LETTERS
FROM
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
W——E——,
ON THE LATE
POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT,
TO THE

EARL OF CARLISLE, | DUKE OF PORTLAND,
LORD NORTH, | LORD LOUGHBOUROUGH,
HON. C. J. FOX, | R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.,
JOHN LEE, ESQ., | J. WEDGWOOD, ESQ.,
MR. W. WOODFALL, | WILLIAM ADAM, ESQ.,

LONDON:
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Beckenham, Dec. 6, 1785.

My Dear Lord,

Ever anxious to evince my unabating esteem and inviolable respect for your Lordship, I hasten to impart, by the very earliest disclosure, an arrangement deeply interesting to both the fortune and the reputation of him, whom you honour with the sacred title of Friend.

This moment, my dear Lord, have I acquiesced in Mr. Pitt's respectable and spontaneous offer of appointing me Envoy Extraordinary
triaordinary to the Court of Versailles, for
the purpose of negotiating a commercial
league between the two countries, agreeable
to the relevant article of the treaty of Paris.
A situation, my dear Lord, at once ami-
cable and eminent; of Cabinet trust,
and diplomatic rank! Possibly too, of all
others, best adapted to the habits and ac-
quirements of him, who is selected to fulfil
it; since if there be any one point in which
both my friends and my enemies unite, I be-
lieve it is my perfect acquaintance with every
art and trick of contraband trade.

As such have I acceded to this lofty situa-
tion,—and yet, my dear Lord, with candour
will I own, not a few were the diffusives which
I felt strong in operation against such nu-
merous and extraordinary allurements.—
Might I express it so, the bounty on my ex-
portation was, in truth, uncommonly high;
but the countervailing duties have undoubted-
ly created a powerful drawback. Let these,
however, be fairly stated.

It was not the inconsiderate remuneration,
which Lord North had scantily dealt out to
me,
me, with his tardy sensibility, that held me in a moment’s suspense; as little was it probable that the false fire of many others’ reproaches, could occasion me one irksome hour. To their mouldable principles I had but to state my salary; and if their envy could be lulled, what other passion had I to fear from them? No, my dear Lord, it was to you, and you alone that all my solicitude was directed—your partiality had twice advanced me to most respectable situations—we had in a manner publicly embarked in one common bottom—you had presented me to your friends, and our junction was established on principles declared and unequivocal; that notwithstanding this, I have at once acceded to a separate arrangement, is a circumstance no otherways to be explained, than by declaring, as with truth I do, that neither interest nor vanity have had the smallest share in detaching me from your Lordship.—No, upon my honour, I declare, my real motive was to save the State. In other words, the same honest ardour which incited me to detect and expose the errors of Administration, as an opponent, in the course of last session,
determined me to prevent them in the ensuing, as their friend and associate. The latter appeared to me to be a more effectual way for the country, and in truth, a far better way for myself also; for to speak out, my dear Lord, my weak enfeebled frame was but ill-suited to the vigilance, the eternal attack, and the impetuous violence of an opposition; not to mention the late hours which a minority debater can less reasonably escape, but which are the worst on God's earth for an impaired frame, such as I candidly admit my own to be. In a word, my dear Lord, at the close of the last sessions, what from excessive fatigue, and the gloomy prospect of public affairs, I fell into a despondency too melancholy to paint, but so visible in my countenance, as to alarm my nearest and dearest connections. My physicians advised the Spa; but my own feelings convinced me they entirely mistook my case. All this time you were absent from town, our commerce exposed to daily and hourly danger, my rest broken—the country at stake—my innocents prattling at my knee, your favourite Augustus, the pensive Wilhelmina,
Helmina, and our little playful Federick,
"I am not made of stone."—Jenkinson arrived, and your friend was vanquished.

No man on earth more cordially detests deliberate inconsistency than do I, even to fervour; but, my Lord, my code of private thought is still immutable; nor indeed do I admit a public incongruity, or even the smallest absence of action consistentaneous to profession. What I have now done, is what I always had done before, nay more, what I always will do in future—to benefit the State, I have accepted a distinguished office.—Uniform in my earliest idea, "Non de Republicá esperandum," I defy my enemies to pretend that I ever have hung aloof from even plurality of office; on the contrary, I do maintain, that under every conflict, under every change, I have at all times and with all men inflexibly retained that eighteen hundred a year, which I cheerfully accepted as an unequivocal voucher, that no personal bias—no difference of principle should on any ground detach me from the public service.

That
That I projected and accomplished that coalition, which I now relinquish, I am frank to admit; that as long as I remained with it, I distinguished myself as at least an unwearied searcher of Parliamentary precedents, and a drawer of popular resolutions, I appeal to the fair unrevised reports of my speeches, as Mr. Woodfall, unaided by me, has transmitted them to posterity; but in answer to all such vexatious observations, permit me to remind your Lordship, that since I presented you with my five printed letters (of which a word by the bye) three babes, as your Lordship very well knows, have been added to my former establishment. A jus trium, my Lord, which even in the penal system of party, may not unreasonably mitigate the severer penalties of political commutation! Possibly it may appear but a frivolous detail; yet, alas! my Lord, is it not a melancholy truth, that every article of a nursery apparatus groans under the pressure of accumulated taxation? With the severest economy, with even a sumptuary prohibition of the little luxuries, and amusements of puerility,
was it possible for an income of eighteen hundred a year to provide even the necessary articles of infantine expenditure?

