

DA  
522  
P6S7s

A  
0  
0  
0  
9  
5  
2  
1  
8  
1  
6



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY





THE LIBRARY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES

T. D. WEBSTER,  
ANTIQUARIAN & EXPORT BOOKSELLER,  
MERE MANOR, DISS, NORFOLK.





To the Lady Caroline Kemison with the  
Editor's kind Regards



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation

SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

CONNECTED WITH

MR. PITT'S RETURN TO OFFICE

IN 1804.





Stanhope, Philip.

# SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

CONNECTED WITH

MR. PITT'S RETURN TO OFFICE

IN 1804.

CHIEFLY COMPILED FROM THE MSS. AT MELVILLE CASTLE.

~~~~~  
NOT PUBLISHED.  
~~~~~

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODES AND SHAW.  
1852.



DA  
522  
P657s

BEING at Melville Castle in October, 1850, I was kindly permitted by the late Lord Melville to examine the letters then in his possession, which his father had received from Mr. Pitt.

These letters, as now preserved, are far less numerous than I had expected to find them, the first in date being of 1794; although from the cordial friendship which Mr. Pitt, almost from his outset, formed with Mr. Dundas, it is nearly certain that many score of earlier ones must have passed between them. Those which I saw, however, seemed to me of no common interest, and did honour, as I thought, to both the statesmen concerned.

I was more especially struck with the value of that portion of the correspondence which referred to Mr. Pitt's return to office in 1804, knowing that his conduct at that period had not been clearly understood nor fairly represented. And on subsequent consideration, looking back to a similar privilege accorded me in 1842 by the Duke of Rut-

1288716

land, with respect to another series of Mr. Pitt's private correspondence, I applied to the present Lord Melville for leave to print a limited number of these letters, for distribution among his friends and mine. That leave was granted me by Lord Melville, in a manner most prompt and obliging.

I have felt it necessary to supply an explanatory comment, in which I have also inserted, according to their dates, the letters addressed by Mr. Pitt, at the same period, to Lord Eldon. They have been already published, first by Mr. Twiss, and then by Lord Campbell, in their respective biographies of the Chancellor; but I desire here to reproduce them, in order to complete and elucidate the series.

I may add, that although the letters of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville in 1804 are here, as I have stated, confined to private circulation, I cannot, on now reviewing them in a collected form, see much reason beyond the smallness of the volume, and perhaps, it may be thought, the inadequacy of my own share in it, why it might not even at present, or still more at some time hereafter, be freely given to the world.

MAHON.

*London, March, 1852.*

# SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

CONNECTED WITH

## MR. PITT'S RETURN TO OFFICE

IN 1804.

---

EARLY in the spring of 1804 a large French army, ready to invade us, lay encamped at Boulogne. At its head was the greatest commander of his country, and (with one exception) of his age. The whole resources of the French Republic were wielded almost with absolute power by his hands. At home, although the great body of the people were loyally attached to their King and Constitution, there was not wanting a small minority which might make common cause with the invaders, and whose efforts it would require vigilance to watch, and vigour to quell. The mind of the Sovereign was again as in 1801, unsettled, and for some weeks fluttering on the very borders of derangement. Never was there greater need of a strong and well-directed Government. But such a Government we did not then possess. The Prime Minister, Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth, was a man of integrity, of industry, and of fair intentions, who, both be-

fore and afterwards showed himself useful and efficient in a second place. But to fill the first at such a time he wanted adequate abilities either in council or debate. To compare him even for a moment to that great statesman who had preceded him in office, was a task too hard even for the flatterers of power. Such a comparison could scarce be seriously made; it is best conveyed in the rhyme, or rather the rule-of-three sum, which was ascribed to Mr. Canning:—

“Pitt is to Addington  
“As London to Paddington!”

The defects of the Premier were still further set forth, and as it were exaggerated, by the utter mediocrity of his two kinsmen and immediate followers whom he put forward as Privy Councillors in office: his brother, Mr. Hiley Addington, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Charles Bragge.

“When the faltering periods lag,  
“Cheer, oh cheer, him, brother Bragge!  
“When his speeches hobble vilely,  
“Or the House receives them drily,  
“Cheer, oh cheer, him, brother Hiley!”

The negotiation which in the preceding year Mr. Addington had commenced for the return of Mr. Pitt to office, had been accompanied with considerable pretensions on his own side, and had ended only in a personal estrangement between them. In this state of things all the most upright and far-sighted politicians perceived the vital im-

portance of a stronger Government; most of them anxiously desiring to see Mr. Pitt at its head.

The two Houses after several weeks' adjournment had met again in February. On the 10th of March we find Mr. Wilberforce write as follows to his friend Lord Muncaster:—" I really feel for  
 " Addington, who is a better man than most of  
 " them, though not well fitted for the warfare at  
 " St. Stephen's. He has exhibited—you, I think  
 " would also interpret it this way—marks of sore-  
 " ness by losing his temper readily, once indeed  
 " without the smallest reason. Pitt on that occa-  
 " sion behaved nobly. Instead of retorting angrily,  
 " as I own I feared, or even showing any con-  
 " temptuous coolness, he scarcely seemed conscious  
 " of Addington's having exposed himself, and an-  
 " swered with perfect good humour."

On the 15th of the same month Mr. Pitt took for the first time a step of direct hostility against the Government, by moving for papers upon our naval preparations, and arraigning in strong terms the conduct of the Board of Admiralty. A long and able debate ensued; Mr. Fox and Mr. Wilberforce speaking in support of Mr. Pitt; but Mr. Sheridan, with the rest of the Prince of Wales's friends, taking part against him. In the division the numbers were:—

For Mr. Pitt's motion	-	-	-	130
Against it	-	-	-	201
				<hr/>
Majority for Ministers				71
				<hr/>

Five days afterwards, the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, deeply impressed with the imminent perils of the country—perils that in his opinion overruled all common party ties—directed his eldest son, at that time member of Parliament for Boroughbridge, to deliver into the hands of Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons, a private note, proposing an interview between them. To that note Mr. Pitt replied as follows :—

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,

Tuesday night, March 20. 1804.

My dear Lord,

MR. SCOTT was so good as to give me your note this evening in the House of Commons. I am very glad to accept your invitation for Saturday, as whatever may be the result of our conversation, I think the sooner we hold it the better. The state of public affairs makes it impossible that the public suspense should last very long, and nothing can give me more satisfaction than to put you confidentially in possession of all the sentiments and opinions by which my conduct will be regulated. Believe me, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

W. PITT.

---

The interview thus agreed to is supposed to have taken place on the day appointed. At least there appears the following entry in the private diary of



the Speaker, Mr. Abbot (afterwards Lord Colchester), of which some extracts have been published by Dean Pellew. October 29. 1804; on which day Mr. Addington paid the Speaker a visit at Kidbrooke; "Mr. Addington said, that in "March last the Chancellor had a *tête-à-tête* dinner "with Mr. Pitt, of which he acquainted him (Mr. "Addington) a month afterwards."

