at such a moment, of that which I held to be a political crime of the deepest die. "Love me, love my dog," was a maxim that was firmly implanted in my breast. He, therefore, that injured my friend, made me his enemy; nay, I was much more ready to resent an insult offered to my friend, than I was to resent injury done to myself. It seems I was yet very young in the ways of the world; so, instead of leaving Mr. Cobbett (who was so very capable) to defend himself, I became his champion, and assailed all those who had attacked him. I considered the conduct of Mr. Leigh Hunt as most unworthy, he being a writer in the cause of Liberty, and espousing those principles of good government for which Mr. Cobbett, as well as myself, had been so earnestly contending. I

charged him with wishing to raise his fame and his fortune upon my friend's downfall; and this was so strongly impressed upon my mind, that I believed it to be the sole cause of his propagating what I considered the foulest and most wanton calumny. I consequently spared him not, and so far was my friend from checking my imprudent zeal, that he encouraged it; and what made me the more earnest was, that he held it to be more dignified that he himself should treat such preposterous slander with silent contempt. I laid on most unmercifully also upon the editor of the *Times*, on the same account, both publicly and privately; by which indiscreet warmth for my friend, I rendered two of the most powerful public writers of the day, and who had the most extensive means of disseminating their opinions, my most implacable enemies. For many years the columns of the *Examiner* poured forth, upon every occasion, the most bitter sarcasms, and the most unjust and wanton attacks upon my character, both private and public, and this, too, at a time when I had not the slightest means of defence, as I had not the least possible power or influence over the smallest portion of the public press. To be sure, I have no one to blame but myself, as, at the time, many good friends warned me of my folly. Their argument was, "what have you to do with Cobbett's quarrels—is he not capable of defending himself?" But although I daily suffered the most severe attacks from the public papers, I still had the hardihood to persevere in his behalf; and I never for a moment doubted the correctness of my assertions till one day, that, as I was passing under Temple-Bar, I chanced to meet Mr. Peter Finnerty. At some public meeting, on the preceding day, I had been attacking some of the editors of the public press, for their cowardly falsehoods and calumnies against my friend Cobbett. Drawing me aside, and taking hold of the button of my coat, Mr. Finnerty began to reason with me in the most friendly and convincing language. He pointed out the folly of my attacking the editors of the *Examiner*, the *Morning Chronicle*, and the *Times*, in defence of Mr. Cobbett's conduct, when I had no means of repelling the attacks of those writers upon my own character. "Even," said he, "had you proof of the truth of your assertions, that Cobbett never offered to compromise with the Government, even then it would be great folly in you to take up the cudgels for him; you who have not, in any portion of the press, the slightest means of vindicating your own intentions. *You* have drawn down a nest of hornets upon your own head; it is quite a different thing with Cobbett, he has all the means of defence, he has a great command of the press; and, besides, it sells his Register into the bargain. Follow the advice which I give you as a friend, take care of yourself; you will have quite enough to do to answer for yourself, and do leave Cobbett to do the same."

This exhortation was delivered in so earnest a manner, that I sometimes began to think that I might by possibility *have been wrong*. I was certainly more guarded in future, but all the mischief was done; I had excited the most inveterate hatred of the *Examiner* and the *Times*, neither of which papers ever let slip an opportunity to abuse, vilify, and misrepresent me. They certainly have had more than ample revenge upon me for my folly and credulity. They have both occasionally made the *amende honorable*; and I believe that the editor of the *Examiner* has been long since convinced, that I was actuated by the most honourable feeling in resenting his attack upon Mr. Cobbett. It is, however, an acknowledgment due from me to him, to say, that I was never wholly convinced of my error till the trial of "Wright *versus* Cobbett," which took place in the Court of King's Bench, since I have been here. Notwithstanding all the violent abuse and unjust assertions that have been published in the *Examiner* against me, I am bound in common honesty to acknowledge my error, and to apologise to the editor of that paper, for having been the first aggressor; and at the same time to assure him, that I was impelled to commit this error from a firm conviction, and the most unqualified assurance, that the assertions made in the *Examiner* were not only false in the main, but were even without the slightest foundation in fact. As for the editor of the *Times*, it is not necessary for me to offer any apology to him. That paper has so often, when edited by Dr. Slop, alias Stoddart, and even up to this very time, given insertions to the most wanton and barefaced lies about me, which the editor himself knew to be false when he wrote or admitted them, that I hold the principles of its conductor in the greatest contempt. Money is his god, and he would abuse the most perfect character in the universe, or praise the most abandoned, if he thought it would sell his paper. The study of the editor is to follow public opinion, whatever it may be, he never attempts to lead it. I have a gentleman now sitting with me, who assures me that he has heard one of the persons most intimately connected with that paper say, that the proprietors and managers of the *Times* were well disposed towards Mr. Hunt, and that they had the highest opinion of his talent and integrity; but that they abused him for the purpose of pleasing some of their readers, and selling their paper.

On the ninth of July, 1810, Mr. Cobbett was brought up for judgment, for the libel of which he had been convicted by a *special* jury. The sentence was, two years imprisonment in Newgate, and a fine of 1000_l_ to the King, and to find security for his good behaviour for seven years. The boroughmongers had now got *myself* in the King's Bench, and *Mr. Cobbett* in Newgate. Almost at the same time Sir Francis Burdett was liberated from the Tower. His release took place on the 21st of June, and, previous to it, the electors of Westminster resolved to meet him at the Tower Gate, and to bring him in grand procession to his house in Piccadilly. A splendid car was provided for the occasion, and arrangements were made on a magnificent scale. I myself had opportunities of communicating to him the progress of

these preparations, for many days previous to the day of his liberation, as I visited the Baronet often while he was in the Tower. I was a prisoner in the King's Bench, when Despard was in the Tower, and, as I have already stated, I visited *him* with Henry Clifford; I was also a prisoner in the custody of the Marshal, while Sir F. Burdett was a prisoner in the Tower, and I frequently visited *him*; and I also very frequently visited Mr. Cobbett in Newgate. I mention this to show what sort of imprisonment it is, being in the King's Bench. In fact, it is no imprisonment at all. I was in the custody of the Marshal, and he knew that I should not attempt an escape, and, therefore, I went where I pleased.

When the day arrived on which Sir Francis Burdett was to quit the Tower, immense multitudes flocked to Tower-Hill, and various parties of citizens of London and Westminster attended to join the procession. Major Cartwright and Alderman Wood attended, to head separate parties. Mr. Place, of Charing-Cross, the political tailor, had undertaken to head the horsemen; Mr. Samuel Miller, the shoemaker, of Skinner-street, Snow-hill, also headed a large party of the citizens of London. Innumerable parties came from all parts of the country, and, as it was a fine day, the spectacle was expected to be very brilliant. I certainly meant to witness it, although, being a prisoner, I did not intend to take any conspicuous part in the procession.

I slept within the walls, and when I got up in the morning, the doors of the King's Bench were closed for the day, and no one, except the officers, was allowed to pass out or in; and, in consequence of the strong public feeling that was created, the prison was surrounded by a regiment of soldiers. Though I could not obtain egress, I raised a subscription amongst some of my acquaintance in the prison, and we had a butt of porter hoisted out of the cellar, and gave it away amongst the poorer prisoners, to drink the health of Sir Francis Burdett. Towards the evening we were told, by some of the officers of the prison, that Sir Francis had disappointed his friends and the people, and had escaped over the water in a boat, and fled privately to Wimbledon. This we would not believe; and we, of course, set it down as a hoax of the officers, particularly as all other means of information were cut off for that day in the prison. So far were we, who were friends to the Baronet, from giving credit to this story, that we actually caused the whole of the interior of the prison to be illuminated; and such was the universal feeling, that every window was lighted up.

The next morning, when the doors were opened, we learned that it was a fact, that the hero of the day had actually sneaked out at the back-door, or rather out of a trap-door, and escaped unobserved over the water, without giving any one of his friends the slightest hint of his intention. At last, after waiting till their patience became nearly exhausted, the parties were informed of the trick that he had played them; upon which they retraced their steps in the procession, with the empty car, amidst the jeers and scoffs of all those who were inimical to the politics professed by Sir Francis Burdett, who was by them universally designated "*Sir Francis Sly-go.*"

The Westminster Electors were not only disappointed, but they were very indignant at the slight which they had received at the hands of their Representative; and some of them went so far as openly to brand the Baronet with the charge of cowardice. Amongst the latter was Francis Place, the Charing-Cross tailor, who, in the most coarse and offensive manner, accused the Baronet of being a d—d coward and a paltroon. Hearing of Mr. Place's violence, I endeavoured to ascertain the cause of his vindictive expressions, and my astonishment was very great, when Mr. Miller informed me, that the said Francis Place had undertaken to head one part of the procession, but that, when the day came, the said tailor neither kept his appointment nor sent any excuse for his absence.

The reader will not fail to draw his own conclusions with respect to this conduct of the political Westminster tailor, this leading cock of the Rump, particularly when they couple this transaction with that of the said tailor having been selected to act as *foreman* upon the famous inquest which was held upon the body of *Sellis*, the late valet of the Duke of Cumberland, who had been found in his bed with his throat cut, in the apartments of the Duke of Cumberland, at a time when the said Duke was understood to have had his *hand* and other parts of his body wounded with some sharp instrument. If Francis Place abused the Baronet, the Baronet, on his side, did not fail to return the compliment, and to describe the said tailor as a suspicious character. At all events, it was a very extraordinary occurrence, that the most violent, professed Republican, should have been selected to act as foreman to an inquest which sat upon the body of a person found dead, under the most suspicious circumstances, in a Royal Palace. It is said that, since that period, Mr. Place has been a very *rich man*; but that, before that time, he was a *poor, very poor Democrat*. The way in which I have heard Sir Francis and the present associates of this man speak of him, is enough to excite the surprise of any one who is acquainted with their present intimacy. Colonel Wardle always entertained the same opinion of this man that Sir Francis Burdett did, and he always advised me to avoid him. I did not fail to follow his advice. The fact is, that I was never upon intimate terms with any of this Rump, and only knew them enough to be able to keep an eye upon their motions.

A few days after this, my family came to town, and we resided in lodgings which I had taken in the

London-road. To these lodgings Sir Francis Burdett one day came unexpectedly to take a family dinner with me. He informed me that it was the first visit which he had paid to any one since he left the Tower; and he appeared very anxious to know what I thought of his manner of leaving the Tower, and also to ascertain what were the sentiments of the public upon the subject; as he had not, he said, had an opportunity of hearing any honest opinion upon it, he having read only the comments of the newspapers. I told him my opinion very honestly, that I very much disapproved of the step which he had taken, and so did all the persons with whom I had conversed upon it; but I added, I was too warm a partizan of his to say this to others, or suffer them to say so, without expressing my belief that he had some good and substantial reason for following such a course, and I pressed him hard to tell me that reason. All, however, that I could get out of him was, that Lord Moira, the Governor of the Tower, had persuaded him to do so. From that moment Sir Francis Burdett lost the confidence of the people; he had deceived them, and they never placed implicit faith in him again. No man but Sir Francis Burdett could have served the people such a scurvy trick, and have preserved even the smallest portion of popularity afterwards; but he had gained great hold of their affections by his public exertions, although those exertions were much more of a general than a specific nature.

While I remained in London, I constantly visited Mr. Cobbett in Newgate; and, after I returned into the country, I occasionally went to London for the purpose of passing a few days with him in his prison; and this I continually repeated till the time that he left Newgate altogether.

When I returned to Sans Souci Cottage, I enjoyed the sports of the field with quite as much glee as ever, and with a zest not in the slightest degree abated by my sentence of three months' imprisonment. At the end of the season I made the hares' *scuts* which I had preserved, amounting to two hundred and fifty, into a handsome pillow, which I had covered with satin, and sent it to my opponent, Michael Hicks Beach, as a mark of the contempt in which I held him, and as a trophy of the sport which I had enjoyed during the season. This was taken, as I meant it should be, in great dudgeon, and he complained of it very bitterly to some of my friends. My sporting was now confined to my gun. I had, in a great measure, given up hunting, for two reasons; first, because I had gone into Leicestershire, and resided at Melton Mowbray one season, for the purpose of enjoying fox-hunting in the highest perfection, by alternately joining the Duke of Rutland's and the Quarndon pack of fox-hounds. Those hounds were hunted in such a masterly style, and the whole business was conducted in such a superior manner, that I never afterwards could bring myself to relish fox-hunting in Hampshire or Wiltshire. In truth, it was not like the same sort of sport, fox-hunting in Leicestershire being so very superior. I really saw more fine runs in one week, with the Duke of Rutland's pack, and the Quarndon pack, which latter pack was then kept by Lord Foley, than I ever saw with a West-country pack in one year. The next reason for my giving up hunting was, that, in consequence of my weight, it was become too expensive, as it required a horse of from two to three hundred pounds value to carry me up to the head of the hounds, where I always rode as long as I followed hunting.

I still resided in Bath in the winter, and at Sans Souci Cottage, in Wiltshire, in the summer and autumn. One evening, Mr. Fisher, who had the management of the White Lion Inn, at Bath, which he conducted for Mr. George Arnold, called at my house, and sent in a message, to say that he wished to speak to me in private. I desired him to walk in, as I did not wish to be entrusted with any secrets but what might be known to my family, who were sitting with me. At length he informed me, that the French General, Lefebvre, who had been a prisoner in England, had been staying some days at the White Lion, waiting for a remittance from London, to take him thither on his road to France, to which country he was returning, either by an exchange of prisoners, or on account of some arrangement between the two Governments; that he had been disappointed of his expected remittance, and that he had not enough cash to pay his bill and his coach hire to London, whither he was most anxious to go; and, therefore, he had proposed to leave a beautiful miniature of Napoleon, for which that distinguished character had sat, and of which he had made a present to the General, after some battle in which he had fought bravely under the eye of the Emperor. Fisher had declined to take the miniature in lieu of, or at least in pawn for, the bill; and the General, in the greatest distress, and anxious to return to France, in obedience to the call of the Emperor, urged him to try and raise a sum upon it. Mr. Fisher told him that he did not know any one in Bath who would give any thing for it, unless Mr. Hunt would, who was an avowed admirer of Napoleon, although he believed him to be no connoisseur in paintings. At the pressing request of the General, Mr. Fisher said he had brought the miniature to shew me, and out he pulled it from his pocket. It was contained in a small morocco case, about four inches by three; but when it was opened it presented to the eye one of the most beautiful specimens of miniature painting I ever saw. I asked Fisher what was the amount of the bill? He replied, some shillings under ten pounds. I desired him to return, and say, that if the General would part with the miniature for that sum, I would advance the money; but that I would purchase it if I had any thing to do with it, and not make an advance upon it as a loan to be repaid. Mr. Fisher soon returned to say, that, although the General lamented very much to part with the miniature, which was the gift of his sovereign, yet, that necessity had no law, and that I might have it by paying the bill; which I immediately did, and received

the miniature.

Some months afterwards, Madame Lucien Buonaparte arrived at Bath, in her road to the residence of Lucien Buonaparte, at Ludlow, in Shropshire, and she stopped at the White Lion for the night. In making her inquiries of Mr. Fisher about General Lefebvre, when he was in Bath, the circumstance of his having been obliged to part with the miniature of Napoleon was mentioned. She instantly said, that she recollected the circumstance of her brother having sat for the miniature, and presenting it to Lefebvre, with a lock of his hair; and, mentioning the name of the artist, expressed a great desire to obtain a sight of the picture, if the gentleman was in Bath. A polite note was accordingly written to the lady to whom, at the time when I purchased the miniature, Mr. Fisher had seen me present it; and she was requested to permit Madame Buonaparte to see it. The lady immediately sent it to the inn by her maid, who was introduced into the room to Madame Lucien, who instantly exclaimed, that it was one of the very best likenesses of Napoleon that was ever painted, and that it recalled him to her recollection more than any thing she had ever seen since she had left Paris. This likeness was taken immediately after he was made First Consul, and it is admitted by all the Frenchmen that it was ever shewn to, to be a very beautiful and correct likeness of him, as he was at that time. She wished the servant to ascertain whether the lady would put a price upon it, but she was promptly answered, that her mistress had instructed her to say, that no price should purchase it. After having caressed and shed tears over it, Madame Lucien returned it to the servant, begging the lady to accept her grateful thanks for having allowed her to see it. I shall have hereafter to relate what passed at an interview which I had with the General, who came to England at the time of the peace, to endeavour to reclaim the picture.

About this time a fire broke out at Auxonne, in France, in which town twenty-one English prisoners of war were confined, who exerted themselves vigorously to extinguish the flames. On this coming to the ear of Napoleon, he instantly ordered them to be paid six months pay, and gave them passports to return home to England. I mention this circumstance as a proof of the liberal and noble mind of the brave and persecuted Napoleon; particularly when contrasted with the mean and dastardly conduct of those in power in this country. On a similar occasion, when the fire took place in this gaol, the other day, [Footnote: Alluding to the partial conflagration of Ilchester Gaol, Thursday, November 15th, 1821.] twenty-five of the prisoners, with myself, exerted ourselves, as was represented by the keeper to the Magistrates, in the most exemplary and praiseworthy manner; but *our* rulers do not know how to perform a generous and liberal act, they do not possess a particle of that noble and magnanimous character, which animated the gallant Napoleon.

The latter end of the year 1810 was remarkable for the greatest failures in commercial speculation. Many Gazettes contained the names of fifty bankrupts, and for many weeks following no Gazette appeared with less than thirty, which was four times the average of former periods. The cause of so much misery, mischief, and distress, was very fairly and justly attributed to the impediments which the laws presented to arrangements between debtors and creditors, impediments evidently intended to benefit the harpies of the law. It is a remarkable fact that there were just TWO THOUSAND bankrupts this year; supposing the Lord Chancellor's fees to amount only to the moderate average of *twenty pounds* upon each bankruptcy, he must have cleared that year FORTY THOUSAND POUNDS from bankrupts; which money must have come out of the pockets of the poor creditors. A further blow was given to commerce by an order, which, on the 27th of October, was promulgated in France, for burning all British goods found in that country; which was rigidly carried into effect.

On account of the King's illness, the Lord Mayor of London was requested to continue in office another year. The coffin of the bloody-minded villain, Judge Jeffries, was discovered in a vault, in the church of St. Mary, Aldermanbury. On the 27th of November nineteen journeymen printers of the *Times* newspaper were sentenced to be imprisoned for a conspiracy to raise their wages.

The average price of wheat this year was ninety-five shillings per quarter, and the price of the quarter loaf averaged at ONE SHILLING and FIVEPENNY.

I now became tired of living an inactive life out of business, and therefore took a large estate at Rowfont, near East Grinstead, in Sussex, consisting of a good mansion, a thousand acres of land, and the manorial rights of the whole parish of Worth, extending over upwards of twenty thousand acres; upon which I was to enter at Lady-day, 1811. This year, when the Parliament met, the Regency question was discussed with great warmth in both Houses. In hopes of the King's recovery several adjournments took place; but all these expectations proved futile, and, at length, Mr. Perceval brought in a bill, by which the Prince had the same restrictions imposed upon him as in 1789; and the person of the King was to be entrusted to the Queen, with a council.

These proposals were accepted by the Prince and by the Queen. As soon as the act passed, the Prince acted as Regent, and the Parliament was formally opened by a commission under the Great Seal. To the surprise and astonishment of every body, and to the great mortification and disappointment of the

Whigs, the same ministers remained in office. The fact was, that when the Whigs were last in office they fell into complete disrepute with the people, and the public feeling was so much against them, that the Prince Regent found that he should not be backed by the people in making any change in favour of the junto faction. He, therefore, had the prudence and the policy to continue the old set, notwithstanding that set had always treated him with great suspicion, and never let slip an opportunity of offering him the greatest indignities and insults.

The city of London now petitioned the House of Commons for Reform. I was frequently in London to visit my friend Mr. Cobbett, in Newgate; and the party which I used to meet there was Sir Francis Burdett, Col. Wardle, Major Cartwright, and Mr. Worthington; we used to spend the evening and remain in the prison, or rather in Mr. Newman's, the keeper's house, till ten o'clock. The great question of Parliamentary Reform was, on these occasions, fully and freely discussed; and it was lamented by Sir Francis Burdett that there were not some county meetings called, for the purpose of petitioning the House for Reform. I suggested that it was in vain to petition the corrupt knaves in the House to reform themselves, but that, as the Prince Regent was entering upon his regal office, I thought it would be a good opportunity to address him on that subject, and to call upon him for the abolition of all useless sinecures and unmerited pensions. Sir Francis very much approved of the idea, and asked if it were not possible to get a county meeting in Somersetshire, where I was then residing, and where I had an estate, as had also his brother, Jones Burdett. I replied, that if it were set about in earnest, there was not a doubt but a meeting might be procured; and I agreed to get this done immediately upon my return to Bath; Sir Francis at the same time promising that his brother should attend the meeting, if I could get the Sheriff to call one.