As to my printed letters to your Lordship, which possibly contain some few ideas not absolutely illustrated by my late step, is the base precedent of Algernon Sidney to be again referred to? Am I to be criminated by the production of my own papers? But, in the name of common sense, what is the date of those letters? Why so long back as October, 1779; a pretty considerable distance to form a criterion of the consistence or incongruity of a past with a present opinion. Your Lordship's well stored mind will recall the wonderous structure of the human body, and ably apply it to the existing case. We have it from Pott, that every single particle, every individual atom of the body undergoes a complete change within the course of five years; and yet the Whimsicals of the present hour would demand a perfect sameness, an entire identity in the light and volatile composition of the mental frame, for not only the same period, but also for an additional fraction
fraction of time, nearly amounting (as some would calculate it) to another quarterage. Away with this ineptitude of enmity! The admirable Horace somewhere observes,—"Ridiculum acri fortius ac melius." Yes, my Lord, your Lordship and myself will scoff at so unphilosophical an attack, "Vir- tute mea me invelo." But I must now, reluctantly conclude this imperfect letter. It is my purpose to enter into an extended series of epistolary elucidation with many others on the subject of my apparent aberration from that line of politics which admitted me to their confidence.—With your Lordship, however, I felt myself irresistibly impelled to auspicate the painful explanation, "neque hae perculgata esse aut Tullius reformidet, aut Atticus nolit."

I remain, my dear Lord,

Unalterably and faithfully your's,

W—— E——.
LETTER II.

To the Right Hon. LORD NORTH,
&c. &c.

Beckenham, December 7, 1785.

MY DEAR LORD,

THE reiterated proofs of friendship with which you have honoured me, encourage me to hope, that you will hear with pleasure an event in which my interest is materially concerned.

I had yesterday a visit from our old friend Mr. Jenkinson, who came to me with a very obliging and handsome message from Mr. Pitt, offering in the most liberal manner to forget all the little differences of opinion, which arose between us in the course of last session, and to appoint me Envoy Plenipotentiary to the Court of Versailles, to adjust C

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and conclude a commercial treaty between the kingdoms of France and Great-Britain, according to an article of the late peace, in the parliamentary censure of which, I had the satisfaction of concurring with your Lordship. I confess, that upon the first mention of this offer, some doubts suggested themselves to my mind, whether the acceptance of it might not be subject to an unfavourable construction, on the ground of so slender an appointment occasioning a change of political conduct. But this very natural objection was immediately obviated by Mr. Jenkinson's informing me, it was Mr. Pitt's intention, that although invested with the character of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary I should receive the full appointments of Ambassador, that is to say, six thousand a year, besides plate, equipage, money, &c. These extraordinary and advanced emoluments have an additional merit which cannot escape your Lordship's observation, and which, I trust, your candour will readily believe, was a stronger incentive to my acceptance of them, than any personal or private advantage of my own; I mean the disgrace which
which they inevitably reflect upon the Minister; who, while he is perpetually making professions of strict economy, and pathetically lamenting the impossibility of confining the expenditure of the civil list within due bounds, lavishes, without any reason, so considerate a portion of the public money. — May it not, therefore, be problematical, whether, by the acceptance of this appointment, I have not more essentially served the cause I apparently abandon, than I could have done by the most strenuous and indefatigable perseverance in opposition? But, independently of this consideration, I am perfectly sure, my dear Lord, when you consider the scantiness of my income (which it is unnecessary to point out to you, since, such as it is, I am indebted to your kindness and friendship for every shilling of it) amounting altogether, including Mrs. Eden's pension and my own, together with two small sinecure offices, to the annual receipt of something less than one thousand eight hundred pounds, that you will agree with me in thinking, it would have been absolute madness.
nefs on my part, not to have closed with a proposal so advantageous.

I cannot, my dear Lord, omit this opportunity of returning you, from the bottom of my heart, the most sincere and unfeigned thanks, for the many, many favours you have so kindly heaped upon me, too numerous to be here repeated, too dear to me ever to be obliterated from my memory. If, in return, I have ever had it in my power to render your Lordship any service, I flatter myself you think I have not been neglectful. Upon a late occasion, in endeavouring to remove the difficulties which lay in the way of a reconciliation between your Lordship and Mr. Fox, I may, without vanity, boast of having laboured with zeal and assiduity. It will ever be the pride of my life to have contributed to the union of such eminent abilities in the public service. You must recollect, however, my dear Lord, that the avowed object of that measure was to produce an efficient, vigorous, and, what was more especially the anxious wish of my heart, a durable government for this country. That
That object having unhappily proved unattainable by the means then proposed, it would scarcely be consistent with my principles, to withhold my poor services from an administration, which, though deficient in point of vigour and ability, with respect, however, to that most essential requisite, duration, seems at present to hold out the most flattering prospect. Should I be deceived in this opinion, my dearest Lord, need I add, with what cordial alacrity, with what disinterested satisfaction, upon the supposition of your returning into power, I shall hasten to tender you once more the services of,

My Dear Lord,

Your most devoted, most faithful, most obliged, and most unalterable humble servant,

W——— E———.