At nearly the same period, the Earl of Moira, who was residing at Edinburgh as Commander of the Forces in Scotland, and who then stood foremost in the favour of the Prince of Wales, had a long and interesting conversation on the state of public affairs with the Lord Advocate, Mr. Charles Hope. Hereupon the Lord Advocate addressed the following letter, marked "Confidential," to his friend and kinsman, Henry Dundas, Lord Melville:—

THE LORD ADVOCATE TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

Edinburgh,

My dear Lord,

March 22. 1804.

LORD MOIRA returned yesterday, and I had a card from him early this morning; in consequence of which I waited upon him this forenoon, and had a very long and unreserved conversation with him, the particulars of which, till he could have a personal interview with you, he desired me to communicate.

First, as to the King. He assured me that he is still far from well in point of mind, occasionally

collected, but for the much greater part of the day very incoherent, and at times still very violent; so much so, that within this week, on their not letting the Duke of York see him, according to promise, he was so outrageous, that they were obliged to put him to bed, and strap him down. He is very anxious to see the Duke, but the physicians are against it. He at first refused to see the Chancellor, unless they would allow him to see the Duke also. They agreed, but after his interview with the Chancellor he was so agitated, that they would not let him see the Duke.

They pacified him then, and fixed on last Thursday for an interview between them; but when Thursday came they broke faith with him, which occasioned the return of mania which I have mentioned.

In short, he is in that state, that he cannot bear any thing to agitate or contradict him, and therefore, although at times collected, remains substantially unfit for business. He says that Ministers, or rather Mr. Addington, are following a most extraordinary game; that they will not make a Regency, but that their intention is at present to get the King down to Kew as soon as possible (for which purpose they are finishing and furnishing the new palace as fast as possible), and when there, to get him to sign a council of Regency, proceeding on the narrative, that the fatigue of business is too much for his health at present, and, therefore, that he devolves the ordinary ad-

ministration of government on this council, with instructions to refer to him only on extraordinary occasions. The Prince to be a member of this council, which, in other respects, is of course to be composed of Mr. Addington and his friends. The Prince, however, has resolved not to have anything to do with such a council, and Lord Moira added, that he does not believe that it is agreeable to the Queen. He says that the discontent in London is prodigious; the very people who are voting with Mr. Addington make no secret that they do it only because, in the present state of things, they know not what else to do.

Now as to the Prince. Lord Moira told me that His Royal Highness had very early sent a message to Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, that he was very sensible of their attachment, but that in the event of his government, either as King or Regent, as he intended to throw himself entirely into Lord Moira's hands, he did not think it right, in his absence, to see either of them, that Lord Moira might not suppose that he had formed any opinion, or even taken up any impression, without consulting him. That the Prince had accordingly thrown himself upon him for advice, which Lord Moira gave him, as nearly as I can recollect, to the following purpose:—

“That your Royal Highness must see, in common with the whole country, that the present Ministry are utterly incapable of governing the country, or even of perceiving, to its full extent,

“ the critical situation in which it is placed ; that  
“ nothing can save the country but the union of all  
“ the talent in it, so as to ensure not only vigour  
“ in our councils, but perfect confidence and  
“ unanimity in the people, and an effectual and de-  
“ cisive co-operation on the part of some of the  
“ great continental powers.

“ Before, therefore, I can go further, or can  
“ judge whether I can be of use to your Royal  
“ Highness, have you the magnanimity and good  
“ sense to lay aside any feeling of estrangement,  
“ right or wrong, which you may entertain against  
“ the late Ministers, and to stretch forth your hand  
“ to Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville, and call on them  
“ to assist you in the government of the country  
“ in these anxious times ?” He said, the Prince  
wanted at first to parry the question, by saying  
that Mr. Pitt would not act under Lord Moira,  
and that no other man should be his Minister ; but  
Lord Moira answered, “ First let me know your  
“ Royal Highness’s feelings, without which it is  
“ unnecessary to talk of Mr. Pitt’s.” The Prince  
still parried him by saying that Mr. Pitt and Mr.  
Fox would not act together. But Lord Moira  
still insisting for an answer, the Prince asked him,  
“ Do you really think this necessary for the good  
“ of the country, and for the honour of my govern-  
“ ment ?” Lord Moira answered him that he did ;  
that he considered Mr. Pitt’s co-operation as essen-  
tial, and that the Prince’s only chance for govern-  
ing the country without Mr. Pitt, with any degree

of comfort, was at least to satisfy the public that the refusal came from Mr. Pitt, and not from His Royal Highness. "Then," said the Prince, "I submit myself entirely to your opinion;" "but added that he, Lord Moira, must still "be his Minister, and that he was sure Mr. Pitt "would never act in a subordinate situation." Lord Moira answered, "Whatever situation your "Royal Highness may intend for me, Mr. Pitt "shall not feel himself subordinate; he never "can be subordinate in any Cabinet; and on "the footing of the broad union which I propose, "I shall consider my business in the Cabinet to be "to moderate between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox."

"Well, then," said the Prince, "bring this "about; but I still doubt that the materials will "be too discordant." Lord Moira replied, that the pressure of the moment would, he was sure, make them go on cordially as long as the necessity lasted; after that they might quarrel, as other administrations had done, without much harm to the country. Thus the conversation with the Prince ended; and Lord Moira says that he left him perfectly made up to the resolution of endeavouring to form the broadest administration possible, without reference to former prejudices or parties. He told me that he had not any channel in London, that he was quite satisfied with, through which he could sound Mr. Pitt on the subject; and I take it for granted, by his expressly saying that I was, at liberty to communicate this to you, that he trusts

to you to do so. But I think you ought not to do it on this letter alone, as you will so soon have an opportunity of hearing more accurately, from his own mouth, those particulars which I have strictly endeavoured to detail. On other points, he says that a war with Spain is now unavoidable, and on the expectation and belief that the Spanish fleet is immediately coming out to join that of France that an expedition, on a great scale, is preparing against some of the Spanish settlements. He adds; that the Prince and the Duke, he trusts, will soon be cordial.

I will not mix my own reflections with the above detail, especially as I hope it will induce you not to postpone your return here longer than is absolutely necessary.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours faithfully,

C. HOPE.

Lord Melville, being then, it seems, in the north of Scotland, communicated by letter to Mr. Pitt the information which he had thus received from the Lord Advocate. In reply to his letter Mr. Pitt wrote as follows : —

MR. PITT TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

York Place,

Dear Lord Melville,

March 29, 1804.

BEFORE I received your letter I had determined to write to you fully on my view of the present

state of affairs previous to my leaving town, which I shall do to-morrow. I will now begin with Lord Moira's letter. I cannot help thinking that his information respecting the King's health has been by no means correct, though I have no doubt he believes it to be so. All the accounts which have reached Carlton House, or at least (*between ourselves*) which have come from thence, have uniformly represented the King's state as worse than it in truth has been, and cannot be reasoned upon without great allowance. I do not however mean to say that I consider a speedy and complete recovery as by any means certain; and I am afraid, although things looked more favourably than Lord Moira supposes at the dates he refers to, that within these few days the progress has been materially interrupted. Under these circumstances it is undoubtedly still possible that a Regency (for a shorter or longer time) may become inevitable; and though I entertain a very strong hope that it will not happen, it is right for public men to be prepared for such an event.