As soon as I got back to Bath, I put an advertisement into one of the papers, requesting the freeholders to attend a preliminary meeting, to sign a requisition to the Sheriff, for the purpose of calling a county meeting, to address the Prince Regent, upon his accepting that office. A considerable number of freeholders who were in Bath attended, and signed the requisition that I had drawn up, and at the head of which I had set my name. About twenty or thirty names were subscribed, and the next morning I waited upon Mr. Gore Langton, one of the then Members for the county, to ask his opinion, and to give him an opportunity of signing his name, if he chose; I candidly and explicitly informed him, that the purpose was to take, as the ground-work of the address, a Reform in Parliament, and the abolition of useless sinecures and unmerited pensions. He politely thanked me for the call, said that it would be indiscreet in him, as the Member for the county, to sign his name to the requisition, but added, that he perfectly approved of the object of the meeting, and in case the Sheriff should call it, he would make a point of attending it, and of supporting the address to the Regent, which it was my intention to propose; the heads of which I read to him, and which he highly approved. I told him that I designed to drive round to the principal towns of the county, to procure signatures from all parts, that the Sheriff might not have any opportunity of refusing to call the meeting. Of this plan he also very much approved.

I took a friend with me in my tandem, and drove to Bristol, where we procured only one name. From thence we went to Wells, Glastonbury, Bridgwater, Taunton, Wellington, and returned by Chard, Yeovil, Ilchester, Shepton Mallet, and Frome, to Bath. We were out, I think, five days, and obtained the signatures of upwards of four hundred freeholders, men of all parties, as the requisition was drawn in very general terms, to take the sense of a county meeting upon the propriety of presenting a dutiful and loyal address to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, upon his accepting the high office of Regent of the United Kingdom, &c. On my arriving at Ilchester, I called first upon Mr. Tuson, the attorney, as the most respectable person in the town; and upon reading over the requisition, he immediately signed it, and requested that, if I went to Yeovil, I would call on Mr. Goodford, which I promised to do. I obtained a number of names amongst the freeholders of Ilchester, many of whom, I found, were clients of the worthy attorney. My having obtained such a name as his, was a sure passport to success amongst his neighbours. The fact was, that the attorneys pretty generally took the bait; to promote the presenting a dutiful and loyal address to the new Regent, met with their general concurrence.

We went on to Yeovil, and called on Squire Goodford, as Mr. Tuson had requested. The Squire was a young man, and upon seeing Mr. Tuson's name, he gave us his without hesitation; and having got the Squire's name, of course we got the name of almost every free holder in the town upon whom we called. At some places we certainly received a rebuff; but, generally speaking, we were received with great politeness, attention, and civility. At Taunton we met with a very hearty welcome, and got a great number of signatures. Dr. Blake, Mr. Buncomb, and Mr. Dummet, will not fail to recollect it, and that they promised to attend the county meeting and support an address for Reform.

Whether the word Reform was in the requisition, I forget; but I well know that, to all those who inquired or wished to be informed of the object of the meeting, I never disguised my intention of making that a leading feature of the address. Indeed, it spoke for itself. It was a requisition to the Sheriff to call a meeting of the freeholders and inhabitants of the county, to take into consideration the

propriety of addressing his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. Nothing could be clearer or fairer. First, it was to call a meeting; second, when the meeting was assembled, it was to take into its consideration the propriety of presenting a dutiful and loyal address to the individual who was just invested with the office of Chief Magistrate; and third, if that proposition should be agreed to, why then to discuss and to settle what should be the nature of that address. We invited all parties to sign it, without distinction or exception; and, as almost every man in the county was a stranger to us, we met with some very curious adventures, of which the two following may be taken as a specimen. In the small manufacturing town of Chard, we called first upon an attorney, I think of the name of Clark, who, upon reading over the requisition, signed it, and without making any comment. He then drew out his purse, and placed a guinea upon the paper, saying that he begged to accompany his name with that subscription towards defraying the unavoidable expense. I politely declined to take it, declaring that we only solicited signatures, but did not require any subscription. He, however, would not be denied, adding, that our travelling round the country must be attended with considerable expense, and, as it ought not to fall upon one or two individuals, he should feel hurt if we did not suffer him to pay his share of it. I was about to expostulate, when my companion gave me a smart twitch by the elbow, and taking up the guinea, he observed that the gentleman was quite right, and he was much obliged to him. This gentleman, although a perfect stranger, offered us refreshment, &c. and pointed out to us where to call upon other freeholders. As soon as we got into the street, my companion began to expostulate with me, telling me that it was the height of folly not to make every one who signed his name subscribe something, as Mr. Clark had done, towards defraying our expenses. I replied, that I would not suffer him to ask for any thing from any one; that if any offered to subscribe, well and good; but if it were known or suspected that we were calling for money, we should not only lose many signatures, but should in many instances be considered as very unwelcome visitors, and probably even be treated as downright intruders. My companion, who was a narrow-minded politician, and of a penurious disposition, followed me in, grumbling, to the next house that we called at, which was a tradesman's, who, I recollect, sold salt. I accosted this tradesman in the usual way, by informing him of our business, requesting him to read the requisition, and desiring to know if he had any objection to sign it. "Sir," said he, "I do not wish to read the requisition; I have no objection to sign it, if you are quite sure that it will not cost me any thing. You are very welcome to my name as a freeholder, to assist in calling a county meeting. God knows *we want something done badly enough*; but, if it is ever to cost me a sixpence, I will not touch it." Giving my friend, who was staring with his mouth open, a very significant look, I assured the gentleman that it would never cost him a farthing; upon receiving which assurance he very deliberately took his pen from the desk, and as deliberately dipped it in the ink, and then, having taken the paper in his left hand, and laid it upon the counter, he looked me once more full in the face, and demanded, "are you quite sure, Sir, if I sign my name, that I shall not be obliged to attend the county meeting, when it is called?" I told him that we should be happy with his company if he chose to come to the meeting, but that it would be left entirely to his own option, whether he would do so or not. "Sir," said he, "I do not think you would deceive me," and he then signed his name.

To give an account of the various incidents which occurred, in this perambulation of the county of Somerset, would be an interesting and diverting history of itself. I had, indeed, told my companion, at starting, that, if he kept his eyes and his ears open, our journey would afford him an opportunity of studying human nature, and witnessing its various shades and colours, possibly in much greater perfection than he had ever before experienced, and my prediction was verified. I suppose that we did not call upon less than five hundred freeholders; in fact, we procured nearly that number of signatures, and to me this was a most interesting and entertaining expedition. I had no self-interested object in view; I was, or at least I believed I was, performing an important public duty, and my only aim was to procure a county meeting—and for what, it will be asked? My answer is, for the sole purpose of inducing my brother freeholders and fellow-countrymen of Somersetshire to look into their own affairs, instead of trusting to those persons who were duping and plundering them.

In the neighbourhood of Chard we called upon Mr. Dean, a large manufacturer of woollen-cloth, who had been a customer of mine to a very large amount, he having purchased of me at one deal between eight and nine thousand fleeces of valuable South-down wool, at half-a-crown a pound; which, I recollect, averaged about six shillings a fleece; so that the whole sum was about two thousand five hundred pounds. The wool was to have been paid for, as is usual, upon delivery. But when Mr. Forsey, who was the partner of Mr. Dean, came to weigh the wool, he unexpectedly requested, on the part of Mr. Dean, with whom I had had previous dealings, that I would give them two or three months' credit, by taking their bills, at that date, for the amount. As in former transactions I had found Mr. Dean a very honourable man, I readily consented to grant the favour, though, as a farmer, the custom was always to be paid for every thing in ready money. The reader must excuse this apparent digression, or rather this descending to minute particulars in this transaction with Mr. Dean, which will be hereafter accounted for. I find it, indeed, necessary to be very particular in explaining my transactions with Mr. Dean, in consequence of an infamous calumny, which, subsequently to my leaving the country, and going to reside in Sussex, was published in the *Taunton Courier*, relative to what took place when I was, upon

this occasion, at Mr. Dean's. I shall prove the editor of this contemptible paper to be an unprincipled, cold-blooded libeller, destitute of every manly and honourable feeling; a wretch, who, from the basest and most mercenary motives, to raise his obscure paper into notice, and to promote its sale, could disgrace the name of man, by propagating the most notorious and unfounded falsehood against the private character of a public man.

When we arrived at Mr. Dean's, we were received with the most hearty welcome. He lived in very great style, and he did every thing to shew his sense of my liberal and generous conduct towards him. The fact of the case was, that a request was made for more time to pay for the wool; and, as I was not in want of the money, the further time was given; and when, at the end of six months, I did receive the debt, I declined to charge any interest for it. Mr. Dean and his family appeared to feel great pleasure in paying me every attention, in return for what he openly declared to be most handsome and liberal conduct on any part. He admitted that mine was the finest and best lot of English wool that he had ever purchased; that it turned out remarkably well, and fully answered the sample. When I sold off my valuable stock of sheep at Chisenbury farm, Mr. Dean sent up and purchased twenty lambs, that he might possess some of my stock of pure South-downs; and he afterwards much regretted that he had been prevailed upon to cross them with the Spanish Merino breed, which, he said, had entirely defeated his original object. He took me into his field, to show me the sort which the cross had produced, and said, that he very much wished to dispose of them, as they were more plague than profit to him: in fact, he offered to make me a present of them; which offer I declined to accept; but I told him, as I had now taken a farm in Sussex, if he would send them half way, I would purchase them at their value. I believe there were about twenty-six ewes and an old Spanish ram; and, as far as I can recollect, I was to give him thirty shillings each for them, which was a fair price, as times went, they being only small two-teeth ewes.

The requisition being signed by upwards of four hundred freeholders, I wrote to the Sheriff, Mr. Horner, of Wells, to know when I should wait upon him with it. He replied, that, as he was just going out of office, and as the new Sheriff, Mr. Smith Leigh, would be sworn in at Bath, on a day named in his letter, he begged that I would attend there on that day, that it might be presented to the new Sheriff, when I could know his pleasure upon the subject. At the appointed time I accordingly attended, and the Sheriff, Mr. Leigh, named Monday, the — day of March, for the county meeting to be held at Wells.

Although I had taken an estate in Sussex, I had not yet given up my house in Bath, where I was then residing. On the Sunday previous to the day fixed upon for the meeting, Mr. Jones Burdett dined with me at Bath, and while we were at dinner, Mr. Power, an eminent reporter of the Morning Chronicle, came in. He travelled down, as I understood, at the request of Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Cobbett, to report the proceedings of the meeting. After dinner, the resolutions and the address being agreed upon, we started for Wells, where we slept that night, to be in time for the meeting, which was to be held at twelve o'clock on the following day. We now learned that there had been a very great stir made in the county, by the gentry and magistrates, of both the Whig and Tory faction. Many of them had canvassed their tenants and the freeholders of their neighbourhood, to attend the meeting, to vote against the proposition of Mr. Hunt, without knowing themselves, or attempting to explain to others, what Mr. Hunt was going to propose. Sir John Cox Hippisley, an old Whig Member of Parliament, was very active; and he employed one James Mills, who was a sort of a steward or understrapper to Lady Waldegrave, to canvas all their tenants and the surrounding neighbourhood, for the purpose of bringing in farmers and others to hold up their hands against "HUNT." Many, who inquired what they were to oppose, were told by this worthy, that they were to hiss, hoot, and make a noise, when Hunt spoke, and to hold up their hands against any thing that he brought forward. I recollect Mr. Power coming, in the morning, to the door of my bed-room, to inform me of the character and disposition of the farmers and yeomanry who were assembled, many of whom he had heard express themselves in a very indignant manner against this Mr. Hunt, who was going to do something which the squires had ordered them to prevent.

There was a fine meeting, of not less than four or five thousand persons; and, as soon as the Sheriff had opened the proceedings, by having the requisition read, signed, as he said, by Henry Hunt, and four or five hundred other persons, I stepped forward and began to address the meeting. *A howl was set up directly*, before they heard one word that I had to say, by the said Mills, and a gang of slaves whom he had collected off the Mendip Hills; a set of fellows as ignorant of all political matters as they were illiterate and besotted. The parsons joined the howl; and of the black cormorants there was a plentiful sprinkling, as a number of them herd together at Wells, in consequence of there being a cathedral, and the residence of a bishop, in that city. At that time, however, I had a most powerful voice, and in spite of the beastly howling of these mongrel curs, I made myself heard. I told them, that the time would come, when they would wish that they had patiently listened to my advice, and followed my recommendation. I told them then, that the only remedy to escape *ruin* and distress would be, for the landlords to lower their rents, the parsons to reduce their tithes, and then resolutely join the people

in demanding a Reform of the Commons' House of Parliament, which alone would produce a real diminution of taxation. O, how the brutish farmers, who had come into Wells that day at the command of their landlords, did bellow and roar to put me down, and endeavour to prevent my being heard! O, how many of them have come to me since I have been in this Bastile, to confess their folly and lament that they had not taken my advice: how many scores of them have been sent to this gaol for debt, since that time, ruined by the very system of taxation that they bellowed for that day! After I had concluded my address, which was delivered amidst continued contention and uproar, a great majority wishing to hear me, and occasionally the bellowers attempted to listen, and for a moment ceased their senseless clamour: having heard one sentence, they appeared very anxious to hear what was to follow; but the agent of old Sir John Cox Hippisley, James Mills, the steward of Lady Waldegrave, under whom they appeared to act, and whose voice or signal they obeyed as regularly as a pack of well-trained hounds obey the voice of the huntsman; this worthy, backed by some half-score of parsons, kept their curs in constant full cry to the end; when I proposed an address to the Prince Regent, expressive of the state of the country, and calling his Royal Highness's attention to that devastating system which would ultimately bring the farmer and the tradesman to that *ruin* and distress which had already fallen upon the industrious labourer and mechanic; praying for an abolition of all useless and expensive sinecure places and unmerited pensions, a reduction of the army, economy in the public expenditure, and a reform in the notorious abuses which were openly practised in the election of the Members of the Commons' House of Parliament. This address, which was pretty well heard, was received with applause by a considerable majority of the meeting; and it was seconded by Mr. Jones Burdett, in a very good speech, which he delivered upon the occasion. Mr. Horner, the late high sheriff, and a staunch ministerialist, came forward to propose an amendment, which, after some little hacking and hammering, he read. It was a mere time-serving piece of fulsome adulation to the Prince Regent, totally unworthy the character of a meeting of freemen, and such as no sensible Englishman would have offered to the Prince, without expecting to be kicked by his Royal Highness, for its time-serving, barefaced, unmeaning flattery. Sir John Cox Hippisley, who had not then *ratted*, a regular Whig, seconded this amendment, in a speech which I am sure many of those who were present will never forget; it was full of sophistry and cant; and the old cunning fox whined and coaxed his hearers in the most supplicating manner, to support the old magistrates of the county, who, he said, had always been the best friends the farmers ever had, or ever would have; and a great deal more of such trash. He implored them not to listen to the advice of strangers, who wished to withdraw them from that steady loyalty for which the yeomanry of the county of Somerset had so long been remarkable: he assured them, that the good old times would come round again, and that, if they would only wait with patience, all the difficulties and distresses which were partially felt in the country would be removed, and plenty and prosperity would be restored. He admitted that a Reform in Parliament was necessary, but he contended that *that* was not a *proper time* to obtain it, neither was Mr. Hunt a proper person to obtain it for them.— Sir John Cox Hippisley, who was a needy briefless lawyer, had married a widow lady of the name of Cox, who was possessed of a good fat dower, consisting of some very fine estates, which were left her by her late husband, a gentleman of character and fortune, one of the old aristocratical families of this county, and who, I believe, had been one of its representatives in Parliament. Her present lucky husband, Sir John, prospered much better as a country magistrate, and a Member of Parliament for the borough of Sudbury, than he did at the bar. The worthy baronet will be long remembered in Parliament for the *endless speeches* which he made there, and the *thin benches* which, as a natural consequence, he always produced. I have been told by some of the members, that when Sir John Cox Hippisley rose in the House, it was a signal for the other members to retire to take their dinners, or to converse upon other subjects; for, if they remained in the House, the baronet's voice was so melodious, that it was sure to send them all to sleep.

At the meeting of which I am now giving an account, the worthy baronet *chattered* for nearly an hour; and when he had concluded, Sir Thomas Acland came forward with a very confident air. As Sir Thomas had been taking notes all the time that I was speaking, and had frequently made what he intended for very significant gestures, we all expected that he would attempt something like an answer to my arguments, to show that the address which I had proposed was either improper or unnecessary. He began with, "Gentlemen"—but Sir Thomas, being a very young man, *could never get out* that which it appeared he wished to say; and, after repeating "Gentlemen," and hesitating for some time, he, in a most ludicrously affected manner, exclaimed, "*England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!*" and with this quotation he was so exceedingly delighted, or was so unable to find any thing else to say, that after having, cuckoo-like, to the great amusement of his audience, repeated it at least half a dozen times, he retired without uttering another sentence. We have heard since, that Sir Thomas is become an *orator*, he having made several brilliant speeches in Parliament. It may be so; but his *debut* at Wells was most laughable. Mr. Goodford, one of the Ilchester Bastile Visiting Magistrates, next came forward, to disclaim any participation in calling the meeting: he had, he said, certainly signed the requisition, but he did not know the object of it. He was succeeded by a Mr. Stephen, a clergyman, a brother to the Master in Chancery, who also supported the amendment, and declaimed against Mr. Waithman and all the Reformers; but particularly, by insinuation, against myself, who had agitated the peaceable county

of Somerset. This gentleman certainly spoke very eloquently, but he proved himself to be a determined supporter of the most profligate system, or (to use the proper phrase) a true thick and thin Government man. Mr. Power, the gentleman who came to report, now stepped forward, and, in a short but animated reply to the parson's attack upon Mr. Waithman, who was absent, most successfully repelled his insinuations against the reformers.

When I went round the county to get the requisition signed, I met with hundreds of not merely Reformers, but absolute heroes in the cause, who promised to come to the meeting, and to support my address. But, alas! when the day of battle came, these blustering blades were all vanished; in fact, I saw but two or three of those who had so strongly pledged themselves to attend, and they looked as shy as possible; and instead of coming upon the hustings to support me, they were afraid of being seen to speak to me—so subservient and so toad-eating were they to the Magistracy, when they came into contact with them. Upon the right of the hustings, where I stood, there were only about half a dozen, and five of them came with me. Mr. Waddington attempted to address the meeting; but, as he was seen coming to the hustings in company with me, the jolterheads would not hear him; and the other person who had attended me round the county being very illiterate, so much so, indeed, as to be incapable of speaking three words of English, or uttering a sentence without betraying his ignorance, we did not think it proper to expose him. I, therefore, shortly replied to the artful addresses of Sir John Cox Hippisley, and Parson Stephen. When the Sheriff put it to the vote, by a show of hats, whether the amendment should be adopted or not, it was most evident to me, and I believe to all who were upon the hustings, that the majority was against the amendment. The Sheriff, however, declared the show of hats to be so equal, that he could not decide which party had the majority; upon which the *old fox* suggested to the Sheriff, to divide the meeting to the right and to the left. This was no sooner said than, as if by previous consent, about forty constables made a wide passage down the middle, which they cleared with their staves, while the Magistrates and Parsons, with the most scrutinising eyes, marked all those that passed over from their side to support my address. This very unfair conduct produced the desired effect; hundreds, who had held up their hats in the crowd for my motion, were so intimidated by this movement, that they did not venture to expose themselves to the rancour of the Magistrates and Parsons; and the majority was now evidently for the amendment, although, in spite of the stratagem which had been used, the majority was so small, that our opponents clearly, by their looks, betrayed their conviction that they had sustained a defeat.