P. S. Mrs. E—— desires me to add, that she shall be proud and happy to execute any commands at Paris, which Lady North, or her amiable friends, the young ladies, will do her the honour to entrust her with.
LETTER III.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES JAMES FOX.

Beckenham, Dec. 7, 1785.

DEAR CHARLES,

My early habits of intimacy with you, when we were at school, and my late habits in politics, since we have been in opposition together, call upon me to deal as openly and frankly with you, as it is your general custom to do with all mankind. I proceed, therefore, without ceremony, to inform you, that my old friend and neighbour, Mr. Jenkinson, has most happily, and entirely reconciled me to my new friend and neighbour, Mr. Pitt. You, who now pass much of your time in the country, must be sensible how irksome it is not to live upon the most friendly footing with one's neighbours; and indeed you have one, no farther distant from St.
St. Anne's than Windsor, with whom, if you take my advice, you will, as soon as you conveniently can, make up all differences; but of this hereafter. I am convinced the project is by no means impracticable, unless you prefer a rigid and romantic adherence to our good friend at Bushy, which, it is true, may prove an unsurmountable obstacle to it. Upon the slightest hint from you, however, believe me, it is a business which I shall feel myself happy to be employed in, and shall enter upon that negotiation with as much satisfaction and readiness as the commercial treaty, which I am now appointed to adjust with the Court of France, although the latter employment secures me an income of six thousand pounds a year, with the additional douceurs of plate, equipage, &c. Such, my dear Sir, are the first fruits of the connection I have now formed; to speak the plain truth, my political situation was become so irksome to me, as to affect both my health and spirits, and even my favourite and beloved retreat of Beckenham was become odious to me, more especially as its vicinity both to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Jenkinson, perpetually recalled to my imagination the striking, and
and melancholy difference of our political positions.

Quid facerem? neque servitio me exire licebat,
Nec tam presentes alibi cognoscere Divos,
Hic illum vidi Juvenem, Melibæ, quot annis,
Bis ſemos cui nostra dies altaria fumant.
Hic mihi responſum, primus dedit ille petenti:
Paſcite, ut ante, boves, pueri, ſubmittite tauros.

I flatter myself, that, although you perhaps may not wholly approve of the step I have taken, you will be candid enough to acknowledge, that I was last year of some service in exposing the ignorance and insufficiency of the Minister, in his awkward attempt at a commercial arrangement with the sister kingdom; it will be hard if you dispute me that merit, since my present appointment seems to explicit and fair a confession of it on his part. In promoting the coalition between yourself and Lord North, you will likewise allow me to have had some small merit, and perhaps, could I have prevailed upon you to lay aside some old prejudices with regard to my friend Jenkinson, secret influence, &c. my talents for negociation might have placed you in the enviable situation in which Mr. Pitt
Pitt now stands. But I will not insist on this topic, least it should have the appearance of reproaching you with an absurd and inveterate attachment to certain principles, which, I much fear, it is not in your nature to correct. Unless you give me hopes that you are inclined to listen to the treaty hinted at in the former part of this letter, I doubt, we shall be for a considerable time separated in our line of public conduct; in that case I shall be happy to see you continue to display those wonderful abilities, of which I have always been a sincere admirer, in the conduct of Opposition. It ever has been my decided opinion (and I now know it by experience) that a constitutional opposition has its use. Should matters turn out less agreeably than I flatter myself they will, you may depend, my dear Sir, on my returning from Paris precisely with the same principles as those with which I set out, and that I shall be once more proud to subscribe myself

Your very sincere,

and faithful humble servant,

W. E.———,

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LETTER IV.

To JOHN LEE, Esq.

Beckenham, Dec. 7, 1785.

My Dear Lee,

I HAVE this instant put the finishing stroke to a business, the fortunate result of which will, I trust, most agreeably surprize you. But before I proceed to state the particulars, let me premise, that I should by no means have concluded this important arrangement, without both your opinion on the case, and indeed that of my good friend Mrs. Lee, had not I found myself indispensably constrained to do so, from the awkward circumstance of Mr. Jenkinson's not having broken the affair to me till near half past twelve, and yet hastily requiring my decision at a quarter before one.
To rush at once, as Horace has it, "in medias res," I have acquiesced in Pitt's handsome terms. In a word, my dear Jack, you are henceforth to hail your friend, Commisarial Envoy and Commercial Regulator to the Court of Versailles.