With respect to the Prince's intentions, I must also say to you confidentially that I fear no very certain dependence is to be placed on any language which he holds. The conversation which Lord Moira reports to have passed with himself is certainly at variance with the assurances which I have good reason to believe the Prince has held out to other quarters. He has certainly seen both Fox and Grey. The former, I have good reason to

believe, understands that in the event of the Prince having the Government in his hands, it is by his (Fox's) advice that he would be guided; and I believe too, that his advice is likely to be to apply to me with a view of forming a strong and comprehensive Government.

Having said thus much to explain to you why I am not disposed to rely too much on any professions till the moment for actual decision arrives, I have no hesitation in stating that I quite agree with you in thinking that nothing could be so creditable for the Prince, or so useful to the public, as his really and sincerely acting on the idea of forming such a Government as I have stated. But with respect to the possibility of carrying it into effect as far as I am concerned, you will not I think wonder at my saying that I do not see how, under any circumstances, I can creditably or usefully consent to take part in any Government without being at the head of it; and I should be very sorry that either Lord Moira, or, through him, the Prince, should suppose that there is any chance of my changing my opinion on this point.

There is another point of more delicacy and difficulty on which I can scarce form my decision beforehand, because it must depend so much on the precise circumstances of the moment. Much as I wish a strong Government, and prepared as I am for that purpose to put aside the recollection of former differences, if a cordial union can be formed on public grounds for the future, I still should



feel a great doubt whether it would be right during the King's illness, and while any reasonable chance exists of his recovery, to form any connexion which might preclude him from a fair option in forming an administration, whenever he might resume the exercise of his authority. This doubt rests, as you will perceive, entirely on the feeling of what is due to the King; and strong as that motive is, I am nevertheless aware that there may be cases in which considerations of public safety will perhaps not allow of its being yielded to beyond a certain point. From what I have now said you will see exactly the state of my mind on the whole of this subject, and will be enabled in conversing with Lord Moira to give him your opinion (so far as you may think it right to do so) of what would be my probable line of conduct.

I wish now to call your attention to the other (and I hope the more probable) alternative of the King's speedy recovery. In that event I am strongly confirmed in the opinion that the present Government cannot last for any length of time, and still more so in the full conviction that every week for which its existence may be protracted will be attended with increased danger to the country. I have therefore satisfied myself that the time is near at hand at which if a change does not originate from the Ministers themselves, or from the King, I can no longer be justified in not publicly declaring my opinion, and endeavouring by Parliamentary measures to give it effect. My present

notion therefore is to take the first moment after the present recess, at which the state of the King's health will admit of such a step, to write a letter to His Majesty stating to him the grounds of my opinion, explaining the dangers which I think threaten his Crown and his people from the continuance of his present Government, and representing to him the urgent necessity of a speedy change. From what I have already said in a former part of this letter, you will not be surprised at my saying that the change to which I should point as most beneficial would be one which would introduce precisely the same description of Government as I think desirable in the other event of a Regency. From various considerations, however, and still more from this last illness, I feel that a proposal to take into a share in his councils persons against whom he has long entertained such strong and natural objections ought never to be made to him, but in such a manner as to leave him a free option, and to convince him that if he cannot be sincerely convinced of its expediency, there is not a wish to force it upon him. I should, therefore, at the same time, let His Majesty understand distinctly, that if after considering the subject he resolved to exclude the friends both of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, but wished to call upon me to form a Government without them, I should be ready to do so as well as I could from among my own immediate friends, united with the most capable and unexceptionable persons of the present

Government; but of course excluding many of them, and above all, Addington himself, and Lord St. Vincent.

From what we both know of the King's character, I am persuaded this manner of bringing the subject before him is more likely than any other to bring him to consider fairly the advantages which I am sure he personally would derive for the remainder of his reign in an equal degree with the country from the extinction of parties, and the establishment of a Government uniting all the weight and talents of the day, and capable of commanding respect and confidence both at home and abroad.

Whatever might be the success of this measure, with a view either to the more extended or narrower plan of Government, I should have acquitted myself of my duty to the King; and if it produces no effect, I should then have no hesitation in taking such ground in Parliament as would be most likely to attain the object. You will have seen by the division on my Naval motion, that a good deal has been already done to shake the Government, and I have no doubt that on any strong question respecting the Public Defence, we should be able after Easter to produce much greater numbers. Fox is taking steps to muster all his friends, of whom not more than five-and-twenty voted on that occasion. On any future trial of strength, I have no doubt of their being between sixty and seventy, and he is certainly prepared to support a question of the nature I have stated, under the full know-

ledge that if the result produces the removal of the present Government, I hold myself at full liberty to form a new one without reference to him. Of my own friends many were also absent on the former vote, whose attendance may be easily ensured for the next. If in addition to this we procure, as I think probable, some considerable strength from Ireland, and if upon what I have stated you think it possible to collect a large proportion of our friends from your part of the world, I entertain very little doubt that the success of our effort would be nearly certain. I am aware that with the important local duties, which belong at this time to persons of weight and property in Scotland, it is more difficult than usual to bring them from their homes. But I think their attendance would not be required here for more than ten days, or at most a fortnight, as the fate of two or three motions must be decisive one way or other; and a short absence for such a purpose would perhaps be the most effectual way of consulting the security both of Scotland and every other part of the empire.

You will be the best judge what is the earliest day on which any attendance from Scotland could be reckoned upon. It would be very desirable that it should not be later than the 18th, or at farthest the 20th of next month.

I shall naturally be very desirous of hearing your sentiments on the whole of this subject; and though the contents of this letter are of course of

the most secret nature, there is no part of it which I should not be very glad that you should show in confidence to the Duke of Buccleugh and the Lord Advocate.

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. PITT.

---

Mr. Pitt, as he announces in his letter to Lord Melville, left town next day, that is on the 30th of March, for Walmer Castle.

In consequence of Mr. Pitt's letter of the 29th of March, Lord Melville wrote to him on the 2nd, the 3rd, the 4th, the 5th, and again on the 6th of April. Of these letters the two which appear important, those, namely, of the 3rd and 6th, are here subjoined :

VISCOUNT MELVILLE TO MR. PITT.

Melville Castle, April 3. 1804.

My dear Sir,

I WROTE you a few lines yesterday on the receipt of your letter, and shall trouble you with a few observations on what appears to me a material part of it.

I never had a doubt, and wrote so immediately to the Advocate, that Lord Moira's ideas would all end in smoke, if he had formed or persevered in the sentiment of your not being at the head of the Finances, as your only appropriate situation. I likewise most cordially agree with you in the

mode by which you propose to bring the business before the King; and as in one of the plans it brings before him, nothing more almost is requisite to give it effect, than that Mr. Addington should give way to you as the head of the Government, I cannot conceive either the King or Mr. Addington himself, in the present critical situation of the country, can stand in the way of such an arrangement. I own, however, I shall be sorry if the business shall end in that way, for I am as much convinced as I ever was in my life of any proposition, that nothing can bring the country out of all its difficulties, and place it, perhaps, on a higher eminence than ever, except a suspension of all political animosities; and a collection of all the talents, vigour, and experience of the country, in one general mass of energy and action. The moment that took place, all foreign nations would see that there was something on which they could rely; but if we remain with a weak Government, and all the talents of the country out of office are fighting and tearing each other's characters to pieces, we cannot blame other nations if they remain shy of forming any permanent or beneficial connexions with us.