I should be doing a great injustice to my own feelings if I were to omit to mention one gentleman, of the county of Somerset, who came forward in the most manly and independent manner, to give me his support, although he had neither signed the requisition, nor promised to support me; but it was very evident that he acted from principle, and from the purest motives of patriotism and love of country. This was Mr. JOHN PRANKERD, an attorney, of Langport. He came manfully upon the hustings, and, without any disguise, he had the courage and the honesty to act like an Englishman and a freeman, by following the conscientious dictates of a noble heart, and speaking his mind, in spite of Magisterial dictation and overbearing tyranny. To the honour of the county of Somerset be it told, that there was one gentleman in it who, by joining our little party upon the hustings, had the honesty and the courage openly to brave the fury of the tyrannical junto of Magistrates and Parsons, who had assembled upon this occasion; but to its shame be it said, he was the only man who did so. There were thousands who mixed in the crowd, a majority who held up their hats to support my address, they had sense and honesty enough to think right, but, when a division and a scouting took place, they had not the courage to face the eye of their oppressors. I never saw Mr. Prankerd but once afterwards (and then I met him by accident in London), till I came to this Bastile. But I had no sooner become a captive in that county which I had ten years before roused into holding a public county meeting, than Mr. Prankerd hastened to my prison-house, and tendered to me his aid, his friendship, and his generous and patriotic assistance; fortunately, he only lives about ten miles from this place, and he was the second friend who called to cheer and to alleviate the horrors of my captivity, by the kindest assurances that he would do every thing in his power to make me comfortable while I remained here. It is with the most unqualified gratitude that I now bear witness that he has fulfilled his promise to the very letter. Nothing could have surpassed his active friendship for me upon all occasions. It is one of the many obligations which I owe to him, that he introduced to me his amiable relatives at Milbourn Port, Mr. and Mrs. Parsons, and Miss Newton, who have also, by their unremitting kindness, greatly contributed to my comfort and happiness. In fact, the generous attentions of Mr. Prankerd, and these his worthy kindred, have been unceasing since I came here; and they have eminently contributed to lighten the pressure of that burden with which the Boroughmongers vainly hoped to overwhelm me.

I must also do justice to the conduct of Mr. Jones Burdett at this meeting. I know that every art was employed, every exertion was made by his neighbours, the magistrates, to seduce him over to join the Whigs against me; and when these artful knaves found they could not succeed in this, they then endeavoured to get him to stand neuter, and at all events not to support my address. But Mr. Jones Burdett had given his promise, and all their arts could not succeed to make him break that promise. It

would have been very base in him if he had done so; but I have been acquainted with thousands who would have yielded to such entreaties.

When we left the hustings, I returned to my inn, the Swan, where a large party of freeholders was to dine. The multitude accompanied me thither, testifying their approbation with the loudest shouts; while the gentry, composed of both factions, who had opposed me, sneaked off to their homes ashamed to look at each other.

The next day I wrote the following address to the freeholders, which was published in a county paper, as well as in the nineteenth volume of Cobbett's Register:

TO THE INDEPENDENT FREEHOLDERS AND INHABITANTS OF SOMERSETSHIRE.

GENTLEMEN—I cannot refrain from offering you my congratulation on the effect of the first public meeting ever called in this county. Notwithstanding our opponents obtained a small majority against the address which I had the honour to propose to you on that day, yet I am clearly convinced that you gained a more complete victory (in the full admission of the truth of all the leading parts of that address by every one of those gentlemen who spoke against its adoption), than you would have gained by a mere majority of numbers without this unqualified admission of those facts. The address pointed out, clearly and explicitly, the distressing situation of the country; and it stated that the cause of all these distresses arose from a want of a fair and free representation of the people in Parliament. These facts were explicitly acknowledged by Sir John Cox Hippisley, who appeared to be the principal orator of both the parties, that united against the people on that day, who said he was sorry to bear witness to the truth of my statement; that "there was at this time a million and a half of paupers in England, subsisting on parish allowance, which was two pounds of bread per head per week less than the allowance to felons confined in our gaols." His only answer (if it might be called an answer) was, that there were 30 millions of paupers in France! He admitted that the cause of all the afflictions and misfortunes of this once free and happy nation, arose from the state of the representation, and said, that he had always voted for that Reform which was the object of our address; but that he found this to be an improper time to accomplish it. On his being asked to name the proper time, he declined to make any answer. Now, as all the gentlemen who spoke upon this subject completely agreed with Sir John, I contend it was a great victory obtained over the enemies of Reform; for had we produced such an address, and supported it in the same language of truth, three years back, instead of having all our points admitted to be true, only that it was an improper time to enforce them; instead of this, all the facts would have been impudently denied, and the mildest appellations we should have been branded with would have been jacobins and levellers. These three facts were clearly ascertained and allowed by all parties, on that day; first, that it was proper the freeholders and inhabitants of the county of Somerset should assemble in county meeting, for they all congratulated you upon your meeting; second, that the country was in an awful and distressing situation; third, that it was highly necessary there should be a Parliamentary Reform, only this was not the proper time for it; and that you, the freeholders and inhabitants of the county, were not the proper men to effect it. Pray, who are the proper men to effect it? Are Sir John Cox Hippisley, Sir Thomas Acland, Colonel Horner, the Rev. Mr. Trevillian, and Justice Goodford, likely men to bring about a Parliamentary Reform? Do you believe, Gentlemen, that they will ever call you together and tell you *now* is the time for Reform? You saw and heard them all on Monday last; and if, after this, you still believe that they are the sort of men likely to procure you an equal and fair representation in Parliament; if you wait for these leading men, as they have been called, in your county, to bring about a Reform, you deserve not even the chance of ever obtaining it. What could you discover in these Gentlemen to make you believe that they will ever attempt to tender you any relief from the load of taxes under which you groan? Did they promise you any such thing? Did they give you any reason to believe that they wish to have your opinion again? Although they have been called your leading men, did they ever assemble you in county meeting? Will they ever do it? No, believe me, never. They heard too much of your sentiments that day ever to wish to try the experiment again. That day the united influence of all the leading men, of all the Magistrates, of all the men of large landed property, the coalition of both parties, the Ins and the Outs, and all their mighty influence actively exerted for the last three weeks against you; and what has been the result? Why truth, unaccompanied by any influence, prevailed. Although you divided in a minority, in the proportion of three to two, yet truth prevailed; and be assured there is now a firm foundation laid for establishing the future independence of the county of Somerset.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your sincere humble servant,

HENRY HUNT.

Bath., March 6th, 1811.

To this letter Mr. Horner replied, which gave Mr. Cobbett an opportunity of criticising the proceedings of the meeting, and of giving Sir John Cox Hippisley a severe and well-merited castigation, for the inconsistent and hypocritical conduct of the Whigs in uniting with the Tories against the people. These *two factions*, Whigs and Tories, had been for many years accusing each other of ruining the country; but, as soon as the people began to think and act for themselves, and to take measures for correcting the evil, they both joined, and exclaimed, "We are a very happy people! We are very well off! Look at France! Look at other countries!" This was the language of Sir John Cox Hippisley.

One unequivocally good effect was produced by this meeting. The mask was torn from the faces of a hypocritical tribe. The Whigs had never so openly exposed themselves before. All county meetings had, indeed, been heretofore called; but they had been called by one or other of the two factions; generally by the faction out of place, who wanted to make use of the people to enable them to get into place, by turning out their opponents. Therefore, though they were always pitted against each other, yet both factions were equally anxious to impose upon, and keep the people in the darkest ignorance. I considered it as a great victory to have compelled these two factions to unite, and show themselves in their true colours in the face of the whole country. From that moment these factions were so well understood that they have not been able to deceive any body. The *Courier* said, that the Reformers had received a "*Rebuke*" in Somersetshire; upon which Mr. Cobbett expressed himself as follows: "*Rebuke*, indeed! as if it was a defeat, as if it was not a complete victory to have compelled the two factions to unite, to exert all their influence, of a public as well as of a private nature, and to come barefacedly forward against the people, against Reform, against every thing that menaced Corruption! As if this was doing nothing! As if this was a defeat! All the magistrates, all the hierarchy, all the *squirarchy* of the county were assembled, with some few exceptions. There were, perhaps, not less than two hundred constables. Why all this? Was it doing nothing to get all the people together? Was it doing nothing to compel them to expose their union to the people? Was it doing nothing to make them exhibit themselves thus, and to knock up for ever all the humbug of party in the county?" Mr. Cobbett thought this a victory of sufficient importance to fill eight pages of his Register with these sort of comments upon the good effects likely to be produced by it.

I have been the more diffuse in detailing the particulars of this meeting; because, when the reader shall have perused an account of two subsequent public meetings, which I attended in this county (at both of which the propositions that I supported were *carried* by overwhelming majorities); when he shall have coupled them with the great public meeting that I was instrumental in calling at Bath, in the year 1816, at which meeting I presided, and at which those resolutions and that petition were adopted, and signed by 20,000 names, which was the cause of Lord Camden resigning his *sinicure place* of Teller to the Exchequer; when he shall have reflected upon all these things, the reader will, perhaps, discover the *reason* why the corrupt tools of the Boroughmongers sent me to be imprisoned in the Bastile of *this* county. There had never been a public meeting of the inhabitants at Bath in the memory of the oldest person residing in that city; and it is possible there never would have been a public meeting held in it, if it had not been for my exertions. There had never been a public county meeting in Somersetshire before, at least not any thing worthy to be called a county meeting, till I procured one; and my readers may be well assured that these things were the cause of the Government selecting this Gaol for the place of my incarceration. Another thing was, that the Judges knew it to be one of the worst, the most confined, and most unwholesome Gaols in the kingdom. At these public meetings that spirit was engendered, which blazed forth with so much splendour at the late county election for Coroner, at which the little freeholders spurned the arbitrary dictation of the Magistracy of the county, and elected a Coroner of their own choice, in spite of the overbearing threats held out by those who had so long been in the habit of ruling them with a rod of iron.

I have before mentioned that I was a member of, or rather an annual subscriber to, what is called the Bath and West of England Agricultural Society; and, as a farmer, possessing, perhaps, the very best and largest stock of Southdown sheep, having my extensive farms cultivated under my own eye in such a manner, as to be more like a garden than like a large arable farm, that farm, of course, producing its produce in the market at all times of a superior quality; I had been often asked, why I did not exhibit some of my stock, and claim some of the numerous prizes for good husbandry, which were annually given by the society? My answer was this, "I pay my guinea a year, that I may have an opportunity to watch the motions of those gentry who have the management of the *concern*, and to see how the *pegs and wires* work." When I first became a member, my father warned me against being made the dupe of the artful and designing knaves, who were the leading parties concerned in it; and he always declared that the society was composed of *three* classes of persons, namely, "RAPACIOUS LANDLORDS; CUNNING, GRASPING, LONG-HEADED PARSONS; AND SHALLOW, VAIN, JOLTER-HEADED FARMERS;" the object of the two former being to suck the brains of the latter, for the purpose of ascertaining the utmost value of their *lands and tithes*, that they might screw up the *rents* of *both* to

the highest possible pitch: in fact, he always set them down for a set of unprincipled gamblers and swindlers, whose sole design was to benefit themselves at the expense of a starving community, by increasing the price of the necessaries of life, through the means of every possible chicanery, trick, and delusion. He used to say, that one half of them ought to be sent to Botany Bay for swindling, and the other half of them deserved to be whipped at the cart's tail for their folly and vanity. "But," said he to me, in the most solemn and impressive manner, "whatever you do, never, on any account, become a candidate for any of their premiums or prizes, because *there*, 'kissing goes entirely by favour,' and, therefore, unless you will submit to become one of their unprincipled gang, by assisting them to dupe and plunder others, be you assured that they will dupe and plunder you; and, let your merit be what it will, take my word for it, you will *never obtain a prize*." I always followed my father's advice; and, by the most strict and impartial observation, I have satisfied myself beyond the possibility of doubt that he was correct in his conclusions. They are, however, not only eminent in knavery, but that their folly keeps full pace with their ignorance and stupidity; the following are splendid proofs. One of their members, Mr. Thomas Crook, of Fotherington, actually exhibited a *fat sheep, as a pig*. He made a bet with a friend, that he would prove the members of the Bath Agricultural Society to be such a set of contemptible pretenders and impostors, that they did not know a *sheep* from a *pig*. There was to be a premium, as usual, for the best *fat pig*, with the *greatest* quantity of fat with the *least* bone. Mr. Crook ordered a very fat sheep to be killed; the wool was then burnt off with straw, the inside taken out, and the carcass dressed after the manner of a bacon hog, and as it was a horned sheep, he had the head cut off, as well as the legs. Mr. Crook was so confident of their want of knowledge, that he actually had his PIG hung up at the entrance of the sapient society's room; so that every one who passed must of necessity see it as they went in or out. Mr. Crook's pig was the admiration of the whole society, and it was declared by the judges far to surpass all the others that were exhibited. Unbounded encomiums were passed upon Mr. Crook, and his most excellent breed of pigs, every one being anxious to possess some of this valuable sort of swine. The prize was, of course, awarded to Mr. Crook; but, as he was a plain, honest, strong-headed farmer, who had always held this society in the highest contempt, he, after dinner, treated them with a suitable lecture upon their profound ignorance, and a well-merited satire upon their false pretensions; and then openly declared, that the PIG which they had, *one and all* (several hundreds of them), so much admired, was nothing more nor less than a SHEEP! How the jolterheaded ideots could ever look each other in the face again, and have the audacity to prate about their proficiency in agriculture, must surprise all those who are unacquainted with their brazen-faced, hardened impudence.

Another of these worthies, a few years afterwards, played off a similar trick upon these sapient agricultural asses. He exhibited an ox for the prize. When it was killed, he and the butcher placed the fat of two oxen in the inside of it. The beast was wonderfully admired by all who saw it, and the judges awarded the prize and the premium to Mr. Kemp, who was the owner of the ox, thus crammed with the fat of another ox in addition to its own. Mr. Kemp was, it seems, very well satisfied with playing off this trick upon these *tricksters*; and it never would have been known, if the butcher had not, some time afterwards, divulged the secret. Mr. Kemp knew that the whole thing was trick and imposition from beginning to end; and, therefore, he thought them fair game. While collectively the gang constantly imposes upon the public, its members constantly dupe and impose upon each other; and yet this is the most respectable society of agricultural asses in the kingdom! As a body they may be described as a set of the greatest impostors I ever met with in my life. There are, of course, many honourable exceptions, but they are, for the most part, the dupes of their more designing associates. A great number of them never paid up their subscriptions, and even *Vice-presidents* were eight or ten years in arrears. When they were seven years in arrear, there was a mark of *degradation* placed against their names, which were annually published, and many bore this disgrace with surprising fortitude, though some of them were Members of Parliament, with upwards of ten thousand a year income.

One year, while I resided at Bath, the society were by some means deprived of their show-yard; the place in which they used to exhibit their live stock, &c. &c. The late secretary, Mr. Mathews, a very worthy man, applied to me for the loan of my premises in Walcot-street, which, being very roomy and spacious, were deemed peculiarly eligible, particularly as at that time the society could not procure any other place, and consequently Mr. Mathews offered me any price that I chose to name for the use of them. As some part of these premises was unoccupied at the time, I felt great pleasure in having it in my power to oblige this worthy man; and I told him the society should be very welcome to the use of my premises upon that emergency, but that I should not think of making any charge for the use of them. The premises were, therefore, occupied with the cattle that were brought from all parts of the country to be shown, and, as this very liberal society always made those persons who wished to see their show-cattle pay for peeping, each person who entered was obliged to pay a *shilling*, and when I passed in at my own gate-way, their keeper actually demanded *my shilling*, which I readily paid, although my stables and garden led through the same. This was allowed by all persons to be much the best place the society ever had wherein to exhibit their cattle, &c. and the secretary offered me, I think it was, thirty pounds a year, to continue the show there. This I declined to accept, as it would have been a bar to the

letting of the whole premises, which were worth nearer two hundred a year than thirty. The next season the society hired some very confined and inconvenient premises, at a rental of twenty-five or thirty-five pounds a year, I forget which; and the secretary informed me that the committee had come to a determination that, as I would not accept any thing for the use of my premises, they would write my subscriptions *paid* in their books for a number of years, equivalent to the value which they had been saved thereby. Of course, I expected that they would, at the very least, have written *paid* for *twenty-five* years, the amount of what they annually paid for premises which were not one-fifth so convenient as those which they had occupied of mine. However, I received a formal intimation that the committee had ordered the secretary to write me off *five years subscription*, which was *five guineas*. When the secretary, Mathews, informed me of this, the society had left Bath, or I really believe that I should have thrown the five guineas at the head of the chairman, so indignant did I feel at their meanness. But Mr. Mathews was a Quaker, and a peace-maker, and to oblige him I took no notice of it; although he admitted that it was very shabby conduct of the committee, as they had offered *forty pounds* for a place very inferior to that with which they had been accommodated by me. I should not have mentioned this circumstance here, had it not been for the disgraceful and dastardly conduct of the society to me a few years afterwards; when, without giving me any previous notice, they came to a vote to exclude me from among them, because my subscriptions were THREE YEARS in arrear, while at the time scores of their members were upwards of SEVEN YEARS in arrear; and the *only rule* about the subject was, that "no member should be eligible to *vote* in the society who was three years in arrear." Be it remembered, too, that when they HONOURED me by this vote, the society was fairly indebted to me fifteen or twenty pounds, out of which they have, as I consider it, actually swindled me. But the very last time I attended their meeting they were guilty of a transaction still more mean and more dastardly than the one I have above described, and which I shall record in its proper place, when that period of my history arrives. I think, however, that what I have stated above will give my readers a pretty fair specimen of the character of that society, and it will be a warning to the public how they place any reliance upon their proceedings.

In the early part of the spring of 1811, I went to reside with my family at Rowfant House, in the county of Sussex, near East Grinstead, about thirty miles from London. This gave me an opportunity of frequently visiting my friend Mr. Cobbett, in Newgate. While he was in the King's Bench, and before he was called up for judgment, he expected that he should be sentenced to some distant county gaol, and in case it had been so, I had promised him that, wherever it was, I would come and take lodgings in the town, and visit him for a week or a fortnight at a time, several times during his imprisonment. This, however, was rendered unnecessary, by his imprisonment being in London. Nothing could have been more convenient for his business, as a public writer, than his being in London; and I have no hesitation in saying, that the punishment of six months' imprisonment in this Bastile is a much greater punishment than that of two years in Newgate. In fact, it was not more than it would have been to have sentenced him to be imprisoned in any house in Ludgate-hill. All persons had free access to him, from eight o'clock in the morning till ten at night, and he had as good apartments as he could have had in any house in London, and quite as good accommodation as he could have had at any private lodgings. Still it was imprisonment; but, when compared with my situation, it was no imprisonment at all. He had his family staying with him night and day, the very same as he would have had at a private lodging. Indeed, I have paid *five guineas* a week for lodgings in London which were worse in every respect. There was nothing about his residence that had the appearance of a prison but the name. Mr. Newman was a worthy and a benevolent man, quite the reverse of what prison keepers are in general, and every thing was done for Mr. Cobbett's accommodation and for that of his family and friends.

In February, Mr. Peter Finnerty received the judgment of the Court of King's Bench, for a libel upon Lord Castlereagh. There never was a man who stood upon the floor of the Court for judgment who made a more able or a more brave defence than he did; he did not retract one sentence, one syllable of the original publication, but, on the contrary, he produced affidavits to prove the truth of every word that he had published about Lord Castlereagh's cruelty to the people of Ireland, when he was in power, at the Castle of Dublin. The Attorney-General, Sir Vicary Gibbs, as well as Lord Ellenborough, were almost frantic with rage at the boldness and the perseverance with which he proclaimed the truth of his statements, as to the conduct of Lord Castlereagh. He was sentenced, by old Judge Grose, to be imprisoned in his Majesty's gaol of Lincoln for eighteen calendar months, and to give security for his keeping the peace far five years from that time. When he first went to Lincoln he was treated very harshly; upon which he caused a petition to be presented to the House of Commons, complaining of the treatment which he received from *the Gaoler and some of the Visiting Magistrates*. This brought the High Sheriff to the gaol, and Mr. Finnerty was partially relieved from the privations of which he had complained. He, however, afterwards caused a petition of one of the debtors to be presented to the House, by Sir Samuel Romilly, which ultimately led to a COMMISSION being sent down, to inquire into the truth of the matters contained in these petitions. As these proceedings were very similar to those which have recently taken place in this gaol, I will, at the proper time, give a more ample detail of them; particularly as Mr. Drakard, the editor of the *Stamford News*, was at this time also a prisoner in

Lincoln Castle. He was confined thereby a sentence of the Court of King's Bench, for a libel upon the army, he having been tried and found guilty at the Spring Assizes at Lincoln, in consequence of an article on the *fogging of soldiers*, which article appeared in his excellent paper. On the 25th of May, he was brought up to receive judgment, and was sentenced to be imprisoned in his Majesty's gaol of Lincoln, and to pay a fine of 200_l_. As there were two such men of talent as Mr. Finnerty and Mr. Drakard confined in Lincoln Castle at the time that a commission was sent down to inquire into its abuses, and the misconduct of the Gaoler Merewether, and the Parson Justice *Doctor Illingworth*, the public of course expected that some important exposures would be made, and that very important benefits would result from the inquiry; but we shall see, by and by, that, from some cause or other, although Mr. Finnerty and Mr. Drakard were much better treated, yet that the commission and the inquiry ended together in mere *smoke*.