Stare as thou wilt, thou honest Bluntness, yet rest assured that I have meant, that I do mean the whole of this as a liberal speculation for the public good. Too great a tenderness of policy to come at that good, must in this instance have inevitably lost my way to it.—But possibly it may be said, there is a degree of inconsistency in this—To which I answer, clap your hand on your own heart, Jack, and then resolve me this plainest of all plain questions: Are there not cases where too scrupulous a predilection for congruity, may in effect be more intrinsically criminal than the apparently boldest supercession of them? Yes, yes my friend, the very lapses of adventurous integrity are venial compared to the pride, the madness of false firmness.
The devotion of a feeble frame to the perplexing investigation of commercial reciprocity, the complete addiction of a patient understanding to the intricacy of mercantile detail, the absorption of every faculty, and of every fibre of my mind on this greatest, this dearest concern, may possibly be some palliation of an excessive anxiety upon my part, to give action to idea, and afford efficacy to theory. I am frank to own, I did most ardently pant for precisely that post to which my Sovereign has elected me; but candour requires me to subjoin, that not wholly unadvised did his gracious self, exercise his undoubted prerogative on this trying emergency. One of the highest, and most dignified characters in this land had pitched on my talents, as exclusively adequate to this nice trust. When I acquaint you, that the adviser of our Sovereign upon this grand question was no other than my approved friend his Grace of Canterbury, you will applaud both his Majesty's determination and mine.

Yet
Yet with grief I have heard, that tony acceptance under all the circumstances, your unqualifying apathy exclaimed, "By my Maker, I'd a seen 'em all damn'd first." A strong phrase, my dear Jack; but forgive me, if I say too deeply tinged with our good old habits of Presbyterian plainness. Let me meet, however, this simplicity of Republican expression, by observing to you, that, on your own grounds, the secret sway of aristocratic tyranny, is to a free-born mind, scarcely less odious than the bolder control of undisguised despotism.—I know the Whigs. Minds, fabricated like ours, Jack, ought not always to surrender up their native enthusiasm to a transmitted creed, or the whim of hereditary talent.

You have here, dear Lee, the faithful portraiture of an honest mind, perhaps indeed too liberal, too independent for the present age, but certainly (with pride I may avow it) unfilled by deceit, unstained by fordid avarice, undegraded by abandoned hypocrisy. Go on, my friend, pursue the generous line you have so righteously adopted. However I may disapprove
disapprove it on public grounds, I forget its general tendency, in the hope it may conduce to your own private satisfactions—virtue can always be its own reward; and surely it were hard to grudge so simple a remuneration. I have omitted to observe, that the emoluments of my office are close upon six thousand pounds per annum, exclusive of equipage, plate, secret service money, and other trifling douceurs. Adieu! dear Lee—

Ever your's with truth,

W—— E——.
SIT down to give you *A hasty Sketch of yesterday's business*, leaving it to your own impartiality to make whatever use of it you think fit.

It was somewhat more than half past twelve when Mr. Jenkinson arrived. — The great conference immediately commenced. To do justice to the profound learning, the admirable judgment, the lively fallacies displayed in the course of this interesting argument, would require a much greater memory than any one except yourself, can reasonably be imagined to possess. — Suffice it to acquaint
you with the agreeable result.—The comfortable office of Commercial Ambassador at Paris is ensured to your friend, with equal emoluments to the Duke of Dorset's; and, surely, as must strike your accurate mind, with superior confidence and credit.—In a word, the manner of the boon, flowing immediately from the best of Sovereigns, the adroitness of the Negotiator, and the pleasing beneficence of the whole arrangement, are transporting beyond language to describe. But now, my dear Billy, I foresee your shrewd observation—"How will all this be reconciled to opposition?"

In the first place I must tell you, I have already written to all their leading men, in such a way as I think will most probably take off the edge of their first anger, and in a degree possiBes them with the idea that I have merely accepted my office on public grounds. These letters I could wish you to speak of with your usual kindness.—You will see by the copies, which I inclose, that I have varied in my style, according to the dissimilar characters of my several correspondents. You will
will therefore extract only such general parts of my defence from these letters, as may be worked up into the most rational paragraphs. Yet I fear there is no diffusing you from touching on my peculiar habits, my information in commerce, my reading, and possibly my scope of mind:—nay, I should not be surprized, if in your friendly way you occasionally drop a few handsome observations on my personal appearance and easy address; which undoubtedly, if in truth you think I possess them, it might not be unadviseable to enlarge on. I would attempt to moderate your friendly enthusiasm, but that I know you will have your own way. One other point I think I could swear you'll urge; I mean your certainty that any man in Opposition would have jumped at what I have taken; and really it is liberal to take that line; as, doubtless, any comparisons of a different nature would only appear invidious, and could answer no good purpose. What I much wish, is to give a pleasant turn to this apparent inconsistency—party attachment therefore should be well ridiculed—and I think too, if, in your
pleasant stile, you could, by way of merry illustration, insinuate that Opposition had in a manner lent me to the Ministry, for this special purpose; (just as your friends, the theatrical managers, accommodate each other by amicable arrangements, on particular emergencies) nothing could be better timed towards the Christmas holidays; I despair of equaling your inimitable strokes; but something now in this way:

"His Grace of Dorset being unavoidably prevented from acting the difficult part of a Commercial Negotiator, we understand Lord North, with his usual liberality, has permitted Mr. Eden to appear in it for a limited time; and we doubt not, as that promising performer has undertaken this trying character at a short notice, he cannot fail to meet with the loudest bursts of admiration from a candid and judicious public."