I am afraid there is too much justice in the observation you make, that the looseness of the Prince's actions and language shakes much the grounds of any solid dependence; but still it forms an essential part of the view in which I see the whole of this subject, that the Prince should be

conciliated, and, of course, his friends duly attended to.

The long letter I wrote for your perusal some time ago, will prepare you for the observation I have to repeat again; I mean, that the precarious state of the King's health, in the best expectation you can form of it, renders it almost impossible that any Government can be strong and permanent which rests solely on the health and life of the King; and this observation is peculiarly worthy of attention when you look abroad, and take into the scale of consideration the importance it is that foreign nations should have a confidence in the strength and unity and permanence of the British Government.

What I have premised will prepare you for the only material observation called on from me. By the tenor of your's I conclude that not only you, but the heads of the other parties which have been most discordant together, are convinced of the necessity of a strong Government, and of the propriety of making every personal sacrifice for the attainment of it. Under that impression it is most natural for them even to wish for an arrangement upon the narrow scale you propose to lay before his Majesty; for by that means the present inefficient head of Government is got rid of. But what I press upon your most serious consideration, is the impossibility of that lasting beyond the King's life and health; and of consequence all the blessed effects to arise from the impression to be

created at home and abroad, not only by the strength but the permanency of such a Government as you propose on the broad scale, of uniting all the talents and weight of the country, will be disappointed. The practical conclusion I draw from all this, and which I sincerely press upon your mind, is, that if you from any circumstances are compelled, contrary to your own conviction, to form a Government on a narrow scale, you ought distinctly to explain, by some means or other, both to Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, the reasons of necessity which induce you to do it, and the determination you are under, the first possible moment, to act on the larger scale, and form such a Government as you are conscientiously convinced is necessary to the salvation and strength of the country. With such an explanation I can perfectly conceive that both Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, and others, would not only acquiesce for the present in the necessary arrangement you are compelled from circumstances to make, but would patiently wait and trust in your honour for the fulfilment of what you all feel to be ultimately necessary and right. If a Government is formed on the narrow scale without such an explanation and understanding, I myself feel strongly, and entreat you to consider with attention, whether the Government formed on the narrow scale would be much better than the present; and in the mean time all the jealousies and heartburnings of party spirit would be lurking, and ready to burst out the first favour-



able moment, and would most certainly do so whenever the King's death or return of illness afforded the opening for it.

I thought it right to take the first moment of laying before you my sentiments on this very material part of your letter. On other less important points I can write again to you, and shall continue to address you through Alexander Hope's conveyance, as I remember our friend Bathurst very strongly hinted to me last year to beware of the Post Office, when you and I had occasion to correspond on critical points or in critical times.

I need scarcely add that if the King should reject both your suggestions of a Government either on a broader or a narrower basis, and shall insist to rest his Crown and his kingdom on the present feeble shoulders, he leaves no alternative which any honest man can adopt, different from that of taking every lawful and constitutional means of saving ourselves and posterity from the danger to which we are exposed by such calamitous circumstances as my affection and duty to the King prevent me from dwelling upon. You shall without delay hear from me what prospect there is of reinforcing your troops from this part of the island.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours truly and affectionately,

MELVILLE.

## VISCOUNT MELVILLE TO MR. PITT.

Melville Castle, April 6. 1804.

My dear Sir,

Two days ago, upon my return from the north, I had an interview with Lord Moira. The only very particular incident in the conversation was the explanation I gave him of my knowledge that you had no desire for office for the sake of office; and with the confidence you felt that the head of the Finances was your appropriate situation, I was certain that, from the conviction of its being the situation in which you could be employed most beneficially for the public, I could state with certainty it was the only way in which you could form a part of any arrangement. He did not seem to receive the communication with either surprise or dissatisfaction, but gave no symptoms of acquiescence from which I could draw any conclusion.

Having speedily disposed of this topic, the conversation, for the most part, was very general. There was, of course, from the nature of the interview, a degree of reserve on both sides, but less than might have been expected, and there was a perfect cordiality and good humour throughout, which made the discussion of many different characters, both high and low, and of many past transactions, particularly those in which the Prince had any concern, go off without any inconvenience. The point to which I was desirous to bring the conversation as soon as I could, without

appearing to do so, was the extent of Mr. Fox's connexion with the Prince, and his influence over him in a comparative view with Lord Moira himself. Upon this subject he was certainly very explicit. He reminded me that, in the first conversation he had with me, when I came first from the north, and when a Regency was every day expected, he expressed his conviction, in pointed terms, that the Prince would act most unwisely if he did not set out immediately with an avowal of forming the strongest Government he could, founded on an extinction and oblivion of party prejudices and animosities, and, as the best groundwork for doing so, to begin with banishing his own. I certainly acquiesced in the fairness of that statement, and admitted that the advice he, both through the Advocate and personally, represented himself to have given to the Prince, was in unison with what he held out previous to his going to London. He further distinctly stated that, previous to his arrival in London, the Prince had stated to Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, that he would not see either of them until he had seen Lord Moira from Scotland; that he accordingly adhered to that intimation, and did not see either of them till after his arrival, and had received a full communication from Lord Moira of all his opinions, and particularly of the propriety of his embracing, with cordiality, the support and connexion of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville; and he makes no doubt the Prince stated all this to Mr. Fox when

he did see him. He distinctly states, that he himself made a full communication of all these opinions to Mr. Fox, as those which he had given to the Prince, and that Mr. Fox seemed, without hesitation, to acquiesce in the propriety of them, nor does he entertain any doubt that Mr. Fox still remains in those sentiments.

At this period of the conversation he threw out a surmise, but whether he meant to convey only a suspicion, or to express an idea for which he had some grounds, I could not distinctly collect. It was as if Sheridan, whom, by *some means*, Mr. Addington seemed to have got hold of, was playing, or would play, a game for the purpose of impressing the Prince that the easiest mode by which he could gain any object, even that of an extensive plan of Government on the footing recommended by Lord Moira, was by admitting into his confidence and friendship Mr. Addington, whose interest and inclination it certainly was to cultivate the friendship of the Prince. I should have liked to have probed this part of the conversation a little further, but I did not see an opening for it. He mentioned that, either in his communications with the Prince or Mr. Fox (I am not certain which), he stated doubts how far too strict a league and union with the Grenville interest was an eligible or wise measure. He admitted it to be very proper, if it went only to considering that interest as a part of the weight and talents that was, on his principles, desirable to unite in one mass of general strength and exertion for the

safety of the empire, but he hinted that difficulties would arise if it went further, for that they were unpopular and full of pretensions. He said that, except one day, accidentally, at the Duke of York's, when Mr. Addington came into the room, he had never seen him till a few hours before he left London, when, in consequence of a note he had from Mr. Addington, he called on him. There was nothing very pointed in the conversation; there were great regrets that Lord Moira's duty rendered it necessary for him to leave town, as he would have been the happy instrument of reconciling the King and the Prince, which was, of all others, the most desirable thing at that moment to be attained.