On the nineteenth of March, dollars were made current at five shillings and sixpence each; and on the twentieth of March in this year, 1811, the Empress Maria Louisa of France was brought to bed of a son, who was immediately created King of Rome. On the ninth of May, the first stone of Vauxhall Bridge was laid; and on the eleventh of October, the first stone of the Strand bridge was laid: this last is the bridge which is now foolishly called by some silly people, Waterloo bridge. A similar circumstance occurred when Blackfriars bridge was built; some foolish people wished to change its name to Chatham bridge, as a compliment to Lord Chatham; and it was so called by many silly people for some time: but at length good sense overcame vanity, and it reverted back to its original and proper name of Blackfriars bridge, in spite of Chatham-place, &c. &c. So, I have no doubt, the good sense of the people will ultimately overcome their folly, and that it will be again universally denominated by its original and proper name, the STRAND BRIDGE.

On the fourth of June, the King's birth-day, the usual public rejoicings were suspended, in consequence of his severe illness, although our most gracious Regent, soon after he attained that dignity, had given a *fete* in February, at Carlton-House, where at least two thousand persons were present. On the ninth of June, Christophe, a man of *colour*, was proclaimed and crowned King of St. Domingo, or Hayti. At the time, it was supposed to bring the kingly office into some degree of ridicule, to have a black man solemnly going through the mockery of a coronation; although it is a fact, that it was a very splendid, as well as a very popular coronation.

It was in this year, that Mr. now Sir Charles Wolseley, first publicly declared his sentiments as to political matters; at least, it was the first time I ever noticed them. In a letter which he addressed to the Freeholders of the county of Stafford, he makes this honest, open, and manly declaration: "The principles upon which a person ought to be sent to serve in Parliament, are, to keep the prerogatives of the crown unimpaired; to secure the liberties of the people; to oppose in every shape the system of Pitt's administration; and to obtain a RADICAL REFORM in the representation of the people in Parliament. These are my principles." These principles has Sir Charles Wolseley honestly acted up to ever since; and to this may be attributed the reason that we have never had the benefit of the worthy Baronet's patriotic and able exertions in the senate as a Member of Parliament. He has always been a staunch Radical Reformer, and he never disguised his sentiments; therefore it is, that he has never been taken by the hand and placed in the House by any of the great Borough Lords of either of the two factions of Whigs and Tories; and from principle he has alike declined to become a slave and a tool to the Boroughmongers, or to purchase one of their seats.

In consequence of the failure of a Bank at Salisbury, of the firm of *Bowles, Ogden, and Wyndham*, immense distress was caused throughout the county of Wilts; almost all the country people having a great portion of their property in the notes of this Bank. It was on this occasion that Mr. Cobbett wrote those famous letters, which he called "Paper against Gold," addressed to the tradesmen and farmers in and near Salisbury, being an examination of the report of the Bullion Committee. These celebrated letters formed a clear and comprehensive exposition of the Paper System; they developed the whole juggle of Stock Jobbing, the Sinking Fund, and the National Debt, and the operation of taxes upon the industry and happiness of the people. These letters, which are now published in a small volume, prove, beyond all doubt, the clear and comprehensive mind of this inimitable writer, and the work will live in after-ages as a monument of his superior talent and knowledge in these heretofore intricate and mysterious matters, which were rendered still more intricate and incomprehensible by the very means which such men as Mr. Horner, the chairman of the Bullion Committee, used to elucidate them. Had Mr. Cobbett never written another line but what is contained in this work, his name, as an author, in matters of English finance, would have gone down to posterity hand-in-hand with that of our immortal countryman, Mr. Paine. Perhaps Mr. Cobbett would never have written this valuable work, if he had not been imprisoned in Newgate by the tyrannical proceedings of the Boroughmongers, assisted by a packed special jury, always the best ally of tyranny and tyrants, because it enables them to carry on a most nefarious despotism, and inflict death, loss of liberty, and torture upon its victims, under the assumed forms of law and justice; the very worst species of tyranny, and the most horrible of all

despotisms.

Sir Samuel Romilly brought some Bills into the House of Commons, which were passed, respecting the criminal laws. Lord Holland, in the House of Lords, and Lord Folkestone, in the House of Commons, made motions to restrain *ex-officio* informations, which were at this time extended to a most alarming pitch by Attorney-General Vicary Gibbs; but ministerial influence prevailed, and the laudable endeavours of the two peers were rendered of no avail, as the motions were lost in both Houses. These proceedings excited universal interest, and the constant *ex-officio* informations filed by Sir Vicary Gibbs against almost every liberal writer of the day, drew down upon him almost universal execration. A Bill was now passed to allow the Ministers to make an interchange of the militia between England and Ireland. The Prince Regent also restored the Duke of York to the office of Commander in Chief. This excited general dissatisfaction, and a debate upon the subject arose in the House of Commons; but upon a division the Ministers carried it with a very high hand, and an overwhelming majority, there being only *forty-seven* of the faithful and disinterested Representatives of the people who voted against the measure. Motions were likewise made in both Houses, to discountenance the doctrine of assassination which had been lately preached up by various righteous Ministerial Members, aiming at the life of Napoleon; but these motions also were lost, as Ministers declined to give them their support. Lord Stanhope about this time brought in a Bill to make Bank-notes be received as equal in value with coin, under a penalty; and after a long debate in both Houses, this profound Bill passed.

The Catholics in Ireland manifested symptoms of great discontent and dissatisfaction at their claims being so long neglected. The fact was, that the wretched peasantry of Ireland were in the most abject state of want, and as they had been kept in the most complete ignorance, and deprived of all the common forms of law and justice, they were gradually sinking into a state of barbarism; the consequence of which was, that we frequently heard of instances of aggravated ferocity, such as seldom disgrace any people but the most uncultivated savages. Deprive civilized man of the protection of the law—only once suffer a body of people to be convinced that there is neither law nor justice within their reach, and you drive them to desperation; in which state they throw off all controul over their passions, and they become remorseless, cruel, and vindictive. I am quite sure that it is this state of feeling amongst the lower Irish that has created White Boys, Peep-of-day Boys, Ribbon Men, and all the various classes of incendiaries and desperadoes of which we hear so much from Ireland. I do not believe, nor did I ever believe, that Catholic emancipation would restore the people of Ireland either to happiness or prosperity: no, the same malady that reigns in England reigns in a two-fold degree in Ireland—they are overwhelmed with taxation, oppression, and injustice; these dreadful evils have goaded them into madness, and till they are removed and the people are treated with kindness and humanity, and above all, till justice is fairly administered amongst them, the Government of England will in vain endeavour to subdue the spirit of insubordination either by the bayonet or the halter. The only remedy there as well as in England consists in giving the people free and equal means of choosing their own representatives, to make wise, just, and liberal laws for them in Parliament.

I lament to find that the poor of England are fast approaching to the same frightful state as the natives of unhappy Ireland. The poor and the oppressed come to me here from all quarters, within a circle of twenty miles, and when they have told me their pitiable tales, and I advise them to go and repeat it to a "*Magistrate*," alas! almost without an exception, they exclaim, "*there is no justice for the poor!*" If they could have obtained any redress from a Magistrate, I should not have been consulted. In fact, most of their complaints arise from their inability to get any justice done them by the Magistrates. I would hold out a friendly warning to these Magistrates, to beware how they strain that cord too tight; for, if it should once break, if the people should in general, or any great portion of them, should come to the conclusion, that there is not justice for the poor, that they exist at the arbitrary will of their task-masters, that, in short, they are not under the protection of the laws, melancholy would be the consequences; such indeed as cannot be contemplated without horror. Who is there that can say what an awful retribution might be exacted! When once such a spirit breaks forth, no one can calculate upon the time at which it will be appeased. I frequently shudder at the terrific consequences which must and would ensue. It was this absence of justice which drove the French to a revolution. It was a similar contempt of justice that caused the Americans to revolt, and most happily rescued that fine country from the worst of despotism. The taxing of the industry, the skill, and the talent of a people, without allowing them to have any share in the election of those who impose those taxes—in a word, taxation without representation is the very acme of tyranny and despotism. It was this species of tyranny that produced the glorious revolutions of South America, of Spain, and of Portugal, and which has emancipated the inhabitants of those beautiful countries from slavery both of body and mind.

At Lady-day I quitted my residence at Bath, and went with my family to reside at Rowfant House, in Sussex, which, as I have before said, is situated thirty miles from London, half way between the two roads leading from the metropolis to Lewes and Brighton, and about the same distance from those two places. It is at the eastern extremity of what is called the Weald of Sussex. Nothing can be more

delightful than this country is in the spring, summer, and autumn; it is then luxuriant and picturesque in the extreme; nothing can then surpass the beauty of the surrounding scenery, and the richness of the foliage which clothe the majestic oak and beech-trees; of the latter there are many, very many, of the largest and finest in the kingdom. The mansion is situated in the centre of a park, or park-like pastures, and has two fronts, one to the south and the other to the west, each looking over the most beautiful, picturesque, and romantic country that I ever saw, alternately presenting to the eye wood, water, and pasture fields, interspersed with the majestic oak, the lofty beech, the trembling birch, the lime, the ash, and every other species of beautiful forest tree. There were nearly five hundred acres of woodland upon this estate, and it was well stocked with game and fish of every description; but the whole country was congenial for the breed of pheasants. On some parts of the manor there was black game, and in the season woodcocks, snipes, and other wild fowl; in fact, all these frequently breed in that part of the country.

This part of Sussex, although it is only thirty miles from London, is as completely out of the world as the most remote mountains of Wales, or the Highlands of Scotland, and the inhabitants were quite as uninformed and in as perfect a state of nature as the natives in the wilds of America. I had no idea that any portion of the people of England could be so completely buried in ignorance, and display such a total absence of all knowledge, with the exception of hedging, ditching, cutting wood, converting it into charcoal, making and eating hard dumplings, and smuggling brandy, Hollands, tea, tobacco, French manufactures of all sorts and descriptions.

This estate had for ages been in the possession of the family of the Bethunes, and the farmers had also been so long in the occupation of their farms, for little or no rent, that they very justly considered themselves as having a much greater interest in the soil than the proprietor had. This place had been put up to the hammer, and sold to the trustees of a lunatic. I had taken it on a lease; the manor, mansion, farms, lands, and the manorial rights. Mr. James, the land-agent, in Old Boswell-court, had the letting of it, under the direction of John Foster, Esq. the head of the firm of Foster, Cooke, and Frere, of Lincoln's Inn, who was the acting trustee for the lunatic. On application to Mr. James, I soon found that he must have a *certain price* for the estate, which, if I would consent to give, *I might make my own terms*. Of course, I took care to insert such clauses in the lease, as would convey the property entirely to my custody, upon the payment of a certain rent. I introduced one clause which I was ashamed to carry into execution, when I found that it would injure the property to an enormous extent, without affording to myself a corresponding benefit. I stipulated to be at liberty to grub up and to cultivate all the hedge-rows, and about three hundred acres of wood and coppice land. This the parties readily covenanted to allow me to do; but when I came to examine these woods, I found that, in availing myself of my right, I should destroy not less than *sixty thousand beautiful and thriving oak trees and saplings*. As the whole of the land on which these trees grew was a light sandy loam on the top, and a deep strata of yellow clay under, which was a soil by no means advantageous to cultivate, but peculiarly congenial to the growth of oak timber, I made my calculations of what *I might gain*, and what would be the loss to the proprietors of the estate, by grubbing up the woods, and destroying sixty thousand thriving oak trees and saplings. My gains would have been but small, but the injury to the estate would have been incalculable. This I candidly laid before the trustees of the property, and at once proposed to forego any advantage that I might have derived, and to suffer the woods to remain, with the timber growing thereon, for the benefit of the proprietor, provided the parties would make me a corresponding deduction in the rent. My proposition was so reasonable, that I had not the slightest doubt but it would be eagerly accepted. Mr. Foster, who was a very keen, sensible, clever, intelligent man, I saw at once, perceived the destruction that it would be to the estate; but yet it was evident that the object in granting one such a lease was to make up a certain annual rent, equivalent to the interest of the money which had been expended in the purchase of the estates. He saw the dilemma in which they were placed, and I plainly perceived that the idea of reducing the rent upon which they had calculated was out of the question, that it was not to be entertained by the trustees for a moment.

This being the case, I returned from London, and proceeded in the cultivation of the farm. I very early made up my mind not hastily to do such a serious and irretrievable injury as I was authorized to do to the estate, and I therefore directed my attention to other objects. I had sent off a servant to meet half way the little drove of sheep which I had purchased of Mr. Dean; the whole distance being one hundred and fifty miles. He had been gone ten days, and I impatiently waited his arrival, but I had as yet heard no tidings of him, although he ought to have been back several days before. At length, when twelve days had elapsed, information was brought me that he had arrived with the sheep upon Copthorn Common, but that he could not get them any further, in consequence of their being all very lame and unable to walk. I took my horse and rode to the spot, about the distance of two miles from my house. When I came there, I found every sheep of them dead lame, with the most confirmed and inveterate FOOT ROT. The poor fellow, ADAMS, who had been so long delayed upon the road, was completely exhausted with the labour, fatigue, and harassing exertion which he had endured in accomplishing his task. I think he had actually left three or four of them thirty or forty miles behind, and many of the

others he declared that he had carried, one at a time, more than half the way upon his shoulders. Upon my expostulating with him, as to his having consented to receive them in such a state; he replied, that the drover, who brought them from Mr. Dean, declared that he would not drive them back to have them; that he left them in the care of my servant the moment that they met, and then, without the least ceremony, took French leave, apparently delighted to get quit of his troublesome charge. When I saw the deplorable state in which they were (for upon closer examination I found that many of their hoofs were rotted off their feet), I demanded with some warmth of my servant, why he had not left them with some farmer upon the road, till they could have been recovered or cured. "Lord bless you, Sir," replied the man, "I tried at more than fifty places, but nobody would take them in at any price, as they all said they would not have them at a gift, and that they should not tread a hoof upon any of their lands on any account, as the *foot rot* was highly *infectious*."

This was another serious evil, for I had purchased two hundred more sheep, and if they went upon the same land, I was sure of infecting my whole flock. However, on the next day when they could be got home, I placed them in some of my best meadows, and set about attempting a cure. In the meantime, I wrote to Mr. Dean, to inform him of the deplorable state in which they had arrived. In his reply he candidly acknowledged that they had suffered from this disease, but he declared he thought they had been quite free from it before he sent them off; adding that, if he had had the slightest idea of the state in which they were at the time his servant left them, they should not, on any account, have been forwarded to me. He begged that I would not return them, but that I would employ some one to endeavour to cure them; and, if that could not be accomplished, I must, he said, kill them, and give them to the dogs, or do any thing with them I pleased. In fact, I did employ a person, who pretended he could cure them, to come and dress them, which he did once a week for nearly a twelve-month, and at length he gave them up as incurable.

Instead of my ever making one halfpenny of these sheep, the plague, the trouble, and the loss that I sustained by them was not so little as sixty pounds; besides, their having given the disease to my flock of two hundred, the remainder of which, after losing sixty of them, I sold at seven shillings per head less than I gave for them. So that by this untoward affair I was, on the whole, at least one hundred pounds out of pocket, to say nothing of all my trouble and anxiety. If I had been served so by any one but a friend, such as Mr. Dean; I should certainly have commenced an action against him for serious damages. Far from Mr. Dean ever applying to me to pay him any thing for the sheep, he frequently expressed his sorrow that I should have been so harassed and perplexed with them as I had been. I had devoted one of my best fields to their use, and at the end of two years, when I left the farm, there were seven of them remaining still in the same state, as they never were or ever could be cured. At length, some time after the decease of Mr. Dean, I received, from the executors of Mr. Dean, an application for the payment of these sheep. I replied, that Mr. Dean had long since cancelled that debt, but, on the other hand, there was a very considerable balance due to me, if I chose to persist in it, from the circumstances above stated.

I heard no more of this affair from them; but, after a considerable lapse of time, a statement was made in the *Taunton Courier*, that, when I had gone round the country to collect names for a requisition to call a county meeting, Mr. Dean had taken me in and treated me with the greatest hospitality, and that I had rewarded him by swindling him out of a *flock of fine sheep*, for which I had never paid him. When the reader reflects upon this wanton and atrocious slander, which was malignantly propagated by the venal and corrupt editor of a country paper, I am sure, although the vehicle through which the slander was conveyed, was in itself obscure and contemptible, I shall be excused for giving the particulars of this transaction; however tedious and uninteresting it may appear to those at a distance, where the venom was never propagated, it is, in truth, due to myself and to my friends in this county, who read the calumny, to have the matter clearly explained; although, to every man of common sense, it must have been very evident, when the scandal was first promulgated, that it was a gross and palpable falsehood; because, if I had owed Mr. Dean's executors, or any other person, a sum of money amounting to forty or fifty pounds, it was the most easy thing upon earth to have compelled me to pay it. O, it was a wicked, a mean and a malignant falsehood, which would never have been put afloat, or believed by any body, against any other man but myself, who at that time was the universal topic of abuse in the whole of the venal ministerial and opposition press of the country, in consequence of my having resisted oppression and tyranny, and roused the spirit of liberal feeling and patriotic exertion among some of the electors of Bristol, where I had maintained, single-handed, two contested elections for that city, in opposition to all the contending factions. The newspaper editors of each faction had disseminated the vilest calumnies against me, in revenge for those struggles which I had made to oppose the rotten borough system in that city; and this venal, dirty, contemptible, hireling knave of the *Taunton Courier*, selected this as a proper time to add his lie to the million of lies that were then circulated against me.

But I shall now speak more fully of the circumstances which led to my being a candidate for Bristol,

in June, 1812. Ever since the previous general election, when the electors had been humbugged by Sir John Jervis, and had attempted to wreak their vengeance upon Mr. Bragge Bathurst, I had, at various times, publicly declared my intention to offer myself as a candidate for that city. On that occasion, Mr. Bathurst experienced such an unfavourable reception, that it was generally understood he did not mean to offer himself as a candidate for the city, at the approaching general election; and as Colonel Baillie, the Whig Member, did not relish the idea of standing such a contest as it was generally expected I should create, he also intimated his intention to resign; Mr. Edward Protheroe, therefore, offered himself as a Whig Member, in his place. The Whigs were very well satisfied with the pretensions of Mr. Protheroe, as being a citizen of Bristol; and he, as the Whig Member, and Mr. Richard Hart Davis, as the Tory Member, would have been returned, without any opposition whatever, by the two factions, had it not been for the threatened interference of myself, who was avowedly a candidate that would excite a great popular feeling.

This consideration induced some of what is called the liberal or Foxite Whigs to think of looking out for a more popular Whig Candidate than Mr. Protheroe, for the purpose of taking away the votes from *me*. After several meetings had been held upon the subject, it was determined upon, by a little faction, to invite Sir Samuel Romilly to become a candidate. I am quite confident, in my own mind, that if it had not been for the opposition which it was certain would be made by me, there would not have been any opposition at all. Mr. Bragge Bathurst and Colonel Baillie, or Mr. Protheroe, would have been returned without the slightest effort to prevent it. My avowed intention of being a candidate, however, first made the White Lion Cock, Bragge Bathurst, turn tail and declare off, and next induced Colonel Baillie to decline. The one of these was the Tory and the other the Whig candidate for the representation of the city of Bristol, which, in consequence of a compromise entered into by the two factions, had always been divided between them; and therefore one Whig and one Tory Member had always been returned; and so it would have continued without any change, had it not been for me. Mr. Davis and Mr. Protheroe would have been returned as quiet as mice, without a word being said by any body against it. But, as I had become a candidate, a little gang of intriguers at length made up their minds to put Sir Samuel Romilly forward; not, I believe, with the slightest expectation that they could carry his election, but under the firm conviction that he would very largely divide the popularity with me.