These volatile jeux d'esprit are always well adapted to parry a serious reproof, and combat the absurd violence of national resentment—but I trust all to your plastic pen.
Be assured, dear Woodfall, I shall not forget you in my new situation. It would be too much to send you parliamentary speeches I haven’t made, when I am known to be at Paris; but I still shall pen something for you, either in the shape of panegyrick on my new friends, or as strictures on those who in future will unreasonably consider me as their enemy. Besides you shall receive, for many years to come, authentic accounts of the speedy determination of my embassay, with curious details, documents, and other solid stuff.

Here is some tolerable cyder, which, as our return to England will not be immediate, I must intreat you to drink for us, by proxy. There are also a few Goslings of Mrs. E—’s breeding which wait your acceptance; and (if through the medium of your friendship I might take the liberty) there is a black buffalo in our paddock, which brother Samson would infinitely oblige me by giving a place to in his eligible farm—Every relative of my friend William’s is dear to me.

Adieu, with cordial attachment

Ever yours,

W—— E——.
LETTER VI.

To his Grace the Duke of PORTLAND,
&c. &c.

Beckenham, December 7, 1785.

My Lord,

It is unnecessary for me to make any apology to your Grace, for troubling you with this letter, to inform you of my acceptance of a commission of Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, for adjusting a treaty of commerce between this country and France, because I think it my duty to give you the earliest notice of it, both from gratitude for the favours I have received from your Grace, and on account of the great advantage which will be derived to your party from the engagement which I have now undertaken for the benefit of that Coalition, in the formation of which I took so large a share.

When
When I inform your Grace, that the first overture on the subject was accompanied with a spontaneous proposal to settle my pay, equipage, &c. upon an equal footing with the Ambassador, your discernment will suggest to you the necessity of my immediately closing with the proposition, in order to furnish so good a handle to the Opposition, for an attack upon the Minister, in the ensuing session,—At the same time I confess that I am under much apprehension of incurring an imputation of which I have the greatest horror.—The world may illiberally conceive my conduct to proceed from interested motives; and though I am sure to meet with a fair construction from your Grace’s unsuspicious and candid mind; yet, as there have been so many instances of base and perfidious apostates of late years, I may be classed, perhaps, in the number of those mean wretches, and even sink to the degrading level of Robinson, or Lord Delaval. But when I reflect on your Grace’s noble disposition, and the generous spirit of your family, and of the illustrious House of Cavendish, I trust that no such misconception or
cepting the Ministers with whom I am to treat, will consider me as a traitor to my friends and patrons, and a person in whom it may not be safe to repose any confidence. Your Grace perceives at once how totally such suspicions must frustrate the purpose of my mission, and render abortive all the idle schemes of an Administration, who would wish to patch and trump up a treaty with our perfidious foes. I need not say that this is for your Grace’s private ear. I may now, my Lord, without arrogance, boast of having returned an essential service to that Coalition which placed me in so elevated and lucrative a station, and gave me such a leading consequence in some points in the House of Commons.——But whilst I am claiming the merit due to me for risking, for my friends, every thing that is dear to me (even my good name) let me not be supposed to be meanly trying to embrace the benefit which will be derived from having such public ground for reprobating the measure. No, my dear Lord, I am far from expecting any return for these services; I offered them from gratitude,
tude, and only desire that they may not be forgotten, whenever they, or other future events, may produce the effect of overturning an Administration which I have so repeatedly condemned by motions in the House of Commons.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

With the profoundest sentiments
of respect and gratitude,

Your Grace's faithful,

and sincere humble servant,

W—— E——.
LETTER VII.

To the Right Honourable

LORD LOUGHBOROUGH, &c.

Beckenham, Dec. 7, 1785.

My Dear Lord,

Although the unhappy felon who, in your judicial capacity, holds up his hand before you, to answer with his life that violation of the law, to which indigence, or perhaps even famine itself, may have impelled him, cannot be suffered to plead his poverty in justification of his crime, yet, as it is the friend, and not the Chief Justice I am now addressing, may I not reasonably hope for some portion of that mercy, which I am persuaded, did not your duty as a Judge forbid, your Lordship's amiable disposition would frequently extend to the highwayman, the house-breaker, and the pick-pocket.

The
The similarity of our situation is, indeed, striking; urged by necessity, I have, like them, violated the most sacred ties; with this remarkable difference however, that their offences have been perpetrated against persons towards whom they have no enmity; whereas mine, with shame and contrition I acknowledge it, have been committed against those to whom I owed everlastimg friendship and unbounded gratitude; and with another difference still more remarkable, and which I cannot but reflect upon with sensations of a disagreeable nature, namely, that their evil deeds are generally rewarded with a halter, while mine have been compensated with an honourable and lucrative employment in the public service. To explain the whole of this exordium in a word, I must acquaint you, my dear Lord, that Mr. Pitt has offered me the appointment of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Paris, together with the full pay and concomitant emoluments of Ambassador, which offer, upon the most mature deliberation, and under all present circumstances, I have thought it advisable to accept. I trust you will give