There were likewise some general hints to what an eminence it would raise Lord Moira, if he should beat the French, &c. &c.; but as there was no point to be gained by any discussions of that nature, the conversation ended between Mr. Addington and Lord Moira, and for the same reason he soon dropped it, and our conversation ended by Lord Moira asking me to name the first day I could dine with him. I named this day, and I understand he has asked a good number of friends to dine with him to-day, *to meet* Lord Melville. In a long conversation you may believe there were many episodes, but I believe I have stated pretty accurately the purport of it.

I think it necessary, however, before I conclude, to mention what he said to me on the subject of the King's health. He mentioned a channel of in-

formation, certainly a very authentic one, if the reports were formed on correct observation, and it does not come through Carlton House. He insists the King never has been well, and is well enough nevertheless every day to speak perfectly accurately on any subject, with any person, but that he never is so for a *whole* day. But what he stated as the remarkable characteristic of this present illness, was a total want of discrimination of the persons and subjects with whom and on which he did talk. In short, that whether it was the Chancellor, Mr. Addington, the Queen, the physicians, his valet-de-chambre, or his cook, his discussion would be the same, and the topics would be the same ; and that this want of discrimination, more than any want of coherence in the discussion itself, was his situation at present. Be the information well or ill founded, I thought it right to mention it to you, as it will enable you to compare it with any other you may have access to.

I wish much to see a copy of your letter to the King, and as Huskisson is now with you, in whom you may confide, perhaps either Long or he may save you the trouble of writing to me on that or other topics. When my son arrives, there is nothing you may not safely entrust to him to be communicated to me.

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

MELVILLE.

## MR. PITT TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

Walmer Castle, April 11. 1804.

Dear Lord Melville,

I HAVE received your letters of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th, and am much obliged to you for the ample and satisfactory communication they contain. I was very happy to learn from the first of them that you concur so completely in the line of conduct which I stated to you.

I perfectly agree in the sentiments you express in your letter of the 3rd, respecting the propriety of a full explanation of future intentions to Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, in the event of being obliged to form a narrow Government; and enough has been said already (to one directly, and through pretty certain channels to the other,) to prepare them for receiving it.

The letters of the 4th and 5th relate to the probable accession of strength from Scotch Members. I have desired William Dundas to take the steps you recommend respecting General Mackenzie and Sir James Montgomery, and I mean to write to-day to Lord Dalkeith. From the account you give of Sir James Grant's situation, I cannot by any means bring myself to wish that his son should incur the risk of giving us a vote, which in the event (improbable as it is) of the Government standing its ground, might lead to such serious consequences to his family.

In another letter of the 4th, you express a curiosity to know which of the present Ministers I had looked to as feeling the insufficiency of the present Government, and wishing my return to office. The Duke of Portland was certainly one of the foremost in my contemplation. Sentiments on his part, similar to those conveyed in his letter to you, have reached me from several authentic channels: and I really believe that he has been induced to remain so long in his situation only from personal regard to the King, and the hope of being better enabled to watch the moment of disposing his mind to a change. In addition to this I have had strong grounds to believe that the same sentiment has been strongly felt by the Chancellor, my brother, Lord Castlereagh, Yorke, and Lord Hobart; I believe too by Lord Hawkesbury, but of him I have not heard it so pointedly. Of them the Chancellor was the person whom I thought most likely to give effect to his opinion. But though I have no reason, from any thing I have observed, since I first wrote to you, to doubt the existence of this disposition in all the persons I have enumerated, and in some of principal weight out of the Cabinet, I have less expectation than I had, of its leading to any practical result. I know recently from what seems good authority, that Addington's resolution is taken not to retire unless forced to it; and I believe his colleagues will think themselves too much committed to him, not to support him in that determination, however



they may in their own minds disapprove of it. If I am right in this supposition, it will remain only to see what effect may be produced by my communication to the King. I do not expect much advantage from it beyond that of representing my conduct to His Majesty in its true light, and having myself the satisfaction of having endeavoured as far as depends upon me to save him from the inquietude and anxiety of seeing his Government shaken, if not displaced, by a strong Parliamentary opposition.

This step, however, I cannot yet take, and must wait till his recovery is more confirmed. By the accounts I had yesterday I have no doubt that he is *now* getting quite well, and that official business begins to be submitted to him as usual; but I think another week at least must elapse, before I can be justified in writing to him on so delicate a point. Whenever I take the step, you shall have a copy of my letter.

In the meantime questions must occur probably in next week, on which I must take part — as I think it absolutely necessary to oppose Yorke's bill for suspending the completion of the Army of Reserve; conceiving as I do, and in which I know I agree with you, that that measure properly modified, may make the foundation of the most effectual permanent mode of augmenting and maintaining the regular army, and form in itself a most important branch of our future military system. I mean for this purpose to return to town, Monday

or Tuesday, in next week. Our principal push must probably be made about the Monday following, that is the 23d, and on some one or two days more, between that and the 30th; after which, if the contest is not successful, I shall return hither to my Volunteers, and wait the issue of the contest of another kind, in which we must probably be engaged before the summer is over. Under these circumstances the more you can hasten the departure of such of our friends, as are not yet set out, the better.

I have said nothing in answer to that part of your letter which relates to the Lord Advocate's situation, because you will easily conceive that your reasoning and the decision upon it, is perfectly satisfactory. The account of your last conversation with Lord Moira reached me this morning, and requires no particular observation. He seems to have been very fair and candid, and as explicit as could be expected.

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. PITT.

---

Meanwhile the Easter holidays having passed, Parliament had met again on the 5th of April. On Monday the 16th Mr. Pitt returned from Walmer Castle; and on the same evening took part in the debates of the House of Commons; the question being the Third Reading of the Bill for the Augmentation of the Irish Militia. Mr. Pitt, as also Mr. Fox, spoke against it as inadequate to the na-

tional defence ; and in the division which ensued the Government had a majority of only 21, the numbers being,

For the Bill	-	-	-	-	128
Against it	-	-	-	-	107
Majority	-	-	-	-	<u>21</u>

---

MR. PITT TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

York Place,

Tuesday, April 17. 1804.

Dear Lord Melville,

ON arriving in town yesterday just before the House met, I learnt circumstances which leave no doubt that Government has taken very serious alarm. That alarm will not have been diminished by the division of yesterday ; and I am much inclined to think that in a few days they must capitulate. If not, I am more and more convinced that in the course of next week they will be either beat on a division, or run so near as to prove the impossibility of their standing.

On looking into the state of the House of Lords, we find that we can probably make almost as strong an impression there as in the House of Commons ; and it is nearly settled that some question will be

moved in the Lords, on Thursday se'nnight, of a nature to try our strength to advantage. Lord Stafford, I believe, will move it. The importance of collecting all our strength on that occasion will, I hope, induce you to reconsider your intentions with respect to yourself. While the discussion was likely to be confined to the House of Commons, any object there might perhaps be gained by the appearance of the recruits you had sent us, but in the House of Lords your personal presence will be highly material.