Thus it was that Sir Samuel Romilly was made the cat's-paw of this faction, for the purpose of destroying all chances of my becoming the Representative of Bristol. As soon as they had announced their intention to support Sir Samuel Romilly, they, the Whigs, took the greatest pains to circulate the report and create the impression that I was offering myself as a candidate for Bristol merely to oppose the "*amiable Sir Samuel Romilly*;" these corrupt, factious knaves, always taking care to keep out of view, that this gentleman was already a Member of Parliament for the Duke of Norfolk's rotten-borough of Arundel, which seat he was sure to retain as long as he lived, if he chose to do so. But it was necessary, for their sinister purposes, to bring upon the scene this gentleman, who bore an excellent character, and who, amongst the Whigs, was considered as a prodigy of perfection.

Notwithstanding that Sir Samuel Romilly was set up against me, instead of my being set up against him, I having constantly, for four years before Sir Samuel's name was ever mentioned, avowed my intention of becoming a candidate, yet, as soon as a meeting had been called at the Crown and Anchor, in London, and a sum of eight thousand pounds had been subscribed by the Whigs to support him, I publicly offered to resign my pretensions, and to give my whole support to the knight of the gown and wig, if he would only pledge himself to espouse the cause of Reform in the House of Commons. This offer was, however, declined, or at least treated with silent neglect; but the venal press did not cease railing against me for opposing Sir Samuel Romilly.

A day was appointed for Sir Samuel to make his public entry into Bristol, and a public dinner was got up on the occasion, to which he was invited. The day fixed on was the second of April, 1812, which was considered to be a period immediately preceding the expected general election. Great preparations were made to receive the lawyer in grand stile, and every thing was attempted to create effect. A number of persons went out to meet him on horseback, and I made a point of being present, to see how the thing went off, and to hear what would be said by Mr. Tierney, who, it was reported, was to introduce Sir Samuel to the citizens of Bristol. It was given out that he would alight at the Bush Tavern, opposite the Exchange, and that he would address the people from the window of his committee-room, facing which window I placed myself, to see and to hear all that could be heard or seen. At length, after he had been waited for, for about an hour (which, by-the-bye, is considered genteel), the worthy lawyer arrived, seated in an open barouche, with Mr. Michael Castle on one side, and *Alderman Noble* on the other! It was but a sorry cavalcade; and although there was some cheering amongst his partizans, yet he met altogether with a very cold reception. But when Sir Samuel was led up to the window, and it was discovered that it was Alderman Noble who accompanied him, there was one general burst of disapprobation—groans, hissing, and hooting, and cries of "No Noble! no six and eightpence! no bloody bridge! no murderers!" &c. &c. Poor Sir Samuel was astonished; he had been made to believe that he

would be received with the greatest applause and indeed enthusiasm; but these discordant sounds quite disconcerted him, and when he began to speak, instead of his being listened to, the cries and the groans were redoubled. Alderman Noble put forth his hand to command silence; this was received with the most violent and indignant execrations and hootings, mingled with cries of "No Noble! no six and eightpence! no bloody bridge!" Nothing could have been so unfortunate for Sir Samuel Romilly, as to be accompanied by Alderman Noble, who, a few years before, had rendered himself deservedly detested, by his having ordered the military, the Herefordshire Militia, with Lord Bateman as their Colonel, to fire upon the people, at a riot which took place relative to the tolls of Bristol Bridge; upon which occasion eleven or twelve persons were killed. So obnoxious was this man, that he had been obliged to quit Bristol for some years, and he took this opportunity to return under the wing of Sir Samuel Romilly; but his appearance roused the most angry feeling amongst the people, and this feeling was so preponderating, that Sir Samuel attempted to address the multitude for about twenty minutes, without one word being distinguishable.

I have already mentioned the report that Sir Samuel would be introduced by Mr. Tierney, the late popular Member for the borough of Southwark, but, subsequently to his holding a place under the Whigs, the Member for the rotten-boroughs of Appleby, in Westmoreland, and Bandon-bridge, in Ireland. Even this would have done Sir Samuel no service. Before the Whigs had been in place, and Mr. Tierney, like the rest of them, had been tried and found wanting, it might have answered very well for him to have introduced a popular candidate to the city of Bristol; for at that period he professed himself to be not only the champion, but the child of Liberty. At the time when he branded with so much spirit and eloquence the income-tax of Pitt, and declared in his place in Parliament that this income-tax was such an odious and such an unconstitutional measure "that the people of England would be justified in taking up arms to resist the collection of it;" at that time, when Mr. Tierney so strenuously and brilliantly opposed all the ruinous measures of Pitt; at that time, if he had proposed to go to Bristol, he might have been received with approbation by the people, and his name might have added to the popularity of any man. But, since Mr. Tierney had been in office with the Whigs, since he had become a splendid pensioned apostate from his former opinions, since he had been kicked out of the borough of Southwark for his apostacy, since he had, while in the Whig Administration, advocated and supported an additional income-tax, and voted for almost all those measures, when in place, which he had opposed when out of place; since these things had occurred, the name of Mr. Tierney was calculated to injure the popularity of any man to whom he linked himself. This of itself, this announcement that Mr. Tierney was to attend Sir Samuel Romilly, was enough to damn his popularity with every real friend of Liberty in that city. But, when he appeared side by side with Alderman Noble, all hopes of his ever being popular in Bristol were at an end! I never in my life, on any public occasion, saw a man received worse by the populace than Sir Samuel Romilly was.

It was asserted, and the assertion has been often repeated, that I was instrumental to this unfavourable reception of Sir Samuel Romilly; but this is totally false; none of my friends knew of my being, or of my intending to be, at Bristol on that day. I had gone into the city privately, and had walked up to the Exchange from my inn, the Talbot, without exciting the attention of any one; and, to tell the truth, no man was more sorry than I was, that such a man should have been treated so unfairly as he was by his party; that he should, in the first place, have been so ill advised, as to have had his name coupled with that of Mr. Tierney, and then, that he should be accompanied by the most unpopular and most odious man in the whole city, and one who, since he had been driven from the city, had become a placeman under the Government. These were the sole causes of Sir Samuel Romilly being received with such demonstrations of disgust and disapprobation. To be sure, all the friends of Liberty in the city of Bristol, who had any pretensions to a knowledge of what was going on, must have very clearly seen that Sir Samuel Romilly had been invited to attend, and to become a candidate for Bristol, mainly for the purpose of dividing the popularity with me; and my friends were, doubtless, prepared to scrutinise his speech with rather a sceptical feeling; but not one of my friends would on this account have interrupted him, or have done any thing to prevent him from being heard; on the contrary, there was a general disposition amongst my friends to support him in conjunction with myself.

Those Whigs who supported Sir Samuel Romilly appeared to be thunderstruck at his reception, and for a long time they did not appear to be aware of the cause of it. As there was not one of them who had any influence over the minds of the people, there was no attempt made to rescue Sir Samuel from this very unpleasant situation, and at length he retired from the window sadly disconcerted, and his party were dreadfully chagrined. Sir Samuel had literally been hissed, hooted, and groaned from the window, at a time when I expected every one would have been anxious to hear him, and to listen to him with the greatest attention. I am sure, for myself, that I was greatly disappointed. There might have been ten thousand persons present, which was no very great number for such an occasion; but I think I may safely say, that there was not one in a hundred that knew or expected that I would be there.

As there was now a pause, and as no one from Sir Samuel Romilly's room attempted to come forward,

I mounted upon one of the copper pedestals which stands in the front of the Exchange, and I was instantly hailed with shouts from all those who knew me, which, at that time, could not have been more than half the persons present. My name was rapidly communicated from one to the other, and before I could begin to address them, they gave three cheers for Mr. Hunt, which was proposed by some one present. The moment I began to speak, the most profound silence reigned around; and in a speech of an hour and forty minutes I was interrupted only by the applause of my hearers, and by the anxiety which they expressed that I should put on my hat, as it rained. This inconvenience was soon obviated, by a gentleman being elevated with an umbrella, which he held over my head till I had concluded. During this address I avowed myself the warm advocate for Radical Reform, and declared myself the staunch friend of Sir Francis Burdett, and the principles which he professed. I went through a history of the proceedings of the Whig Administration, and recounted the sinecures, pensions, and unmerited places held by the Grenvilles, and other Boroughmongers of that faction; but when I came to speak of the conduct of the Law Officers of the Crown under that administration, during the continuance of which Sir Samuel Romilly was one of those officers, when I touched on their having drawn up the famous Acts of Parliament passed by the Whig Ministry, during the reign of *one year, one month, one week, and one day*; when I came to speak of *this*, the windows of the room in which Sir Samuel Romilly and his friends were, in the Bush Tavern, opposite where I stood, were pettishly shut down by some one. The moment that the people saw this, they exclaimed, "Look! look! they are ashamed to hear the truth, and they have shut the windows to prevent its coming amongst them." This shutting the windows the populace took as an insult offered to them, and they vociferously demanded that they should be reopened; and their demand was made in such an unequivocal and peremptory manner, that the gentry, after some slight hesitation, complied with the wishes of the multitude. I continued to address the people for nearly an hour after this time, although at the outskirts of the crowd in Clarestreet there was a waiter with Sir Samuel Romilly's colours in his hat, who announced that the dinner was waiting; in consequence of which, several attempts were made in vain by some persons in the Bush, to force their way out of that house through the dense crowd, that not only occupied the whole of the front of the tavern, but extended for a very considerable distance above and below, even up to Broad-street and down to Small-street, so that it was absolutely impossible for any one to pass while I was addressing the people. This was most galling to Sir Samuel Romilly's friends, who, from this circumstance, were actually prisoners in the Bush nearly an hour and a half after the dinner had been ready at the Assembly Rooms in King-street, where the party were going to dine; but, if their lives had been at stake not a man of them could have got out till I had finished my speech; for the crowd had considerably increased since I had begun. After having exhausted my strength, I retired amidst the most deafening shouts of approbation; the whole of the immense populace accompanied me to my inn, and left Sir Samuel and his friends a clear course to proceed to their dinner.

I never said any thing against the gown and wig knight. On the contrary, I thought him a much better man for a Member of Parliament than Mr. Protheroe, who had declared himself a candidate also in the Whig interest, to represent the city, in the place of Colonel Baillie, who intended to resign at the general election. I had, ever since the former election, offered myself as a candidate, whenever there should be a vacancy, without any reference to either of the factions; but Mr. Protheroe and Sir Samuel Romilly came forward avowedly to fill the seat of Colonel Baillie; neither of these gentlemen professing any desire to interfere with the White Lion candidate, Mr. Bragge Bathurst, the factions being too civil to each other to interfere with their separate interests. If I had not offered myself as a candidate, Mr. Bragge Bathurst would have been elected by the White Lion interest, without any opposition.

The Whigs were excessively annoyed by the inauspicious manner in which Sir Samuel was greeted, and not less so by the exposure which I made of their politics and principles. The editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, and other papers in London, gave, however, a flaming account of the public entry of Sir Samuel Romilly into Bristol: they said that he was hailed with the greatest enthusiasm, and they published a speech which he had delivered to the people at the Bush Tavern window, and which they unblushingly affirmed to have been received with the greatest applause; but they forgot to say one word about a speech of nearly two hours, which I delivered. They published the account of a speech of a quarter of an hour, not one word of which was heard, while the speech that was heard and attentively listened to, they never noticed at all! This was so glaringly unfair and partial, that Mr. Cobbett wrote a very long and able paper upon the subject, exposing and chastising the Whigs for their duplicity and deception, and, at the same time, he did not fail to represent the conduct of Mr. Perry in its true colours.

A dissolution of Parliament had been anticipated for some time; but an occurrence now took place that caused a sudden and unexpected vacancy for the city of Bristol. Mr. Bragge Bathurst was appointed to the lucrative office of *Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*, one of the most valuable places in the gift of the Sovereign, or rather of his Ministers. It was announced that he had accepted this office, that he had in consequence vacated his seat, and that a new writ was issued for the election of a Member for the city of Bristol; to which was added, that Mr. Hart Davis, the then Member for

Colchester, had accepted the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, for the purpose of becoming a candidate upon the White Lion, or Blue Club, alias the Ministerial interest in Bristol. This was all promulgated in the same paper, and it stated that the election would be held forthwith, as Mr. Davis would be elected without any opposition, the friends of Sir Samuel Romilly and Mr. Protheroe having no intention to interfere with the election of that gentleman.

The writ for electing a Member for Bristol, in the room of Bragge Bathurst, was moved for in the House of Commons, on Tuesday evening, the 24th of June: and at the same time a writ for electing a Member for Colchester, in the room of Richard Hart Davis, was moved for. I never heard a word of this till Thursday afternoon at four o'clock, when the postman brought me my Wednesday's paper, just as I was sitting down to dinner at Rowfant, in Sussex. After dinner I read the account, and I made up my mind to start for that city the next morning. I rode to town on Friday, took my place in the Bath mail, and reached Bath at ten o'clock on Saturday morning. Some of the people of Bristol had arrived in Bath in expectation of meeting me, and one of them immediately returned to Bristol to announce my intention of being in that city the same evening. At the appointed hour, which was five o'clock, I arrived at Totterdown, where I was met by an immense multitude, who took my horses from the carriage, and drew me into the city and through the principal streets, till they arrived at the front of the Exchange, which they had fixed upon as the theatre of my public orations, in consequence of my having accidentally mounted one of the pedestals on the memorable day of Sir Samuel Romilly's public entry into Bristol. I left the carriage, remounted the pedestal, and addressed at least twenty thousand of the inhabitants, who had accompanied me thither with the most deafening shouts. I never had seen such enthusiasm in my life. I briefly animadverted upon the trick which was intended to have been played off upon them by the worthy leaders of both the factions in that city, who had united for the purpose of stealing a march upon the electors, a trick which I had no doubt my opportune arrival would frustrate; and pledged myself to be at the Guildhall in due time on Monday morning, on which day the election was fixed to be held.

Mr. Davis, who was a banker, of Bristol, had made his public entry in the morning of the same day, attended by his friends, amidst very evident marks of disapprobation from the assembled multitude. So sure, however, was this gentleman of his success, and so little had his friends anticipated any opposition, that they had actually got every thing prepared for *chairing* him, and had ordered the dinner, which was to celebrate the event, to be ready immediately after the election had closed on Monday; as they calculated that the election would be nothing more than a mere matter of form, which would occupy them for only a very few hours. But my arrival, and the enthusiastic reception which I had received, made some of his partizans begin to fear that the victory would not be so easily gained, or the contest so speedily terminated, as they had at first sanguinely hoped. Still the old electioneering managers calculated upon carrying their point by one of their *old tricks*, or by a "*ruse de guerre*," but in this, as the sequel will shew, they *reckoned without their host*. Before I got into the mail in London, I purchased *Disney's* Abridgment of Election Law, a part of which I read before it grew dark, and the remainder I finished in the morning before we arrived in Bath. Although this publication is the least to be relied upon of any, yet it furnished me with sufficient law upon the subject, not only to set completely their intended projects at defiance, but also to enable me to keep open the poll for fifteen days, the whole time that the law allows.

The White Lion Club, in the meanwhile, lost no time in preparing to open the campaign on Monday; and, seeing the disposition of the people, and knowing how deservedly unpopular the Ministerial faction, to which Mr. Davis belonged, had rendered themselves, they resolved to carry the election by force. Before Monday morning, they had sworn in upwards of four hundred mock constables, or bludgeon-men, every one of whom was supplied with a short bludgeon, painted sky *blue*, that being the colour of Mr. Davis's party. These bludgeons were composed of ash, and were made of prong staves sawn off in lengths, about two feet long. These were put into the hands of the greatest ruffians that the city of Bristol, and the neighbourhood of Cock-road and Kingswood, could furnish at so short a notice. The few staunch friends who came round me, most of whom were strangers, anticipated nothing less than that the White Lion gentry would carry their point, and, either by trick or by violence, would close the election on the first day. I promised them, however, that if they would only stand steadily by me, I would defeat the object of their enemies, and that they might rely upon an election, and a protracted poll.

Monday came, and at an early hour the bludgeon-men of Mr. Davis had got possession of Broad-street, where the Guildhall is situated; which street, by the bye, has no right to the name that it bears, it being among the narrowest streets in Bristol. I sallied forth from my inn, the Talbot; and having addressed a few words to the multitude upon the Exchange, I proceeded down Broad-street with some of my friends, and reached the Hall door before it was opened. I immediately placed my back against it, and proclaimed to the surrounding throng, that I would be the first to enter that Hall, and that I would be the last that would leave it, while there was a freeman of the city unpollled. Notwithstanding I was

now in the midst of the enemy, this declaration was received with a burst of applause, which made the old walls of this *scene of iniquity* ring again. At length the Sheriffs, *Brice* and *Bickley*, arrived, attended by all the paraphernalia of office, in company with Mr. Richard Hart Davis, whom I now eyed for the first time. All persons were pompously commanded to stand back from the door; but I had a sturdy set of friends now to support me, and they stood as firm as a rock, and almost as immovable. For some time the Jacks in office attempted in vain to approach the door, till at length I requested that those who were near it would fall back, and make way for the Sheriffs; which request was instantly complied with. The moment the door was open, I was the first man who entered after the Sheriffs, and the rush was tremendous. I was also one of the first that reached the hustings in the Guildhall, and, being once there, I had not the least doubt but I should by and by make a due impression upon the persons there assembled.

During this rush to get into the Guildhall, (a place altogether unfit for the election, and incapable of containing a twentieth part of the electors of Bristol,) Davis's four hundred bludgeon ruffians made a desperate and brutal assault upon the people, and most grossly ill used those who appeared to be my friends and supporters, who were at last driven to a successful resistance. Many of the hired gang were disarmed by the populace, and the rest were either driven from the scene of action, or awed into respectful behaviour by their determined conduct.

Mr. Davis was proposed and seconded by two members of the White Lion Club, who were also members of the Corporation. I was proposed and seconded by two freemen in the humble walks of life, journeymen, I believe, of the names of Pimm and Lydiard; men who, although they did not move in an elevated sphere, yet for native talent and honourable feelings, as far excelled the proposers of Mr. Davis as the sun excels in splendour the twinkling of the smallest star. Both the candidates addressed the crowded assemblage. I avowed myself to be the staunch friend of Radical Reform, and the enemy of oppression, and I tendered an oath to the Mayor, that I would never receive one sixpence of the public money, drawn from the pockets of an impoverished and starving people; and that if elected I would move for the immediate reduction of all extravagant salaries, and the total abolition of all sinecures and unmerited pensions, &c. &c. The Sheriff, little Mister Brice, put it to the vote, in the usual way, by a skew of hands, which of us the freemen would have for their member. The shew of hands was in my favour by an immense majority. Mr. Davis then demanded a poll, and, after a vote or two had been taken for each party, the Sheriffs adjourned the poll till the next morning at nine o'clock. This was of course done to give the unpopular candidate time to collect his forces, and to put in motion the whole machinery of corrupt influence; and, where that failed, the stronger means of unconstitutional dictation and arbitrary power. On our retiring from the hustings, Mr. Davis had to endure every species of popular execration, while I was saluted by the overwhelming applause of the whole multitude, with the exception of the agents of authority and wealth, and the whole of the Corporation and its tools. If the people of Bristol had possessed the privilege of giving their votes by ballot, I believe that I should have had on my side eight out of every ten of the population of the city. It was evidently a contest between the rich and the poor; the whole of the former were openly for Davis, the whole of the latter, with the exception of those who were hired by the other party, were every man, woman, and child, for Hunt; and even of those who were hired, there were numbers who could not conceal their good wishes for me, and their abhorrence of the party for whom they were acting.

In the evening great contests and bloody battles took place in the streets. The bludgeon men of Davis had been increased to eight hundred; each bludgeon being heavy enough to knock down an ox, they being, as I have before stated, six feet prong staves sawn off in three lengths, about two feet each. In the front of the White Lion, in Broadstreet, the bearers of these weapons attacked the populace, whom they beat and bruised most unmercifully for some time; who, in return, at length, beat and drove them to all quarters, and in their fury they demolished the windows of the White Lion Inn, and gutted the house. Bleeding and smarting with their wounds, they then hurried to Clifton, to the house of Mr. Davis, whom they considered as the author of all their wrongs, and of the assaults which had been committed upon them by the hiring ruffians of bludgeon-men, who all wore Davis's colours, and acted under regular disciplined leaders, trained and commanded by the notorious Jemmy Lockley, a boxer and Sheriff's officer. While that party of the populace, which had directed its course to Clifton, demolished the whole of the windows of Mr. Davis's house, and pulled up all the shrubs in his front lawn, another party demolished the doors and windows of the Council House.