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full credit to my sincerity, my dear Lord, when I express the most poignant concern in thus suddenly finding myself in a situation likely to lead to a difference of opinion on public matters with you, my earliest friend and original patron in public life. But five children, and a wife who may, in the course of five years, bless me with as many more, were arguments in my breast irresistible against the rash and unadvised rejection of an income so truly acceptable as six thousand five hundred pounds a year. In further extenuation of my conduct, I might perhaps not unfairly urge the habitual love of business, and consequent attachment to official situation, which your kindness, and the protection and friendship of Lord North, had so early, and so powerfully impressed upon my mind. Short, very short, yet truly tedious, has been the period since my first entrance into public life, during which, I have had the ill fortune to be out of employment; use is said to be a second nature, and my strong predilection for office, arises, no doubt, from having been so long accustomed to the enjoyment of its advantages; if therefore
therefore I am now guilty of an apparent desertion of my friends, paradoxical as it may seem, to the generous and unmerited excess of their friendship only can it justly be imputed. Trusting wholly, my dear Lord, to that uniform kindness I have experienced from you, to put the most favourable construction on my conduct, I still venture to subscribe myself

Your most faithful,

devoted, sincere, and grateful

humble servant and friend,

W— E—.

LETTER
LETTER VIII.

To R. B. SHERIDAN, Esq.

My Dear Sheridan,

To men of your enlightened mind and consummate observation of human character, profession must always be at once disgusting and superfluous.—I shall not, therefore, indulge myself in repeating a detailed inventory of your virtues, nor gratify my friendship by telling you what I could say of you—Duplicity is so common a character in the present area of universal depravation, that it is the most difficult attainment in the whole compass of physical practicabilities, to find a man in whose attachment you can at all depend, or in whose firmness you can repose any confidence.—Adverse, however, as I sincerely am to any appearance of professions, I cannot refrain from saying this much to you, which I enter-
I entertain no doubt you will give your most implicit belief to, that I feel as sincere, as warm, as faithful, and as disinterested a friendship for you as I do for any man breathing.

The immediate reason of my writing to you at present, is to convince you of my regard, by a testimony much more cogent than any assertion of mine—the potent evidence of actual fact.—In few words, I have finally concluded the negotiation which, for the last twelve months, has been uniformly going on, with different degrees of progression between me and Mr. Pitt, and have received the last fiat to my official appointment, as Commercial Negotiator between this country and France.—Whatever may be the sentiments of the party on this occasion (and such is the instability of human attachment in these times, that I shall not wonder if my best friends, and those indeed who have served me most, were to take the lead against me on my present promotion.) I have at least a peculiar claim upon your gratitude, and an insuperable pretension
tenion to your approbation.—I need not bring to your recollection the divided interest we have always taken in one great and important department of Parliamentary business. We have fought side by side, and I think I can, without vanity, assume, that I was not far outdone by you, in the successful detection of the reiterated instances of ministerial imbecility, and the diurnal demonstration of their unexampled ignorance. We constituted in our two persons a species of Hercules Biformes, vigorously and equally engaged in the arduous employment of cleansing the Augean stable of official corruption and political impurity.

What then will be the consequence of the recent appointment, of which I now convey to you the earliest information. You will be in your own person the single man of this conflict, and all the fame (of which you know the value better than I pretend to) attached to the victory, will be entirely, and without partition or diminution, your own. For my part, so you are but benefitted, I am satisfied; I submit to the voluntary degradation
tion of my new commission with cheerfulness, while I see my friend and fellow-labourer gratified and rewarded. If the term reward-ed should seem oddly and uncommonly used in its application to you, let me suggest to you, that the precise meaning of all words depends upon the circumstances that attend their introduction, and I am sure, when compared with the miserable effects that have accompanied the result of all my political labours, you will consider your own situation as a condition of splendid and illustrious remuneration indeed. And here you have the heart of my story;—the great and efficient instrumentality of my recent conversion. It was not to serve the state that I adopted this measure; for on a careful revision of Cay's Abridgment, the happy source of my celebrity and display, I found not a single word relevant to the subject of a commercial treaty between this country and France. I need not therefore say to you, who know me, that no reasonable expectation of superior advantage to my country could influence my determination on this occasion. It was not to serve myself that I entered
entered into the negociation; for, without vanity, I think I may truly say, that my regard for myself is well known to be as weak and unoperative, as my friendship to others is demonstrated to be vigorous, energetic, and immutable. In short, my friend, I did it toserve you; and I flatter myself you will readily agree, few men have gone greater lengths in the indication of their attachment.

If I were in the disposition to indulge in those tepid emanations of genuine humours, those dazzling coruscations of native genius,—those flashes of splendid colloquy, that are too well known to be the characteristic criteria of my endowments to make any affectation of modesty on the subject at all necessary, I should observe, that you, as the tutelary patron of wit, independent of all operation of gratitude, are bound to become my most active advocate in this situation of possible acrimony and factious misrepresentation. For what does the great Locke define wit to be? He says, it is the ready assemblage of two ideas together, which, though apparently unlike, are in reality not so.
Now, does not the union that has taken place between me and Mr. Pitt operate, to all intents and purposes, as a sort of practical illustration of this definition, and of course as a consequent confirmation of the truth of the theory. For what could for years be more apparently unlike than Mr. Pitt and me? and yet who, as this event has proved, can sympathize with a more compleat or accurate verisimilitude? One common resemblance of longitudinal emaciation; one common poller of literary morbidity; one common abhorrence of pertinacious and prejudiced adherence to any given description of political catechumen, one common accuracy in the reminiscence of original obligation, one common exemption from the weak, though dulcet predominance of official ambition, and one common effervescence of personal gratitude, may be stated as the congenial designations of our mutual characters.