Independent, however, of all questions of Parliamentary strength, I am for still stronger reasons most anxious for your presence. It is not only in the event of my being compelled to make a narrow Government, that I should feel your assistance indispensable. But even if we succeed in forming one as strong and comprehensive as we wish, I see no possible reason (public or private) why you should not return to a seat in the Cabinet, with the Board of Control, and the management of Scotland. Neither of these can be a burden to you, or interfere with your plans of health and comfort for a large part of the year. In short, on every account, I am most anxious to have you on the spot, and earnestly beg you, if possible, to set out immediately.

I will send you some blank proxies by to-morrow's post, to be filled up by any Peer you can apply to, who cannot personally attend. You can hardly at any rate set out before that letter reaches,

but if you should, pray leave directions with some one to open it.

In great haste,  
Ever sincerely yours,  
W. PITT.

The crisis seems so near, that Hope writes to the Advocate to urge his coming up if possible. He clearly should not resign till he comes to London, and it may then be unnecessary.

MR. PITT TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

York Place,  
Wednesday, April 18. 1804.

Dear Lord Melville,

FRIDAY se'nnight is the day now fixed for Lord Stafford's motion in the House of Lords, and he means to give notice to-morrow. You will, I hope, receive by this post some blank proxies, and you will be able to judge who there are in Scotland whom you can prevail upon to make use of them. As it will be uncertain what Peers may be at liberty to receive them, it will be desirable to get them signed, leaving a blank for the persons to whom they are to be entrusted.

I have found it convenient, with a view to a full attendance, to defer my opposition to Yorke's Bill from to-day, when it is to be read a second time, till Friday, when it will be reported. We shall, I am persuaded, have a very strong division then,

and another on Monday, when Fox is to move for a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the state of defence. All this course may, however, very probably become unnecessary, as the expectation I expressed to you yesterday has been strongly confirmed by what I have heard since; and I have great reason to think it probable that I shall be called upon, from the only proper quarter, to explain fully my sentiments before the end of the week.

I hope any other letter I may wish to send will find you on the road, and if I have any thing material to say, I will endeavour to find out where it will be most likely to meet you.

Ever yours affectionately,

W. P.

---

The next trial of strength in the House of Commons was expected to take place on Monday, the 23rd, when Mr. Fox had given notice that he would move to refer the several Bills for the defence of the country to a Committee of the whole House, — in other words, a vote of want of confidence in Ministers. An anxious *whip* was made by both parties, and persons unconnected with either felt no little perplexity as to the course they should pursue. Thus writes Mr. Wilberforce, in his private diary, April 18. 1804: — “I am out of spirits and doubtful about the path of duty in these political battles. I cannot help regretting

“ that Addington’s temperance and conciliation  
“ should not be connected with more vigour.  
“ Lord, direct me right, and let me preserve an  
“ easy mind, resigned to Thee and fixed on Thy  
“ favour !”

On the day before the expected motion, the correspondence with the Chancellor was renewed.

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,  
Sunday, April 22. 1804.

My dear Lord,

UNDER the present peculiar circumstances, I trust your Lordship will forgive my taking the liberty of requesting you to take charge of the enclosed letter to the King. Its object is to convey to His Majesty, as a mark of respect, a previous intimation of the sentiments which I may find it necessary to avow in Parliament, and at the same time an assurance, with respect to my own personal intentions, which I might perhaps not be justified in offering, uncalled for, under any other circumstances, but which you will see my motive for not withholding at present. I certainly feel very anxious that this letter should be put into His Majesty’s hands, if it can with propriety, before the discussion of to-morrow ; but having no means of forming myself any sufficient judgment on that point, my wish is to refer it entirely to your Lordship’s discretion, being fully persuaded

that you will feel the importance of making the communication with as little delay as the nature of the case will admit. I shall enclose my letter, unsealed, for your inspection, knowing that you will allow me, in doing so, to request that you will not communicate its contents to any one but the King himself. I am the more anxious that you should see what I have written, because I cannot think of asking you to undertake to be the bearer of a letter expressing sentiments so adverse to the Government with which you are acting, without giving you the previous opportunity of knowing in what manner those sentiments are stated.

Believe me, with great truth and regard,

My dear Lord,

Faithfully and sincerely yours,

W. PITT.

---

It appears that Lord Eldon suggested some alteration in the letter to His Majesty, for which purpose he sent it back, at the same time expressing his readiness to deliver it, provided the King's mind should be sufficiently composed.

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,

Sunday night, April 22. 1804.

My dear Lord,

I HAVE no hesitation in availing myself of your permission to return into your hands my letter to



the King. My wish is to leave it entirely to your discretion, whether it can be delivered before the debate to-morrow. If not, I anxiously wish that it should be known to His Majesty, in due time, that it was deposited with you, in order that it should be so delivered, if you should judge that it could with propriety.

I am, my dear Lord,  
Faithfully and sincerely yours,  
W. PITT.

This letter from Mr. Pitt to the King has never been published, nor do I know whether it be still preserved.

Mr. Fox, according to his notice, brought on his motion upon the 23rd. The debate to which it gave rise continued until four in the morning. Mr. Wilberforce, after many conscientious doubts, ended by voting on the Opposition side. "Pitt able, but too strong," says he, in his account of the speeches. In the division the numbers were : —

For Mr. Fox's motion	-	-	204
Against it	-	-	256
			52
Majority for Ministers			52

These numbers, which at some other periods in our history would have been celebrated as a great triumph to the Government, were in 1804, after a

Ministry accustomed to large majorities, looked upon as little short of a defeat.

In the House of Lords, during this time, there had been, on the 19th of April, a motion by the Earle of Carlisle for certain papers respecting the war in India, which was carried against Ministers by a majority of one, the numbers being : —

Contents	-	-	-	-	31
Non-contents	-	-	-	-	30
				Majority	1

And on the same evening, upon the second reading of the Irish Militia Offer Bill, the Opposition mustered 49 against 77 votes. Lord Malmesbury, in his diary, and according to the notions of that day, speaks of the Ministers in the House of Lords as being “very nearly run.”

Nevertheless Mr. Addington hoped to maintain his ground. But only two days after his majority of 52 in the House of Commons, the attack upon him was renewed. On Wednesday the 25th, and on the order of the day to go into committee on the Army of Reserve Suspension Bill, Mr. Pitt rose, and, in a speech of great eloquence and force, inveighed not only against this particular measure, but against the general system of defence pursued by Mr. Addington. Again did Mr. Fox speak, again did Mr. Wilberforce vote upon the same side; and, in the division which followed, the

Ministerial majority dwindled from 52 to 37, the numbers being :—

For the motion	-	-	-	240
Against it	-	-	-	203
				37
Majority for Ministers				37

In this last division, and in that upon the 23rd, it is noted by Speaker Abbot, in his diary, that Mr. Fox's friends showed themselves very doubtful of deriving any personal benefit from their co-operation with Mr. Fox. Mr. Courtenay said: "We are the pioneers digging the foundations, but Mr. Pitt will be the architect to build the house, and to inhabit it." But considerations thus merely selfish did not sway Mr. Fox himself.