When I went to the Hall the next morning, I never witnessed such a scene of devastation as the White Lion exhibited; every window and window frame was destroyed, and there remained only so many holes in the walls. However, as I mean to give a faithful history of this election, I cannot do better than to republish three letters addressed at the time to the Electors of Bristol, by Mr. Cobbett, and also to state the various accounts that were given of these transactions by the *Times*, the *Courier*, and the *Morning Chronicle* papers. I will begin with the following letter, published in the first page of the 12th volume of *Cobbett's Register*, July 4th, 1812:—

GENTLEMEN,—Your city, the third in England in point of population, and for the bravery and public spirit of its inhabitants the first in the world, is now become, with all those who take an interest in the public welfare, an object of anxious attention. You, as the Electors of Westminster were, have long been the sport of the two artful factions, who have divided between them the profits arising from the obtaining of your votes, One of each faction has always been elected; and as one of them always belonged to the faction *out of place*, you, whose intentions and views were honest, consoled yourselves with the reflection, that if one of your members was in place, or belonged to the IN party, your other member, who belonged to the OUT party, was always in the House to watch him. But now, I think, experience must have convinced you that the OUT as well as the IN member was always seeking his own gain at your expense, and that of the nation, and that the two factions, though openly hostile to each other, have always been perfectly well agreed as to the main point, namely, the perpetuating of those sinecure places and all those other means by which the public money is put into the pockets of individuals.

With this conviction in your minds, it is not to be wondered at that you are now beginning to make a stand for the remnant of your liberties; and, as I am firmly persuaded, that your success would be of infinite benefit to the cause of freedom in general, and of course to our country, now groaning under a compilation of calamities, I cannot longer withhold a public expression of the sentiments which I entertain respecting the struggle in which you are engaged; and especially respecting the *election now going on*, the proceedings of *a recent meeting in London*, and the *pretensions of Mr. Hunt*, compared with those of Sir Samuel Romilly.

As to the first, you will bear in mind, gentlemen, how often we, who wish for a Reform of the Parliament, have contended that no Member of the House of Commons ought to be a placeman or a pensioner. We have said, and we have shown, that in that Act of Parliament by virtue of which the present family was exalted to the throne of this kingdom; we have shown, that by that Act it was provided that *no man having a pension or place of emolument under the Crown, should be capable of being a Member of the House of Commons*. It is indeed true, that this provision has since been *repealed*; but it having been enacted, and that too on so important an occasion, shows clearly how jealous our ancestors were upon the subject. When we ask for a revival of this law, we are told that it cannot be wanted, because, if a man be a placeman or a pensioner *before* he be chosen at all, those who choose him know it; and if they like a placeman or a pensioner, who else has any thing to do with the matter? And, if a man be made a placeman or pensioner *after* he be chosen, he must *vacate his seat*, and return to his constituents to be re-elected before he can sit again; if they reject him he cannot sit, and if they re-choose him, who else has any thing to do with the matter?

To be sure it is pretty impudent for these people to talk to us about *choice*, and about *re-choosing* and about *rejecting*, and the like, when they know that we are all well informed of the nature of choosings and re-choosings at Old Sarum, at Gatton, at Queenborough, at Bodmin, at Penryn, at Honiton, at Oakhampton, and at more than a hundred other places; it is pretty impudent to talk to us about members *going back to their constituents* at such places as those here mentioned; but what will even the impudence of these people find to say in the case of those members who, upon having grasped places or pensions, do go back to their constituents, and upon being rejected by them, go to some borough where the people have no voice; or who, not relishing the prospect, do not go to face their former constituents, but go at once to some borough, and there take a seat, which, by cogent arguments, no doubt, some one has been prevailed on to go out of to make way for them? What will even the impudence of the most prostituted knaves of hired writers find to say in cases like these?

Of the former, Mr. GEORGE TIERNEY presents a memorable instance. He was formerly a member for Southwark, chosen on account of his professions in favour of freedom, by a numerous body of independent electors. But having taken a fancy to a place which put some thousands a year of the public money into his own individual pocket, having had the assurance to go back to his constituents, and having been by them *rejected* with scorn, he was immediately *chosen* by some borough where a seat had been emptied in order to receive him, and now he is representative of the people of a place called *Bandon Bridge*, in *Ireland*, a place which, in all probability, he never saw, and the inhabitants of which are, I dare say, wholly unconscious of having the honour to be represented by so famous a person. Your late representative, Mr. BRAGGE BATHURST, has acted a more modest, or at least a more prudent part. He has got a fat place; a place, the profits of which would find some hundreds of Englishmen's families in provisions all the year round; he has been made what is called *Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*, which will give him immense patronage, and of course afford him ample means of enriching his family, friends, and dependents, besides his having held places of great salary for many years before. Thus loaded with riches arising from the public means, he does not, I perceive, intend to *face you*; he cannot, it seems, screw himself up to

that pitch. We shall in all likelihood see in a few days what borough opens its chaste arms to receive him; but, as a matter of much greater consequence, I now beg to offer you some remarks upon the measures that have been taken to supply his place.

It was announced to his supporters at Bristol, about three months ago, that he did not mean to offer himself for that city again, and Mr. RICHARD HART DAVIS, of whom you will hear enough, came forward as his successor; openly avowing all his principles, and expressly saying, that he would tread in his steps. What those steps are, you have seen; and what those principles are, the miserable people of England feel in the effects of war and taxation. But, I beg your attention to some circumstances connected with the election, which ought to be known and long borne in mind. The WRIT for electing a member for Bristol, in the room of Bragge Bathurst, was moved for in the House of Commons; on Tuesday evening, June 23, and at the same moment a writ for electing a member for Colchester, in the room of Richard Hart Davis, was moved for. So you see they both vacate at the same instant; your man not liking to go down to Bristol, the other vacates a seat for another place, in order to go down to face you in his stead. Observe too with what *quickness* the thing is managed. Nobody knows, or at least none of you know, that Bragge is going to vacate his seat. Davis apparently knew it, because we see him *vacating at the same moment*. The WRIT is sent off the same night; it gets to Bristol on Wednesday morning the 24th; the law requires *four days notice* on the part of the Sheriffs; they give it; and the election comes on the next Monday. So you see if Mr. HUNT had been living in Ireland or Scotland, or even in the northern counties of England, or in some parts of Cornwall, the election might have been over before there would have been a POSSIBILITY of his getting to Bristol. And though his place of residence was within thirty miles of London, he who was at home on his farm, had but just time to reach you soon enough to give you an opportunity of exercising your rights upon this occasion. Mr. Hunt *could* not know that the writ was moved for till Wednesday evening, living, as he does, at a distance from a post town; and, as it happened, he did not know of it, I believe, till Thursday night; so that it was next to impossible for him to come to London (which I suppose was necessary) and to reach Bristol before Saturday. While, on the other hand, Mr. Davis had chosen his time, and of course had made all his preparations.

Such, Gentlemen, have been the means used preparatory to the election. Let us now see what a scene your city exhibits at this moment; first, however, taking a look at the *under-plot going on in London*, in favour of Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY.

It is stated in the London newspapers, and particularly in *The Times* of Saturday last, that there was a meeting on Friday at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, the object of which was "to *raise money*" by subscription for "*supporting the election of Sir Samuel Romilly at Bristol*;" and it is added, that a large sum was accordingly raised. This meeting appears to me to have for its object the deceiving of the electors of Bristol; an object, however, which I am satisfied will not be accomplished to any great extent. I do not mean to say that Sir Samuel Romilly would use deceit; but I am quite sure that there are those who would use it upon this occasion. The truth is, that the raising of these large sums of money (amounting already, they say, to 8,000 l.) proves that Sir Samuel Romilly does not put his trust in the FREE VOICE of the people of Bristol. At this meeting Mr. BARING, one of the persons *who makes the loans to the Government*, was in the chair. This alone is a circumstance sufficient to enable you to judge not only of the *character* of the meeting, but also of what sort of conduct is *expected* from Sir Samuel Romilly, if he were placed in Parliament by the means of this subscription. Mr. WHITBREAD was also at the meeting, and spoke in favour of the subscription. But we must not be carried away by *names*. Mr. Whitbread does many good things; but Mr. Whitbread is not always right. Mr. Whitbread *subscribed to bring Mr. Sheridan in for Westminster*, and was, indeed, the man who caused him to obtain the appearance of a majority; Mr. Whitbread supported that same Sheridan afterwards against Lord COCHRANE; and though Mr. Whitbread is so ready to subscribe now, *he refused to subscribe to the election of Sir Francis Burdett*, notwithstanding the election was in a city of which he was an inhabitant and an elector. These, Gentlemen, are facts, of which you should be apprised; otherwise *names* might deceive you.

I beg to observe also, that at this meeting there was nothing said about a *Parliamentary Reform*, without which you must be satisfied no good of any consequence can be done. There was indeed a Mr. MILLS, who said he came from Bristol, who observed that "the great majority of the inhabitants of Bristol *felt* perfectly convinced of the necessity of SOMETHING LIKE Reform." And is this all? Does your conviction go no farther than this? I remember that, when a little boy, I was crying to my mother for a bit of bread and cheese, and that a journeyman carpenter, who was at work hard by, compassionately offered *to chalk me out a big piece upon a board*. I forget the way in which I vented my rage against him; but the offer has never quitted my memory. Yet really this seems to come up to the notion of Mr. Mills; the carpenter offered me SOMETHING LIKE a big

piece of bread and cheese. Oh! no, Gentlemen, it is not this *something like* that you want; you want *the thing itself*; and if Sir Samuel Romilly meant that you should have it, do you believe that neither he, nor any one for him, would have made any specific promise upon the subject? Even after Mr. Mills had said that you wanted *something like* Reform, there was nobody who ventured to say that Sir Samuel Romilly would endeavour to procure even that for you. His friends were told, that if he would distinctly pledge himself to Reform, whether *in place or out of place*, Mr. Hunt, who only wished to see that measure accomplished, would himself assist in his election; but this Sir Samuel Romilly has not done, and therefore he is not the man whom you ought to choose, though he is beyond all comparison better than hundreds of other public men, and though he is, in many respects, a most excellent Member of Parliament. Gentlemen, these friends of Sir Samuel Romilly call upon you to choose him, because he is, they tell you, a decided enemy of the measures of the present ministers. Now they must very well know, that *all those measures have had the decided support of the parliament*. Well, then, do these friends allow, that the parliament are the real representatives of the people, and that they speak the people's voice? If Sir Samuel's friends do allow this, then they do, in fact, say, that he is an enemy to all those measures which the people's voice approves of; and, if they do not allow this, if they say that the parliament do *not* speak the people's voice, and are *not* their real representatives, how can they hope that any man will do you any good who is not decidedly for *a reform of that parliament*? Let the meeting at the Crown and Anchor answer these questions, or, in the name of decency, I conjure them to hold their tongues, and to put their subscriptions back again into their pockets.

To say the truth (and this is not a time to disguise it from you) this subscription is a subscription *against*, and not *for*, the freedom of election. If Sir Samuel Romilly's friends were willing to put their trust in the free good-will of the people of Bristol, why raise money in such large quantities, and especially why resort to *party men* and to *loan makers* for this purpose? They will say, perhaps, that the money is intended for the purpose of carrying down the *London voters*, and for that of fetching voters from elsewhere; but, why are they afraid to put their trust in the *resident voters* of Bristol? The object of this subscription is very far indeed from resembling the object of that which was set on foot in Westminster, which was not to gain votes by dint of money, but merely to pay the expenses of printing, of clerks, and other little matters inseparable from an election at Westminster; and the whole of which did not amount to more than about *eight hundred pounds*; whereas as many thousands are stated to be already subscribed for procuring the election of Sir Samuel Romilly. In short, this attempt of the friends of Sir Samuel Romilly is like many others that have been made before. It is *purse against purse*. Mr. PROTHERO has shaken his purse at Sir Samuel; and, as the latter does not choose to engage with his own purse, his friends, with *a loan maker at their head*, came forward to make up a purse for him; and the free and unbought voice of the electors of Bristol is evidently intended by neither party to have any weight at all in the decision.

Let us now return and take a view of the political picture which Bristol at this moment presents. And here, the first observation that strikes one is, that neither the friends of Sir Samuel Romilly nor the friends of Mr. Prothero say one word in opposition to Mr. Hart Davis, though he avowedly stands upon the principles of Mr. Bragge and the present Ministers; though he quitted his canvass about ten weeks ago, to come express to London to vote in favour of the Orders in Council; and though he now says, that he will tread in the steps of Mr. Bragge. Though they have all this before their eyes, not one single syllable does any one of them utter against the pretensions or movements of Mr. Davis; and, though the meeting at the Crown and Anchor took place several days after the Bristol and Colchester writs were moved for, and though the parties at the meeting must necessarily have been well acquainted with all that I have above stated to you upon the subject of those writs, not one word did they utter against the pretensions of Mr. Davis, nor did they (according to the printed report of their proceedings) even mention his name, or take the smallest notice of the circumstance, that an election, a little, snug, rotten-borough-like election, was, at that moment, getting up in that very city, for the *interest* and *honour* of which they were affecting so much concern! And can you, then, believe them sincere? Can you believe, that they have any other view than merely that of securing *a seat for the party* in Bristol? Can you doubt that the contest, on their part, is not for the *principle*, but for the *seat*?

Having pointed out this circumstance to your attention, it is hardly necessary for me to advert to the conduct of Mr. Hunt, which, in this case in particular, forms a contrast with that of the other parties too striking not to have produced a lasting impression upon your minds. He does not content himself with *talking* about defending your liberties. He *acts* as well as *talks*. He hears that the enemy is at your camp, and he flies to rescue you from his grasp. He does not waste his time in a tavern in London, drawing up flourishing resolutions about "*public spirit*." He hastens among you; he *looks your and his adversary in the face*: he shows you that you may *depend upon him in the hour of trial*. These, Gentlemen, are marks of such a character in a representative as the times

demand. Sir Samuel Romilly is a very worthy gentleman; an honest man; a humane man; a man that could not, in my opinion, be by any means tempted to do a cruel or dishonest act; and he is, too, a man of great talents. But, I have no scruple to say, that I should prefer, and greatly prefer, Mr. Hunt to Sir Samuel Romilly, as a Member of Parliament; for, while I do not know, and do not believe, that the latter excels the former in honesty or humanity, I am convinced that his talents, though superior, perhaps, *in their kind*, are not equal, *in value to the public*, to the talents possessed by Mr. Hunt, who is at this moment giving you a specimen of the effect of those talents.

Gentlemen, the predominance of *Lawyers*, in this country, has produced amongst us a very erroneous way of thinking with respect to the talents of public men; and, contrary to the notions of the world in general, we are apt to think a man great in mind in proportion to the glibness of his tongue. With us, to be a *great talker* is to be a *great man*; but perhaps a falser rule of judging never was adopted. It is so far from being true as a general maxim, that it is generally the contrary of the truth; and, if you look back through the list of our own public men, you will find that, in general, they have been shallow and mischievous in proportion to their gift of talking. We have been brought to our present miserable state by a lawyer-like policy, defended in lawyer-like debates. Plain good sense has been brow-beaten out of countenance; has been talked down, by the politicians from the bar; haranguing and special pleading and quibbling have usurped the place of frank and explicit statement and unsophisticated reasoning. In Mr. Hunt you have no lawyer, but you have a man who is not to be brow-beaten into silence. You have a man not to be intimidated by the frowns or the threats of wealth or of rank; a man not to be induced to abandon his duty towards you from any consideration of danger to himself; and, I venture to foretell (begging that my words may be remembered) that, if you elect him, the whole country will soon acknowledge the benefit conferred on it by the city of Bristol.

Gentlemen, this letter will, in all likelihood, find you engaged in the bustle of an election. With all the advantages on the side of your adversary, you may not, perhaps, upon the *present* occasion, be able to defeat him. But you will have a chance; you will have an opportunity of trying; you will have *an election*; and this you would not have had if it had not been for Mr. Hunt, for the whole affair would have been over before you had scarcely *heard* of it. At the very least you will have *some days of liberty to speak your minds*; to tell Mr. Davis what you think of him and of his predecessor; to declare aloud your grievances and your indignation; and even for *this* liberty you will be indebted to Mr. Hunt, and *solely* to Mr. Hunt. You are told of the *zeal* of Mr. Prothero and Sir Samuel Romilly in your service; you are told of their desire to promote your *interest* and your *honour*; but where are they *now*? Where are they when the enemy is in your city, when you were to have been handed over from Mr. Bragge Bathurst to Hart Davis as quietly as if you had been a cargo of tallow or of corn? It is now, it is in this moment of real need, that Mr. Hunt comes to your aid; and, if he fail in defeating, he will, at the least, harass your enemy, make his victory over you cost him dear, and by exposing the sources and means of his success, lay the foundation of his future defeat and disgrace.—I am, your friend,

WM. COBBETT.

State Prison, Nerogate, Monday, 29th June, 1812.

Such of my readers as are not old enough to remember the events, or to have read Mr. Cobbett's Register at that time, will acquire from this letter a pretty clear insight into the state of the case at this period of the proceedings. It has already been seen, that, on the first morning, I made my way to the hustings, and, under every disadvantage, maintained the right of election in the City of Bristol. I had no allies but the people; of *them*, indeed, I had the great mass with me; but, though I had well-wishers in all the richer classes, there was scarcely a single man beyond the rank of a journeyman, who had the courage openly to give me any countenance or support. The Whigs and Tories united with all their accumulated force against me. I had, therefore, to contend, single-handed, against all *the power, wealth and influence* of all parties and factions in the city. All the corporation, all the merchants, all the tradesmen, all the clergy and priests, whether of the church of England or of the numberless sects of dissenters, all these, and all whom they could array under their banners, were volunteers to uphold the most corrupt and profligate system of election that ever disgraced the rottenest of rotten boroughs. Then came the hireling legion, consisting of a swarm of more foul and noxious vermin than Moses inflicted upon the land of Egypt. It was made up of all the attorneys, and pettifoggers, with their clerks, scamps, and runners; every man, or rather every reptile, of them, being profusely fed to bark, to snarl, to cavil, and to bully; and all of them more ravenous and ferocious than sharks or wolves. It is, indeed, almost a libel upon the sharks and wolves to compare them with such creatures. I cannot, perhaps, give a better idea of them than in the forcible, though rather coarse language of a mechanic, who declared that, "if hell were raked with a small tooth-comb, it would not be possible to collect another such a gang." In the evening, I requested my Committee to procure me a list of these worthy limbs of the law;

and, if I recollect right, the number was forty-one. I know that it was one under or one over forty, but I do not know which. There they were, Whigs and Tories, bitter haters of each other on all other occasions, but now jumbled together like pigs in a sty, or like hungry curs of all sorts of mis-begotten and degenerate breeds. I believe that the famous Mr. WEBB HALL, who was then a practising attorney in Bristol (of the firm of Jarman and Hall); I believe that this profound agricultural quack of 1821, was, in 1812, one of the formidable phalanx which was drawn up against me.

O, how this blessed band did roar and bluster, and pretend to be shocked and horrified at my "matchless impudence," in thinking to oppose "the amiable" and mighty candidate of the White Lion Club! The reader will bear in mind that there never had been a real contested election in Bristol since that of 1774, when Mr. Burke and Mr. Cruger were elected, upon the opposition or Whig interest, to the exclusion of Earl Nugent and Mr. Brickdale. At the election in 1780, the ministerial faction returned both members. "From that period till 1812," says Mr. Oldfield, in his History of the Boroughs, "the city of Bristol has been governed by two party clubs, and each club has nominated a member, who were quietly returned without any opposition." The people of Bristol, I found, distinguished their two factions by the designation of the *high* and the *low* party: the Whigs deriving their principal support from the lower class of tradesmen and journeymen.