Adieu, my dear Sheridan.—Continue to think of me, as I believe you have ever done.—Vale et plaudc.

Immoveably yours,

W—— E——.
LETTER IX.

To Josiah Wedgwood, Esq.,

Bickennham, Dec. 7, 1785.

Dear Sir,

I REMEMBER it was an ingenious and judicious observation of yours, that the introduction of friendship into trade was not less absurd than that of fancy into mathematics; might you not have added, that integrity and politics were equally incompatible? Such at least has been my uniform sentiment, and for that reason I have ever studiously avoided engaging in them, as I am concerned to say, is the practice of too many, as a profession. It is true, that called upon early in life, by the voice of the uninfluenced Electors of the borough of Woodstock to represent them in Parliament, I have at different
different times concurred with parties of various descriptions; but I have at all times been particularly attentive, not to bind myself down to any circumscribed line of political tenets, which might in any degree deprive me of that free, unrestrained exercise of my judgment, which, in my humble apprehension, a Member of Parliament can never prudently surrender. In short, I flatter myself, I shall not risque being contradicted from any quarter, when I venture to assert, that from my first entrance into public life, my conduct has been that of a plain, honest, uninfluenced, independent Gentleman; who without attending to any views, either of interest or ambition, has upon all occasions made the welfare of the community his sole inviolable rule of action. Such however is the virulence of faction, such the illiberality, and such the want of candour amongst men who concern themselves in public affairs, upon motives less pure and disinterested, that I shall be little surprized, to find the step I am now about to apprise you of, maliciously and industriously represented as a desertion of principle, an inconsistency
...fidelity of conduct, and an open breach of the most sacred obligations; the step I allude to is, that of having accepted from a Minister, of whom you well know the opinion I entertain, the appointment of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, to conclude a Commercial Treaty between France and Great Britain. Let Malice however do her worst, I flatter myself your candour will give me ample credit, when I solemnly protest and declare, that no considerations but a sincere and ardent desire to serve the public interests in general, and a tender and anxious solicitude for those of the manufactures of Great Britain in particular, have had the smallest weight in my mind upon the present occasion; the trifling and paltry emoluments annexed to the employment, I will confidently affirm cannot be suspected to have influenced a person whose birth, fortune, and rank in life, have placed him so infinitely above such mean and despicable temptations: No, my dear Sir, believe me, it is the firm conviction I feel in my own mind, and which I have in a great degree derived from the light of information you have
have favoured me with, of the utter incapacity of the present Minister, and the scandalous insufficiency and ignorance of all his Majesty's servants with respect to the commercial interests of the nation, that have decided me to devote my poor abilities to their service; in the hope of averting some of those mischiefs which cannot but be expected from their wretched management to befall this country; I confess I feel at this moment like a second Curtius (without descending to a pun upon the subject) devoting myself to a Pitt, for the salvation of my country; I cannot therefore doubt but you, with all sincere patriots, will cordially approve my present conduct.

Before I enter upon the arduous business I have now undertaken, there is a matter I wish much to suggest to you, and in which should I be so fortunate as to have your concurrence, I shall esteem myself peculiarly happy. Converfants as you are in the manufacturing interest, it is needless to point out to you, that whatever treaty I may conclude with the Cabinet of Versailles, it cannot be expected
expected to prove equally beneficial to all the different branches of them, and consequently I am not to flatter myself with an universal approbation of the result by my negotiations; (I trust I need hardly say, that Earthen ware will not be the article to which I shall be the least attentive.) This circumstance being duly considered, I confess it strikes me, and hope it will appear in the same light to you, that no future meetings of the Chamber of Commerce can possibly be attended with any advantage to the public; I will therefore take leave to recommend it most earnestly to you, to use your most strenuous endeavours to prevent any future assemblies of that kind; it was but too evident from the little success we had, on this side of the water, in our opposition to the Irish Propositions, that our utmost efforts against the will of the Minister must in the present Parliament prove ineffectual; and I own I am not without hope, that the general good opinion I have been anxious to establish of my sincere concern for the manufacturing interest, will dispose all parties to
to rely implicitly on my most strenuous exertions for the common prosperity of all.—

One thing I would authorize you to promise, in my name, to every distinct branch of our manufactures, namely, that I will not, on any account whatever, hastily or precipitately conclude any treaty which may affect their interest; I care not how much of my time I sacrifice to their service, and though the business I am now undertaking should detain me from my native country, and the enjoyment of my domestic comfort, five, or even ten years, rather than neglect their interests in the minutest particular, I will patiently and cheerfully submit to my lot.—

For them and their sakes only, I become a voluntary exile; for them I expose my character to the most odious and ignominious imputations. Do I ask too much, when, in return, I request only their confidence in my desire to serve them, and a suppression of those meetings, which however wise, while their concerns were in the hands of ignorance and incapacity, become unnecessary, if not prejudicial, when they are entrusted to
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one in whose zeal and exertion they may reasonably confide?