Next morning, the 26th, Mr. Addington reviewed his whole position. He looked back to his diminishing majorities in the House of Commons; he looked forward to a similar result, or perhaps even to a defeat, on the closely impending motion of the Marquis of Stafford in the House of Lords. Upon the whole case, he came to the resolution to resign. He did not, however, notify his purpose to any of his colleagues until late in the evening of Sunday the 29th. Then, a Cabinet being held, the resolution was officially taken and declared. Then, also, as Mr. Addington stated some months afterwards to Mr. Abbot, an altercation took place between himself and Lord Eldon; Mr. Addington reproaching the Chancellor with having been the

bearer of a letter from Mr. Pitt to the King ; in which letter were expressions so injurious to the head of the then administration.

According to Dean Pellew, who has drawn up his biography of Lord Sidmouth from his Lordship's private papers, Mr. Addington so early as the 26th communicated to the King his idea of resignation. The King received the news with great concern, and great reluctance. He offered to Mr. Addington to dissolve the Parliament and appeal to the people, or to take any other course which his Minister could suggest for his maintenance in power. A few days later, when admitting the resignation as inevitable, His Majesty expressed an anxious wish to create him Earl of Banbury and Viscount Wallingford, and to settle an adequate pension both on himself and Mrs. Addington. With a high sense of public duty, and most commendable personal disinterestedness, Mr. Addington respectfully declined to avail himself of any of these favours.

On that same Sunday, however, the correspondence between the Chancellor and Mr. Pitt had been continued. The Chancellor wrote first to propose a personal interview, and Mr. Pitt had thus replied : —

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,  
Sunday, April 29. 1804.

My dear Lord,

I AM very much obliged to you for your letter, and must feel great satisfaction in learning the manner in which the assurances contained in my letter were received. I shall be at home till half-past two to-day, and afterwards from five to six, and any time before six to-morrow, if you should find occasion to call here; or if you prefer seeing me at any other hour, or at your house, you will have the goodness to let me know, and I shall be at your commands.

I am, my dear Lord,

Sincerely and faithfully yours,

W. PITT.

---

In the forenoon of Monday, the 30th, the Lord Chancellor called upon Mr. Pitt, by the King's orders, to inform him of Mr. Addington's impending resignation, and of His Majesty's desire to receive from Mr. Pitt, in writing, the plan of a new administration.

At the meeting of the House of Lords that evening, and in anticipation of the Marquis of

Stafford, Lord Hawkesbury, one of the Secretaries of State, rose and said, that “he had reasons of the “highest and most weighty importance which induced him to request the noble Marquis to postpone his motion.” With that request, after some discussion, Lord Stafford complied, and the House adjourned.

In the House of Commons, the same evening, Mr. Addington brought forward the Budget for the year ; following, in that respect, the precedent of Mr. Pitt, who, in 1801, had also brought forward his Budget after he had tendered his resignation. When Mr. Addington had concluded his speech and sat down, a question of Mr. Fox elicited from him some expressions similar to those which Lord Hawkesbury had already used in the House of Lords. His language might be vague, but his meaning was well understood ; and the House, at his suggestion, readily agreed to postpone all disputed points before them.

On Wednesday, the 2nd of May, Mr. Pitt, in conformity with the King’s commands, transmitted to His Majesty his views respecting a new administration. The form which he adopted was a letter to the Chancellor ; which does not, however, seem to be preserved among Lord Eldon’s papers. It was accompanied by the following private note :—

## MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place, Wednesday, May 2. 1804.  
Three-quarters past one, P.M.

My dear Lord,

I ENCLOSE a letter addressed to you, which I shall be much obliged to you if you will lay before His Majesty. I am sorry not to have been able to make it shorter, or to send it you sooner. As I think it may probably find you at the Court of Chancery, I will, at the same time that I send it, ride down to Mr. Rose's, at Palace Yard, in order that I may be easily within your reach, if any thing should arise on which you may wish to see me before you go to the Queen's House. If you should not be at the Court of Chancery, I shall order my letter to be carried to your house, unless my servant should learn where it can be delivered to you sooner.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

W. PITT.

---

The written representation of Mr. Pitt for a strong and comprehensive Government was most distasteful to His Majesty, who, in a private note to the Chancellor (May the 5th), doubts whether Mr. Pitt may not be preparing "another essay containing as many empty words, and little informa-

tion, as the one he had before transmitted." Thus there appears to have been some demur, and some delay, with respect to a personal interview.

All this time Mr. Pitt, to nearly all his friends, maintained, as was his duty, a strict reserve. Lord Malmesbury observes in his diary: "The only proof I could collect this week of Pitt's opinion, was from his telling Fitz-Harris, who dined with him on the 3rd of May at Lord Carrington's, that he would not be wanted in the House, and might go to take charge of his regiment (the 2nd Wilts Militia), which was to be inspected very soon."

An interview between the King and Mr. Pitt took place on Monday the 7th. It is a curious fact, stated by Lord St. Helen's to Speaker Abbot, and recorded by the latter, that Mr. Pitt had never seen His Majesty since he had left office; that is, for above three years. No wonder, then, if at first their intercourse may have been cold and constrained. But, within five days of this time, as we learn from Lord Malmesbury's diary, the King told the Duke of Portland that, *now*, he and Pitt met like old friends who had never parted. "It seems certain," adds Lord Malmesbury, "that what has passed, far from hurting the King, seems to have relieved him."

The interview between the King and Mr. Pitt continued during full three hours. All this time the Lord Chancellor, who had brought Mr. Pitt in his carriage from York Place to Buckingham House,



remained in the ante-chamber. When Mr. Pitt at last came out, he declared himself quite satisfied, and even surprised, with the King's state of mind. "Never," he said, "in any conversation I have had with him in my life, has he so baffled me." Mr. Pitt had used his most strenuous endeavours to convince his Sovereign of the necessity, at that crisis, to lay aside past grounds of resentment, and to form against the common enemy a strong and united administration. But, unhappily, the result was such as the King himself described in a note addressed on the 9th to Mr. Addington:—"Mr. Fox is excluded by the express command of the King to Mr. Pitt."

Mr. Pitt, finding his Sovereign thus resolute, and knowing on how frail a tenure his mental health at that time depended, resolved, according to his previous purpose, to give way. He undertook to form a Government even with this exclusion. On leaving the King, he immediately sent Mr. Canning to Lord Grenville, and Lord Granville Leveson to Mr. Fox, to acquaint them with what had passed. Lord Grenville said at once, and coldly, that he must decline to take office without Fox. Mr. Pitt, considering his own intimate connexion with Lord Grenville—a connexion of family, of friendship, and of office,—felt himself here aggrieved. "I recollect,—" says Lord Eldon, in a fragment which Mr. Twiss has preserved,—"I recollect Mr. Pitt saying with some indignation, "he would teach that proud man that, in the

“ service and with the confidence of the King, he  
“ could do without him, though he thought his  
“ health such that it might cost him his life.”