The hungry, grasping, quirking attorneys thought they were all the time pretending to be shocked at my opposition to "the worthy Mr. Davis," were, in fact, frightened out of their senses, every moment of the first day, lest I should make a slip, so as to enable their worthy *leader*, Mr. Arthur Palmer, the perpetual Under Sheriff, to take an advantage of it and close the election. These mercenaries were all *hired at five guineas a day* each, as long as the election lasted; and of course the cunning old trickster, Palmer, was always upon the look out to spoil their sport, by closing the election. This Squire Palmer, this perpetual tormentor of the poor distressed debtors of the City, was a cavilling, quibbling, empty-headed, testy, old womanish chap, scarcely worthy to be designated by the title of a man. He was eternally yelping, like a cur, without any rhyme or reason; and the reader may estimate the pack by the description that I have given of this, the foremost hound. There was another of this gang who put himself very forward, and who was very insolent to some of my friends. Such a looking creature I had scarcely ever seen in human form; he had coal-black, straight hair, hanging down a sallow-looking face, that had met with very rough usage from the ravages of the small-pox. In fact, his face resembled a piece of cold, dirty, honey combed tripe, and had very little more expression in it; and the whole was completed by two heavy, dark eyes, which looked like leaden bullets stuck in clay. This worthy had been going on for some time in an impertinent way, on which I was about to admonish him; and, as a preliminary, I asked him, with great coolness, "pray, Sir, is not your naive Leach?" "Yes," said he, "it is *Leech*, and I should like to suck thy blood!" This was esteemed a brilliant sally of wit, and was received with noisy approbation by his surrounding friends. Well! I thought to myself, I am amongst a precious set of cannibals, indeed, and it will require all my temper to manage with such a tribe. There, too, sat the Sheriffs. The one of them, Mr. Sheriff Brice, a sugar-baker, was as upstart, whipper-snapper, waspish a little gentleman as ever disgraced the seat of office. I soon discovered that I was not to expect from him an atom of liberality or fair play. Mr. Sheriff Benjamin Bickley, the other Sheriff, appeared to be an easy, good sort of man, that wished to take it all very coolly and unconcernedly—to wit, "you may settle it just as you please, gentlemen," or some such answer as that, when he was appealed to. However, there was, altogether, a spirit of fairness about him, which, when it came to the push, he had too much honesty to disguise; so that, when he could be moved to interfere, it was generally with impartiality. These were our two Sheriffs and returning officers. But, as they thought it quite beneath them to understand any thing about the law of election, they had their assessor, a barrister, to settle all the law points with me; this assessor was Edmond Griffith, Esq. who is now one of the police magistrates in the metropolis, but at which office I forget. The points of law I carried nineteen times out of twenty, for I had *Disney's Abridgement* at my fingers ends, and that author's volume we made the umpire in all contested points. Before I proceed any farther, I must say, that, during the whole of this tremendous contest, Mr. Griffith conducted himself in every respect like a gentleman and a man of honour; and when I have said this of Mr. Chancellor Griffith, and Mr. Sheriff Bickley, I shall not belie any person in the city of Bristol by paying him a similar compliment. With these two exceptions, I can safely affirm, that I never received an act of civility, liberality or fair play, from any of that class that call themselves gentlemen, in Bristol, during the whole fifteen days that the election lasted. But, to make amends for this, I received numerous acts of kindness from many worthy tradesmen, and such proofs of devoted attachment from almost the whole of the population, male and female, with the exception of the hirelings and dependents of the gentry, as I have never seen surpassed to this day.

Between the time of adjourning the poll to that of meeting again the next morning, I received no less than half a score anonymous letters, threatening my life, if I appeared at the Hall the next day. This had, of course, no weight with me; but it shows by what a gang of desperadoes I was surrounded. I had not the least doubt of their good will to put this threat into effect; it was the fear of a *dreadful*

retribution that alone deterred them from hiring some of the numerous assassins, who, it was said, had volunteered for a good round sum to become my butchers. All sorts of schemes and plans were devised to get rid of me; but nothing was thought likely to answer. At length it was proposed, by certain members of the White Lion Club, to bribe me with the offer of a sum sufficient to purchase a seat from one of the Boroughmongers, if I wished to be in Parliament. This was believed to be the only plan, and every one appeared to think that it would be much better to give me 5000_l_. to withdraw, than it would be for them to pay 20,000_l_., which was the least the contest would be likely to cost, besides all the trouble to boot. But just as this was apparently unanimously agreed upon, one of the sapient attorneys, who happened to know me a little personally, put this very natural question, "Pray, Gentlemen, who is the man that is to offer Mr. Hunt this bribe?" This, as I was informed, put an end at once to the scheme; there being no one who would undertake to be the messenger to bear such a proposition to me. The task would indeed have been an absurd as well as a hazardous one; for I offered myself to the people of Bristol upon the Constitutional principle that I would not spend one shilling, neither would I canvass the electors; and I further tendered an affidavit, which I offered to swear before the Mayor, that I never would accept of a place of profit or a pension under the Crown, either directly or indirectly, either for myself or any one of my family. It was, therefore, not very likely that I would consent to creep into Parliament by corrupt means.

Well, the election was fairly begun, two candidates were regularly proposed, it had been put to the vote, the shew of hands had been declared by the Sheriffs to be in my favour, a poll had been demanded by Mr. Davis, the poll was open and votes on each side had been taken, and the poll been adjourned till nine o'clock the next morning. One thing was made obvious, on the first day, to my opponents. It was clearly ascertained that I could not be put off my guard; and that in the midst of this terrible struggle and hurlyburly, I was perhaps the calmest and most collected man in the whole assemblage. All hopes of putting an end to the election were consequently quite banished from the mind even of the arch-trickster, Mr. Arthur Palmer, and there was nothing left for them but to endure the fifteen days contest, or try to bring it by force to a sudden conclusion. It was then, as I have before stated, that the bludgeon-men were let loose to accomplish the plan, and glut the vengeance of their enraged and mortified employers; and, after I was retired to bed at my inn, to recruit my strength, that I might be able, on the next day, to commence single-handed, the task of keeping in order these said forty limbs of the law, and dreadful was the struggle. Mr. Davis had all the power of authority and wealth thrown into his scale; and finding that I had all the popularity, his supporters set to work the engines of intimidation, corrupt influence, and bribery. All day long my voters had to submit to insults and assaults, committed upon them by the bludgeon-men, who had increased their numbers to eight hundred. These fellows, together with the whole of the City police, conducted themselves in the most outrageous manner, by maltreating the people. Their gangs had absolutely blocked up the whole of Broad-street, and every avenue leading to the hustings. Information was frequently brought to me, that these ruffians were assaulting and beating back my votes; and I frequently left the hustings and went into the streets to rescue those who were so unmercifully attacked, which I always effected whenever I went forth.

When the evening came, and the poll was adjourned to the next day, I retired, mounted my horse, which was waiting for me at the Hall door, and rode to the Exchange, to give the multitude a history of the proceedings of the day in the Guildhall. After giving them a correct detail of the business of the day, and the state of the poll, I urged every man to get as well armed as he could, and by all means resist the illegal violence of the hired bludgeon-men; but on no account to strike first. It behoved them, I said, to stand up manfully for their rights, and not be driven off the field, particularly out of their own city, by hired ruffians. I told them that, after I had been home to my inn and taken my dinner, it was my intention to ride round the city for a little fresh air, and that I should, if they wished it, have no objection to my friends accompanying me, to make a sort of general canvass. This communication was received with universal approbation, all declaring that they would attend me; and I promised to start from my inn, the Talbot, precisely at seven o'clock, to ride an hour or an hour and a half.

At the appointed time they were all as good as their words, and the Talbot was surrounded by perhaps not less than from ten to fifteen thousand people. I also was as good as my word, for as soon as the clock struck seven I mounted my horse, and rode out of the inn yard amongst them. I was of course hailed with such shouts as made the whole city ring again. Unaccompanied by any human being whom I knew, I threw myself amongst them, and made my way through a passage that was opened, over the bridge and down by the quay, gently following the course of the river from Bristol-bridge even till I came round by the Broad-quay to the draw-bridge. The whole of this quay is covered with all sorts of timber, wood, poles, faggot piles, and other rough merchandise, principally brought from Wales. The people eyed these faggot piles very wishfully; at length one drew out a stick, another followed, till, as we passed along, the whole male part of the multitude became armed with bludgeons and sticks as well as Mr. Davis's bludgeon-men. Though I could have wished that the weapons had been otherwise obtained, yet I must confess that I was not very sorry to see what had happened, as the White Lion

hirelings had become so outrageously brutal that it was absolutely necessary to put them down, or the next day we should not have been enabled to bring up a single vote. Eight hundred ruffians, collected from the collieries at Kingswood and from Cock-road, the haunt of every species of desperadoes; such a gang as this, well paid and well filled with ale, and knowing that, do what they would, they should be protected by the authorities, was a sort of force that was not to be trifled with. I therefore gave the word, let none of my friends strike first, but let no one upon such an occasion as that for which we are contending, which is for the freedom of election, let no one be insulted or assaulted with impunity by the hired bludgeon-men. If they once begin to knock down the people, let them without ceremony be driven out of the city.

Such a body of men as were with me, armed each of them with a good thick stick, made rather a formidable appearance, and I saw that the countenances of the citizens, shopkeepers, and merchants, as I passed, evidently betrayed the greatest alarm. As soon as they had attended me to my inn, and given me three cheers at parting, the cry was, "*to Broad-street! to Broad-street!*" which was the rendezvous for Davis's bludgeon-men, who had got complete possession of that street, and remained opposite the White Lion the whole of the day, stopping up all access to the Guildhall, which is in the same street. Every one who was not of the Blue party, and who had attempted to pass, had been not only insulted but assaulted, and sometimes knocked down and half murdered. One man had been killed the night before. Every one now affected to dread Hunt's mob; but I replied "depend upon it they only want their rights, and their rights they shall have, as far as maintaining the freedom of election, or they shall fight for it." In less than a quarter of an hour after they quitted the Talbot, and before I had finished my tea, I heard a tremendous shouting, and upon inquiring the cause, I found that the bludgeon-men had all fled at the approach of my men. On the evening before, when the people had no weapons, the bludgeon gentry had received a specimen of what they could do in resisting unjust and usurped power; and now that the people had bludgeons as well as their enemies, the hirelings took to their heels, and the volunteers were victorious, without striking scarcely a blow. The timid and cowardly race that had employed these bludgeon-men, in whom they placed great confidence to save them from Hunt's mob, began to quake for fear; but their fears were groundless. Having by their victory gained that to which they were entitled, a free and unmolested passage through the streets of their city, they were content; and, instead of acting in the same way, that, under similar circumstances, their dastardly oppressors would have done, instead of committing the slightest depredations upon any body or any thing, they returned to communicate their triumph to me, which they announced by three cheers, and then quietly and peaceably dispersed, and retired each man to his home, without even having broken a single pane of glass, that ever came to my knowledge. The very idea of having a free election was, however, quite out of the question with my opponents. They sent off for the military, as it was reported, without further delay, though there did not exist the least riot, or probability of one; in fact, all rioting and bloodshed had been put an end to by driving the hireling bludgeon-men to quarters, and clearing the streets of them.

By this time I had received a considerable accession to my forces at the inn. My committee, or rather the committee of the free men, mustered very strong. Mr. Williams, a very respectable shoemaker, together with Mr. Cranidge, a schoolmaster, had now joined the standard of Liberty, and added their names to my committee. Every one who entered the committee subscribed his name to act as a volunteer, without the slightest pecuniary remuneration. There were the two Pimms, Lyddiard, Mr. Bright, in the Old Market, Mr. Brownjohn, Mr. Wright, the famous pedestrian, who has lately accomplished such feats in Yorkshire, such as no one but a real Radical could perform; a Mr. Webb, a sort of an attorney, a very active man, who was generally in the chair at most of the committee meetings, and who used to be very particular that every one who joined the committee should pledge himself to act as a volunteer, &c. without fee or reward. There was also a Mr. Hornbrook, who, together with Webb, took a very prominent part in the *talking department*. There were several more, but these determined Radicals managed every thing, and carried all my plans into effect. I seldom saw any thing of the committee in a body, except that every evening I paid them a mere visit of form for a few minutes. It was real purity of election; not one shilling was to be spent or given away, every one was to do his best, and to pay his own share of any little expense they were at; and so well understood was it, that it was an election of principle, that scarcely ten persons ever asked for any thing; not even so much as a draught of porter was ever given away to a voter or any one else. There was a daily subscription for printing, and that was all the money that was ever required, and printing was the only thing on which money was spent. Yet even this was a heavy expense. I have since learned that there was a rich Quaker, and two or three rich men, that, under the rose, furnished my committee, or at least some of the members of it, with liberal sums. There was also a lady at Clifton who did the same; and, in truth, I have reason to think that money to a considerable amount was subscribed in this way, which never came to my knowledge, or to the knowledge of the great body of the committee.

I have, I dare say, missed the names of some who made up this committee. Indeed, I at this moment remember some additional names. There was Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Lutherel, a sort of a journeyman

attorney, and a Mr. W. Weech, of all the men in the world one that I ought not to have forgotten, he was a most worthy elector of Bristol, who, together with Brownjohn, never flinched for a moment. There were also Mr. Haines and Mr. Farr, and a brave and worthy elector of the name of Stokes, a shoemaker. In fact, they were altogether as brave and as staunch a little band of patriots as ever met to struggle for the rights of Englishmen—and this was indeed a mighty struggle, the force, the power, the wealth, and the corrupt influence that we had to contend with, being beyond all description.

I very soon discovered that there was not the slightest chance of carrying the election; there being a complete coalition between the Whigs and the Tories. The whole enormous influence of both the factions was thrown into the scale against me. The most violent menaces were used by them to deter my friends from coming forward in my favour. Hundreds upon hundreds came to say, that they were anxious to vote for me, but if they did do so they would lose their bread, and they and their families would be ruined. All the merchants, tradesmen, and masters of every denomination, openly vowed vengeance against all their dependants and connexions, if they voted for me. I believe there was never any thing equal to the threats and intimidation that took place in that city during that election. As, therefore, there was no chance of contending against all this with any prospect of success, the only course which was left for me to pursue, was to make the enemy purchase his victory as dearly as possible; and, with this view, all my efforts were directed to impress on the minds of my Committee the necessity of husbanding our resources, by keeping back all the staunch votes, so as to protract the poll to the very last hour which was allowed by law. We *did* accomplish this; yet how, under such adverse circumstances, we contrived to carry on the contest for fifteen days, has often been a matter of astonishment to me.

I had been two days now without any friend to assist me, and whether it was on the third or whether it was on the fourth day, I am not quite clear; but, to my great joy, a gentleman from London, whom I had only met once or twice before, came down, as he said, when he introduced himself upon the hustings, expressly to assist me in the glorious struggle. My pleasure was equal to my surprise, when Mr. Davenport, a gentleman well known in the literary world, walked up on the hustings and shook me by the hand, at the time that he communicated this gratifying intelligence. Mr. Davenport was just the very man of whom I stood in need. If I had taken the choice of the whole world, knowing him, as I now do, I would have selected Mr. Davenport. He is rather a little man, but he is as brave as a lion, with an eye as quick as a hawk's, decisive and rapid in executing any thing that was to be undertaken, and with wit and talent as brilliant as the sun at noon-day. I had all along felt myself more than a match for the forty attorneys and all their myrmidons; but with such a man as Mr. Davenport by my side, I held them cheap indeed. This was such an accession to my forces as I had not at all calculated upon. To Mr. Cobbett and to Sir Francis Burdett was I indebted for the able assistance of such a man. Before he arrived, I had not a friend that I could communicate with; all the Bristol men were tradesmen, and they had to attend to their business, when they were not at work either in the Committee-room or in the field; but in Mr. Davenport I found at once a delightful companion, and an indefatigable, able, assistant. When he sees this it will recal to his recollection many and many a hearty laugh which we had together, in talking over the blunders and stupidities that had been committed by the Bristolians during the labours and fatigues of the day, and how we enjoyed the mischief that we were making amongst the agents of The Boroughmongers. It was calculated that Mr. Davis and his friends did not spend less than two thousand pounds a day, while we fared sumptuously, and partook of every delicacy of the season, at an expense not exceeding twenty-five shillings a day between us; this being the extent of my expenses, when I came to pay my bill at the end of the sixteen days that I was at the Talbot. I shall never forget how he used to laugh and enjoy the fun; and it almost makes me laugh now, even in my solitary dungeon, when I recollect the way in which *Snuffy Jerry* tuned up the first song that Mr. Davenport wrote, beginning—"Tallow Dick! Tallow Dick! you are cursedly sick of being baited at Bristol election." Tallow Dick, be it observed, was the name by which the Tory champion was known. After being *eighteen days and nights in solitary confinement*, in my gloomy, dark, damp, dungeon, without having been once cheered by the voice of a friend, I can smile at the recollection of these scenes that afforded us so much mirth. Ah! my dear and much respected friend, when you read this, and think of my situation, I know that the tear will for a moment glisten in your eye, your whole soul will sympathise with your friend. But again, when you think of the cruel sufferings and persecutions of those that I love more than my life, I can almost see you jump out of your seat, and, as you brush the tear indignantly from your eye, I can fancy I hear you shower down maledictions upon the unnatural monsters who can thus delight to inflict wanton misery upon a captive and his unoffending family.

The next morning very early, one of my friends came to my bed-room door to inform me that a regiment of soldiers had been marched into the city during the night, and that some of them had actually taken up their quarters and slept in the Guildhall, the very seat of the election. I immediately rose, and while I was dressing myself, I ordered my horse, being determined to go and witness this novel scene, of a regiment of soldiers taking possession of the Guildhall and the hustings, during the time of an election; still, however, expecting that as soon as the authorities were in motion in the

morning, they would remove them at least from the immediate neighbourhood where the election was going on; but I afterwards found that my haste was unnecessary. I mounted my horse, and accompanied by a few friends, I rode down to the door of the Guildhall, which was surrounded by soldiers with bayonets fixed. Upon hearing that I was coming, for my approach was always announced by the people, those who had slept in the Hall come flocking down the steps, to have a peep at this tremendous candidate who had created such a popular feeling that the election could not be carried on without the intervention of the military, both horse and foot—two troops of the Scots Greys and the West Middlesex Militia. Upon one of the officers coming to the spot, I addressed them as I sat on my horse. But, as what I said was published at the time, in an account given of the transactions as they occurred, as well as in the details which were put forth by the London press, and collected by Mr. Cobbett, who reprinted them in the 22d volume of the *Register*, I shall insert his account of it, as follows:—

BRISTOL ELECTION.

From the letter, at the head of this sheet, [Footnote: See page 519.] the reader will find a pretty good preface to the history of this election, which is quite another sort of thing than what the friends of Sir Samuel Romilly appear to have taken an election at Bristol to be.

The intelligence which I have from that City comes down to Wednesday last, the 1st instant. I may, and, I dare say, I shall, have it to a later date before this number goes to the press; but, I shall now give the history down to that day.

Sir Samuel Romilly's friends, at their meeting at the Crown and Anchor, talked of Mr. PROTHEROE as an opponent; but, not a word did they say of Mr. HUNT. A *farmer*, was, I suppose, thought beneath their notice. We shall, however, see that farmer doing more at Bristol, I imagine, than they and their subscription will ever be able to do. In the letter, before inserted, I have shown how Mr. Hunt, whose residence is in Sussex, was taken by surprise. He was wholly ignorant of the vacancy, 'till *Thursday evening*, the 25th of June, when his newspaper of Wednesday informed him that the writ, in the room of Mr. Bragge Bathurst, had been moved for on Tuesday.

He came to London on Friday, set off that night for Bath, and got into Bristol on *Saturday evening*, where he was received by the people with a pleasure proportioned to their surprise at seeing him come.

Hart Davis had made his entry in an earlier part of the day, preceded by the carriages of bankers, excise and custom-House people, and, in short, all that description of persons who are every where found in opposition to the liberties of Englishmen.

As it was settled amongst the parties, that Davis was to meet with no opposition from either MR. PROTHEROE or SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY, he expected a *chairing* on the Monday, amidst the shouts of some score or two of hired voices. How great was his surprise, then, and how great the consternation of his party, when they saw it announced that Mr. Hunt was about to make his appearance!

Sunday (the 28th of June) passed, of course, without any *business* being done, but not without "*dreadful note of preparation*."

On Monday morning, the day appointed by the Sheriffs for holding the election, the Guildhall, the place for holding the election, became a scene of great interest: an injured and insulted people resolved to assert their rights against the intrigues and the violences of a set of men who were attempting to rob them of those rights.

After the *nominations* had taken place, the Sheriffs adjourned their court till the next day.

In the evening great strife and fighting and violence took place; the *White Lion Inn*, whence the *Club* who put in Mr. Bragge, and who are now at work for Davis, takes its name; this Inn was assailed by the *people's party*, and, it is said, pretty nearly demolished. Mr. Davis's house at Clifton is said to have shared the same fate; and, this and similar work, with terrible battles in the streets, having continued till Tuesday night (the 30th of June), the SOLDIERS WERE CALLED IN, AND, IT IS SAID, ACTUALLY MARCHED INTO THE GUILDHALL!

Pause, here, reader. Look at this spectacle. But, how came this to be *necessary*? It is said, that it was *necessary*, in order to *preserve property*. But, *how came it to be so*? Who *began* the violences? That is the question.