I am, dear Sir,

With the greatest esteem and regard,

Your very faithful,

and devoted humble servant,

W. E.-

P. S. As my residence on the Continent may probably be long, I will trouble you to give orders to your principal agent, to countermand the three dozen chamber utensils I had bespoke, with the figure of Mr. Pitt engraved in the bottom of them; for which I am happy to learn, you have had so extensive a demand, as I was so lucky as to be the person who originally suggested the idea of them.
LETTER X.

To WILLIAM ADAM, Esq. M. P.

Beckenham, Kent, n. 2, 1786.

Dear Adam,

There have been hitherto so many circumstances of common sympathy between you and me, in the course of our pursuits in life, that I think it particularly my duty to comment on the first instance of its interruption, and to reprehend you gently for the voluntary deviation from the standard of our original friendship, of which I am not unapprized, by the objection which I understand you have expressed to my conduct in a recent instance of my good fortune. You set out in your career of politics under the cheering auspices of Lord North;—so did I. You were an active and warm friend...
to the Coalition;—so was I. You have an amiable and deserving wife, together with a large family;—so have I. You were originally bred to the profession of the law;—so was I. Why then will you not permit me to add to this detail of affirmative resemblances, an equally congenial lift of contraries; and allow me to say, you have left Lord North, as well as I. You have abandoned the Coalition, just as I have done. You have deserted the drudgery of an ignoble profession for the attainment of more rapid emolument, and in that also have followed the example of your friend. Why will you give me an opportunity, even for the most lenient rebuke on the subject of violated consistency and injured sympathy.—Think better of it.

Will you permit me to speak to my new allies, to obtain for you the employment of Commercial Negotiator between this country and the Court of Madrid? The office is as necessary, in point of fact, as mine; and has this advantage, that it cannot be exposed to the empty ridicule of factious jibers, on the
the score of there being two Plenipotentiaries at the same Court. — The moft ingenious of them cannot prove that.——Might it not, however, facilitate your appointment, and reconcile an inquisitive, discontented multitude to the extravagance, as they may call it, of your nomination, if you were to move professionally for a writ of enquiry, to discover a true state of the Ambassador's locality, and to ascertain the moot point of his existence. This writ, you know, lies legally in all cases of nihil decit, or non est informatus; and on each of these accounts, both as to taciturnity, and the absence of information, what judicature will question the singular propriety of its issuing against such an individual as the Earl of Chesterfield? As another mode of effecting the same purpose, for the little Earl has been evidently represented in the Retorna Bre-vium (pardon this simple instance of the paronomasia) as a non est inventus, may it not be practicable to issue a latitat?—a process which indeed owes its name to the supposition that the defendant doth "lurk and lie hid," to compel him to answer to his duty,
delicacy!—Nay, so much am I satisfied of the full and unqualified sincerity of his opinion upon the case, that I am convinced, were I to go down to the House on the first day of its meeting, to take a place, impossible as such an hypothesis must appear, on the adverse side of the House, or even to seat myself between a couple of the most abandoned and convicted profligates in the records of political delinquency, he would even, under such circumstances, honour me with his notice, and indulge himself in the most unambiguous eulogia upon the expediency and necessity of my official promotion, and upon the purity and disinterestedness of my personal inducements—need I say mine—His opinion will, I trust, influence yours, and I doubt not of their entire coincidence.

I will only add, that though bred a lawyer, I am not implacable—that though no longer a whig in personal connection, I am so sincerely attached to that principle in the theory of their creed, inimiciss placabiles, that I here give you full authority to assure your friends,
friends, that if either the French Court should demur to my appointment, or by any other odd flaw, I should suffer a non-suit at home, I shall in that case be quite willing to forego all actions of battery or trespass, which it is my present duty to institute and carry on against them, and to join issue with them with as much good faith and genuine attachment as ever.

Believe me, Dear Adam,

to be constantly and inviolably yours,

W—— E——.

P. S. Pray do you happen to know any thing in the way of your profession (for I understand he is an attorney, and may therefore occasionally visit you with a brief) of Mr. Sayer, the famous satirist of our modern politics? if you do, I wish you would intimate to him the propriety of omitting me in the future editions of his justly celebrated print,
print, called, The Concerto Co-alitionali.— You may tell him, I no longer belong to that Band. I had no idea of playing when I saw so little chance of the piper being paid—volto subito therefore was the word—and I changed my key—I have indeed raised my pitch through the whole compass of the diapason, from the deep grumbling note of faction to the alto of ambassadorship.—Let him know this, he will perceive I understand time, and will acknowledge also, I trust, that I did well to relinquish a company of gentlemen performers, who volunteer their exertions to gain a set so thoroughly devoted to the art they possess, that like Nero, they can fiddle even when their country is undoing.

FINIS.