And I have no hesitation in stating my firm belief, that they were begun, not by the PEOPLE, but by their enemies.

I state, upon the authority of Mr. JOHN ALLEN, of Bath, whom I know to be a man of honour, of strict veracity, and (if that be any additional praise) of great property: upon the authority of this gentleman, who requests me to use his name, and who was an eye-witness of what he relates, I state, that, there were about 400 men, who had been *made special constables for the purpose*, who were planted near the place of election; that these men, who ought to have been for one side as much as for the other, were armed with *staves* or *clubs*, painted BLUE, which, the reader will observe, is the colour of the White Lion, or Bragge and Davis, party; and, of course, the PEOPLE, who were for Mr. Hunt, looked upon these 400 men as brought for the purpose of overawing them and preventing them by force from exercising their rights. These men committed, during the 29th, many acts of violence against the people. But, at last, the people, *after great numbers of them had been wounded*, armed themselves *with clubs too*; attacked the Blues, and drove them into the White Lion.

Here the mischief would have ended; but the Blues, ascending to the *upper rooms* and *the roof*, had the baseness to throw down *stones, brick-bats, tiles, glass bottles*, and other things, upon the heads of the people. This produced an attack upon the house, which was soon broken in, and I believe, gutted.

These facts I state upon the authority of Mr. Allen; and I state them with a perfect conviction of their truth.

The reader will observe, that the great point is, WHO BEGAN THE FIGHT? We have heard Mr. Allen; now let us hear what the other parties say. In the TIMES newspaper of the 2d July, it is said by a writer of a letter from Bristol, who abuses Mr. Hunt, that when the nomination was about to take place, "Mr. Davis and his party made their appearance. The friends of Mr. Davis *wore blue cockades*, and they were accompanied by *some hundreds of persons bearing short BLUE STAVES*, who had been sworn in as *special constables*." This is enough. Here is a full acknowledgment of the main circumstance stated by Mr. Allen: namely, that hundreds of men, sworn in as Constables, were armed with *staves* of the colour of one of the candidates, and that they accompanied that candidate to the Hustings.—In the COURIER of the 1st July, the same fact, in other words, comes out. The writer (of another letter from Bristol), in speaking of the precautions intended to be taken, says: "Our Chief Magistrate has summoned his brother officers together, and *as the constables assembled by Mr. Davis's friends* are to be all dismissed at the close of the poll, and *their colours taken out of their hats*, there will be *no provocation on his part* to Mr. Hunt's party."—This, coming from the enemy, clearly shews *on which side the aggression had commenced*.—Therefore, for all that followed, the party of Davis are responsible.— We shall know, by-and-by, perhaps, who it was that *permitted* these hundreds of Constables to hoist the colours of one of the candidates, which was, in fact, "a *declaration of war* against the people," and as such the letter in the TIMES says it was regarded.—Well, but the SOLDIERS ARE CALLED IN; and, as I am informed, the Soldiers were, on Wednesday morning, between *five* and *six* o'clock, addressed by Mr. Hunt in nearly the following words: "Gentlemen; Soldiers; Fellow-citizens and Countrymen, I have to ask a favour of you, and that is, that you will discover *no hostility to each other* on account of your being dressed in different coloured coats. You are all equally interested in this election. You are all Englishmen; you must all love freedom; and, therefore, act towards each other as brother towards brother." It is added by my informant, that Mr. Hunt was greatly applauded by the *whole* of his audience.—He expressed his conviction, that the soldiers would not voluntarily shoot their countrymen; "but," added he, "if military force is to carry the election, the *sooner the shooting begins, the better*; and here am I," said he, laying bare his breast, "ready to receive the first ball."—Let us now see how the *factious* view this matter.—The COURIER abuses Mr. Hunt in the style to be expected. The TIMES speaks of him in this way: "The poll commenced at ten o'clock. In this *farce* Mr. Hunt plays many parts: he unites in himself the various characters of *Candidate, Counsel, and Committee*, as he has *not one human being to assist him* in either of those capacities." Well, and what then? What does he want more than a good cause and the support of the people? These are all that ought to be necessary to any candidate. What business have *lawyers* with elections? And, ought the people to want any committee, to tell them their duty? The *Morning Chronicle* takes a more sanctimonious tone. It says on the 2d of July, (in the form of a letter from Bristol): "It is much to be regretted, that the *regularity and peaceable* demeanour with which our elections were *formerly conducted*, are now totally disregarded. Notwithstanding *the exertions of Mr. Davis's, Mr. Protheroe's, and Sir S. Romilly's friends*, to prevent a recurrence of the outrages which endangered Mr. Bathurst's life at a late election, the procession on Saturday *was assailed by volleys of mud, stones, dead cats, &c.* Mr. Davis *fortunately escaped unhurt, except from one stone which struck his arm*." Here are two things to be observed: first, that *Davis, Protheroe, and Sir Samuel Romilly's friends*, the friends of all of them, are here spoken of as co-operating. Aye, to be sure! League with the devil against the rights of the people! This is a true *Whig trait*. But, the *mud, stones, and dead cats!* Who in all the world could have thrown them at "the amiable Mr. Davis?" It must have been some *Bristol people* certainly; and that of their own accord too, *for Mr. Hunt was not there at the time*.—Mark how these prints discover each other's falsehoods. The Courier of the 1st July gave us an account of Mr. Davis's gracious reception. It told us, that "RICHARD HART DAVIS, Esq. the late Member for

Colchester, and the professed candidate of the *White Lion party* in this city, was met at Clifton on Saturday by *an immense body of freeholders and freemen*, consisting of the most respectable and opulent inhabitants of the city, and was preceded to the Exchange by a cavalcade of upwards of one hundred carriages, and a numerous body of his friends on horseback and on foot." But, not a word about the *mud, stones, and dead cats*, with which he was saluted. Yet these were flung at him; and flung at him, too, by the people of Bristol; by hands unbought; for Mr. Hunt spends not a farthing. They were a *voluntary offering* on the part of those men of Bristol who were not to be corrupted.

The COURIER of Thursday, 2d July, states, that both *horse and foot soldiers* had been marched into Bristol.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT mentioned this circumstance in the House of Commons on Thursday evening. The Secretary at War said he did not know of the troops being brought *into* the city. But this will be found to have been the case.

WM. COBBETT.

State Prison, Newgate,

Friday, 3rd July, 1812.

After having reviewed the red coat gentry of the West Middlesex Militia, I returned to my inn and took my breakfast, and at nine o'clock I proceeded on horseback to the Guildhall, accompanied as usual by a great number of my friends, the unhired, the unbought, people of Bristol. When I arrived at the top of Broad-street, I found, to my surprise, that I had to pass the whole of the way down that street to the Guildhall, between double lines of the military, drawn up on each side of the street, with arms supported and bayonets fixed. This was not only a novel scene, it was such a one as had never before been exhibited at an election in England. As I passed the first rank and file I halted, and taking off my hat, said, "Come, my lads, let us give our friends, the soldiers, three cheers." This was instantly complied with, and as I went on, each soldier exclaimed, "Hunt for ever;" and this was kept up by the whole line till I reached the Hall-door, when three more cheers were given, in which many of the soldiers heartily joined. Unconstitutional and illegal as was the measure of bringing the military to superintend, or rather to overawe, an election, it must be owned that the soldiers were at least much less dangerous than the brutal bludgeon-men. This, however, had the desired effect of deterring almost all the electors from coming to the poll, except those who came for Mr. Davis, and knew that they were protected by the authorities. The very idea of introducing military at any time into the streets of Bristol, had a very disagreeable and alarming appearance, and called to the recollection of the citizens the horrors which had occurred at the massacre of Bristol Bridge, some few years before, when the people were fired upon by the Herefordshire Militia, and I think as many as ten or twelve were killed, and a great many wounded. The introduction, therefore, of troops into the city, in the midst of an election, naturally excited a great panic amongst the timid and the weak, and those who prided themselves for prudence took care to keep from the spot.

The moment that I got upon the hustings I protested against such a violation of the constitution, such an outrage upon the rights of freedom of election, and pledged myself that I would present and prosecute a petition against the return which might be made under such circumstances. The Sheriffs declared they knew nothing about it; that the military were introduced by the Mayor to preserve the peace of the city. The soldiers, nevertheless, continued to occupy the whole of Broad-street, and kept guard over the door to the hustings, during the whole of that day.

Seeing the state of intimidation in which the people of Bristol were placed, and learning the threats and the violence which had been used to prevent the voters from coming up to poll for one, it now became my care to husband those few independent votes upon whom I could depend, and to avoid bringing up those whose bread was dependent upon my opponents. Of the latter there were some as brave as lions, who, defying danger, set all consequences at defiance. I recollect some instances of peculiar devotion and heroism. There was a smith in Balance-street, of the name of Pollard, a freeman, who possessed a soul that nothing could shake; there was also a young freeman, named Milsom, and several others, who attended the hustings every day, but held back their votes to the very last, and bravely came up to the bar when called upon. It required nerves, courage, and virtue, of no common cast, to do this, in defiance of all the authorities, as vindictive and virulent a gang of petty tyrants as ever disgraced the robes of office. In this manner the election proceeded from day to day, without any chance ever having been given by me to enable the Sheriffs to close it.

In the evening, after this exhibition of the military, I heard that they were quartered all over the city; but the next morning they did not appear to keep guard over the hustings. Great bodies of them were, however, stationed at the Mansion House, and other public offices. A circumstance meanwhile

occurred, which, at the time, I communicated only to a few confidential friends, and have seldom mentioned since, for fear that there might be a remote possibility of placing in jeopardy the parties concerned. The knowledge of the Middlesex Militia having been marched into the city of Bristol, to overawe the electors in the free exercise of their franchise, was rapidly spread far and wide. About eleven o'clock, just before I was going to bed, a message was brought to me to say that there were three men, strangers, who wished to see me in private, upon business which they said was of importance. I had a friend sitting with me, who was about to depart; but I detained him, and desired that the gentlemen might be told to walk up. Three decent-looking young men were introduced, and one of them, who acted as spokesman, addressing himself to me, said, "We wish to communicate something of consequence to you in private, if you please, Sir." My answer was, "As you are strangers to me, I ought to see you only one at a time; but as there can be no secret that I would wish to hear from you that I would not intrust my friend with, I beg you will proceed." "Can you rely upon your friend, Sir," said the speaker, "as our communication will place our lives in your power?" I replied that I would trust my own life in the hands of my friend; but I saw no reason why they should commit themselves either to me or to him." The reply was, "It concerns you, Sir, as well as us." "Well, then," said I, "proceed, for I will be answerable for my friend, that he will never betray you." "I, Sir, am a corporal in the — regiment —; these are two privates, my comrades; we are quartered at —. Yesterday one of our men was sent over by an officer to vote for Mr. Davis; he had a conversation with a serjeant of the Middlesex Militia, who told him, in confidence, that they had private orders, in case of any row or riot, to shoot you, Sir; which the serjeant told him would be certainly put in execution in case there was the slightest disturbance to give a colour for such a measure. This he related to us upon his return last night. The circumstance has been communicated in confidence to every man in our division, except the officers and one non-commissioned officer, and we have, one and all, sworn to come to your relief, and, by driving these bloody Middlesex men out of the city, protect you from the violent death which is intended for you. We were chosen by lot to come over to you with this offer. Your life is in danger, and we are, one and all, ready to sacrifice our lives to protect you. We do not expect, as you do not know us, that you will openly accept our offer; but only give us a nod of assent, and we will march into the city of Bristol at any hour to-morrow night that you may think proper. We shall have no commissioned officers, but we shall have all the non-commissioned officers, except one, and him we did not choose to trust. Our lives are in your power, and we pledge them upon the accomplishment of what we offer; we are ready to lay them down to save you. It was first proposed to come off this night, in which case the whole of our four companies would have been here by this time, but it was at length resolved to make you acquainted with our design, lest you might be sacrificed in the onset, before you were aware of our intentions. The lot having fallen upon us to communicate this to you, Sir, we put on coloured clothes, and started before it was scarcely dark, and here we are, in your power, or at your command." The two privates testified to the truth of the corporal's statement, and gave their names.

During this harangue, I had time to collect myself, and I deliberately replied—"If you are spies, sent to entrap me, your own guilty consciences will be your punishment; but as you appear to have placed yourselves in my power, and claimed my confidence, I will not betray you. If you are honest, you have my thanks for your indiscreet zeal, in running such a great risk to preserve my life. The motive is laudable, but the means are most dangerous, and I fear you have not well weighed the consequences. Should the sword be once drawn in such a cause, there is no middle course to pursue; the scabberd must be thrown away. The period is not yet come for such a movement; neither will the occasion warrant it. I must trust to the laws for my protection, or rather to the fears of my enemies; as their dread of a terrible and summary retribution, I have no doubt, will prove my greatest shield of safety. I must recommend you to return immediately to your comrades, and tell them they are not wanted; and rely upon it, as you have placed such confidence in me, I will never betray it." They all replied they had not the slightest fear of that, and they declared that if any accident or foul play happened to me, that they would take an ample and an awful retribution.

This was a very serious occurrence, and it made a deep impression upon my mind. I was grateful for their zealous attachment to me; but I trembled when I thought of the result. Yet, had I at last found that no other resource remained to save me from being basely murdered, I might, perhaps, have been tempted to accept their offer, and to make one grand effort to preserve my life and the liberties of my country, and either have accomplished my purpose, or have gloriously fallen in the struggle. I never doubted the truth of the corporal's account respecting the private orders which were delivered to the non-commissioned officers of the West Middlesex militia; and I have never had any occasion to doubt the sincerity of these men. If the event had taken place six years later, I should at once have been of opinion that it was a plot to *entrap me*; but I am thoroughly convinced, from what came to my knowledge afterwards, that this was a most sincere and devoted offer; and, further, that if I had been killed during that election, rivers of blood would have flowed in Bristol. The friend who was present will read this, and will perceive the correctness with which I have related the circumstance. In fact, it made such an impression upon both of us, that we shall never forget it.

The military were still retained in Bristol, and one or two troops of the Scots Greys were kept, during the whole election, at Clifton, within a hundred yards of the bounds of the city. The election was still continued, but very few were polled on either side, although those who polled for Davis, more than trebled in number those who polled for me.

One day, when I came from the hustings, I announced that I should take a ride in the evening, down the Hot-well-road, and round by Clifton. This was hailed with that sort of applause which was an earnest that my numerous friends would attend me. The plan was, however, thought by some to be a hazardous one, as we had over and over again been threatened, that if we went out of the bounds of the City, the military should assuredly be called into action to disperse us. My answer was, "my friends are always very well behaved; they never commit any breach of the peace; and I shall certainly ride where I please; besides, I wish to see the example that was made of Mr. Davis's house, in consequence of the outrageous assaults committed on the people by the bludgeon-men."

The hour of six came. I mounted my horse, and was accompanied by Mr. Williams, of Clare-street, on one side, and Mr. Hornbrock on the other, both mounted, and Mr. Cranidge walked in front, exhorting the people to be firm and peaceable. When our setting out was announced, we could hear the bugle sounding to arms, and see the horse soldiers galloping in all directions towards the parade upon Durdham-down. This bore a resemblance to the state of things when a town is about to be attacked by an invading army. My friends were not less than five or six thousand, but they were known to be peaceably inclined, and without the least disposition to commit any act of violence or riot; they merely testified their approbation of a popular candidate at an election, with the usual demonstrations of cheering, &c. We had passed down the Hot-well-road, and had turned up the hill towards Clifton, with the intention of passing over Durdham-down, by Brandon-hill, and returning to the city down Park-street. This was the route which I had marked out for what I called my evening general canvass. It must be recollected that I never solicited or canvassed one individual for his vote; it was, on my part, a specimen of real purity and freedom of election; whilst on the other side every thing corrupt, every means of bribery, cajolery, fraud, perjury, intimidation by threats, and even violence, was resorted to for the purpose of bringing up votes, many hundreds of whom came to the poll in all appearance as reluctantly and as much against their will as a man goes to the gallows.

Before we had reached half the summit of the hill, some respectably dressed females came running down to meet us. They were received with cheers, but they no sooner approached than they addressed me in the most fervent and supplicating manner to return, as the Scots Greys were drawn out with their carbines loaded, and they had heard the magistrates and gentlemen give orders to fire upon the people, and Mr. Goldney, the magistrate, had read the Riot Act. Some of the women fell upon their knees to implore me to return, if I had the least regard for my life, as they had heard the officers and gentlemen give orders by all means to shoot me. I thanked these ladies for their kind wishes and good intentions, and then turning to any attendants and friends, I addressed them, urging every one that feared death to go back, as it appeared very evident that murder was premeditated; as to myself, I told them, that, as I had promised to pay my friends a visit that evening at Clifton, I should proceed, if I went alone. Having promised to go, go I would, for I would much rather be punctured like a cullender, by a thousand balls, than live in such a state as not to travel peaceably in any part that I might choose, and particularly during an election. If I went back, and failed to perform my promise through fear, I should justly deserve to be execrated as a contemptible coward as long as I lived; and whatever they might think of me, I would much rather be out of the world than have such a despicable opinion of myself. I therefore intreated those who meant to proceed with me to be firm and peaceable, but those who had the least doubt upon their minds to return. The exact language that I used, I, of course, cannot recollect; but I shall never forget the effect which it had upon my hearers. The eye of my worthy old friend Cranidge, the school-master, (who fifty years before had been in the army) sparkled like fire. I believe he was the first to pull off his hat, and the air resounded with one tremendous shout, which was repeated three times. Even the ladies, who had so earnestly intreated me to return, joined in the cheers, and every soul passed steady and cheerfully on; not one person returned. Thus we proceeded, receiving and returning the friendly salutations of those whom we met, and of those that hailed us from the windows and houses, by the waving of handkerchiefs, colours, &c.

Just as we were turning off the Down, to go back to Bristol, through Rodney Place, all at once a troop of the Scots Greys wheeled in full gallop from behind some houses and plantations, and formed in line across the road; so that our progress was apparently stopped. At the same time we discovered Mr. Goldney, the Magistrate, accompanied by half a dozen of Mr. Davis's friends, running with a book in his hand, to meet us. He came up between us and his troops as *pale as ashes*, and in a trembling hurried accent, he exclaimed, "Stop, Sir! and hear the Riot Act read." I knew the gentleman well whom I had to deal with, and therefore pushing my horse steadily forward, I deliberately said, "Stand out of the King's highway, Sir, and suffer me to pass, or I shall be under the necessity of riding over you; it appears *you* want to commit a riot, by interrupting the progress of those who are peaceably passing on the King's

highway, but we shall not indulge you in your amiable plot; Stand aside!" He and his friends now exclaimed, TURN BACK, which caused a great laugh; while we proceeded forward, to within twenty paces of the more formidable interruption of the horse-soldiers, drawn up across the whole road, to cut off, as it were, our return to Bristol. We gave the heroes three friendly cheers, and proceeded deliberately on, up almost to the noses of their horses, upon which *the officer* gave the word to the *left wheel, march!* and they instantly wheeled out of the road, left us a clear passage, and resumed their former position behind the plantation and houses. I took off my hat, bowed to the officer, and politely thanked him, adding that it was a beautiful manoeuvre, well planned and most adroitly executed; this was said in such an ironical manner, that the officer burst into a loud laugh, in which he was heartily joined by his men.

Be it recollected, that all this time we had never halted for a moment, but had proceeded calmly on, as we had a right to do, without once pulling our horses up out of a walk; and, in the mean time, poor Mr. Goldney and his friends excited the greatest merriment, for they were shuffling after, roaring out, "*Stop, and hear the Riot Act read!*" there being no more symptom or likelihood of a riot, than as if the party had met in a church or chapel to join in Divine Service.

We passed on gaily by the *remains* of Mr. Davis's house, without any other interruption or accident, with the exception of one disgraceful transaction, which I shall record as a specimen of the character of our opponents, who professed themselves to be so anxious to preserve the peace, by endeavoring to create a riot, that they might massacre the people, under the pretence of quelling it. A fine, handsome, decently-dressed female, about fifteen years of age, who had remained a little behind our party to speak with a friend, was stopped, seized, and brutally assaulted by some of the ruffians, who attempted to take the most indecent liberties with her person. Those attempts she successfully resisted, and made them feel the effects of her virtuous resentment, by stamping coward, ruffian, and lawless brute upon their faces; which punishment she inflicted with her teeth and her nails. Stung with shame and fury at their disgraceful defeat, one of the ruffians levelled her to the ground by a violent blow upon the head with a bludgeon, and then retreated.

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