Mr. Fox, on whom Mr. Pitt had no personal claim whatever, showed on public grounds a lofty and generous spirit. On the preceding day he had left a note at the house of Mr. Thomas Grenville, stating (as Mr. Canning related it to Lord Malmesbury) “ he wished it should appear as a  
“ record, and be known, that he stood in the way  
“ of no arrangement; that he was sure the King  
“ would exclude him; but that this ought not on  
“ any account to prevent the Grenvilles from  
“ coming in, and that as far as his influence went,  
“ it should not prevent his own friends.” To Lord Granville Leveson he expressed no disappointment, no anger, no surprise. He said, “ I  
“ am myself too old to care now about office, but  
“ I have many friends who for years have followed  
“ me. I shall advise them now to join Govern-  
“ ment, and I trust Pitt can give them places.”

This answer being without delay brought back to Mr. Pitt, he expressed, and with good reason, great pleasure at Mr. Fox's conduct. He immediately desired Lord Granville Leveson to return and say how ready he was to comply with Mr. Fox's wishes for his friends, and that he hoped to see him the next morning. To the interview thus proposed Mr. Fox readily agreed. But meanwhile his friends in Parliament (Mr. Grey, &c.) had held a meeting, and, contrary to Mr. Fox's wishes and

request, had come to an unanimous decision not to take office without their chief. "And they contrived," said Mr. Canning to Lord Malmesbury, "to place this in such a light to Fox that he excused himself from seeing Pitt next morning." Thus ended all present hope of union or connexion between them. On the other hand, Lord Grenville was followed on this occasion by Lord Spencer, Mr. Windham, and many more; and thus on both sides the power of choice to Mr. Pitt was greatly narrowed. Thenceforth he could only form his administration from two classes of persons—from among his own personal adherents, or from those who had already held office under Mr. Addington.

It is to be observed, that in first proposing Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt had deliberately hazarded the serious displeasure, not only of the King, but of very many among his own followers and partisans. There is printed in the third volume of the Wellesley Correspondence a letter dated May 18. 1804, marked "Most Secret," and addressed to the Governor-General of India, by Lord Castlereagh, who had been in Mr. Addington's Cabinet, and who was continued in Mr. Pitt's. Of the contemplated junction he thus writes: "It is enough to know that Mr. Pitt proposed it, to be assured that in his conscientious judgment it appeared to him the best adapted under all the circumstances to promote the public service. . . . He had made every effort . . . and certainly had gone much greater lengths than was congenial to the feel-

“ ings and sentiments of a large portion of the  
“ public, and of many of his best friends.”

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,  
Tuesday, May 8. 1804.

My dear Lord,

I SHALL be much obliged to you, if you can send me a single line to let me know what accounts you have from the Queen's House this morning. I shall be very desirous of seeing you in the course of the day, and will endeavour either to find you near the House of Lords between four and five, or will call on you in the evening. It will probably be desirable that I should see the King again to-morrow.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Sincerely yours,

W. P.

MR. PITT TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

York Place,  
Wednesday night, May 9. 1804.

My dear Lord,

I HAVE had another interview to-day, not quite, I am sorry to say, so satisfactory as that of Monday. I do not think there was any thing positively wrong, but there was a hurry of spirits, and

an excessive love of talking, which showed that either the airing of this morning, or the seeing of so many persons, and conversing so much during these three days, has rather tended to disturb. The only inference I draw from this observation is, that too much caution cannot be used in still keeping exertion of all sorts, and particularly conversation, within reasonable limits. If that caution can be sufficiently adhered to, I have no doubt that every thing will go well; and there is certainly nothing in what I have observed, that would, in the smallest degree, justify postponing any of the steps that are in progress towards arrangement. I am, therefore, to attend again tomorrow, for the purpose of receiving the Seals, which Mr. Addington will have received notice from His Majesty to bring. If I should not meet you there, I will endeavour to see you afterwards at the House of Lords.

I am, my dear Lord,  
 Ever sincerely yours,  
 W. PITT.

---

In accordance with the expectation expressed in this letter, the Seals of office were on the following morning, the 10th of May, brought back by Mr. Addington to the King, and delivered by His Majesty to Mr. Pitt. That same day the new Writ for the University of Cambridge, rendered

necessary by his return to office, was moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Charles Long.

During these arrangements Lord Melville, who had some time since arrived from Scotland, was in frequent and friendly communication with Mr. Pitt. The following note refers to a suggestion which had verbally passed between them.

MR. PITT TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

York Place,  
Friday night, May 10. 1804.

Dear Lord Melville,

ON reflecting on the whole subject this evening, I doubt much the utility and propriety of sending to Lord Moira, and will beg you to suspend it till after we meet to-morrow.

Ever yours,

W. P.

---

EARL OF MOIRA TO VISCOUNT MELVILLE.

Edinburgh, May 18. 1804.

My dear Lord,

IT gratifies me to be able to assure you, without further investigation, that there was not any connexion between the publication in the newspaper and the letter from Colonel M'Mahon. The

former was obviously the effusion of some unauthorised and disappointed runner of party; and it would, I am confident, be unjust to suppose the concurrence of the Prince's sentiments in such a statement. That there was no connexion, is clear from the explanation which M'Mahon has given me of his note to you. There had been, it seems, a rumour of your having sent to request me to repair to London. M'Mahon was desired to learn if it was the case, with no further view than that the Prince might not unnecessarily be put to the unpleasant difficulty of asking leave for me from the Duke of York. The Prince at the instant was anxious to see me, but dropped the purpose of requiring my attendance, from circumstances that occurred before he saw your answer.

Having censured what appeared to me intemperance on the part of Fox's friends, it is fair that I should state to you their vindication. They assert that the King's rejection of Mr. Fox was not qualified to them by any proposal on the part of Mr. Pitt to bring even one of them into the Cabinet. They state the communication as having been simply that Mr. Pitt had failed to form an administration on broad grounds, and had thence been obliged to undertake one upon a confined plan. At this distance I must be incompetent to judge of representations, but I think there has been more of misconception (heavily to be lamented in its consequences) than of real estrangement on both sides.

In the conversations which took place between

you and me, there certainly was never any thing which we might not equally have discussed in a public assembly. No one private consideration was ever agitated, unless this be one, — that a Minister who had flattered himself with having made us all his dupes by turns (because we could not suspect he would be unprofitably insincere), could deserve no forbearance from us.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's very obedient servant,

MOIRA.

---

On the same 18th of May, the King addressed a letter to the Chancellor, with which letter, as published by Mr. Twiss, the present series may properly conclude.

#### THE KING TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

Queen's Palace, May 18. 1804.

5 m. past 10. A. M.

THE King having signed the Commission for giving his Royal Assent, returns it to his excellent Lord Chancellor, whose conduct he most thoroughly approves. His Majesty feels the difficulties he has had, both political and personal to the King; but the uprightness of Lord Eldon's mind, and his attachment to the King, have borne him with credit and honour, and (what the King



knows will not be without its due weight) with the approbation of his Sovereign, through an unpleasant labyrinth.

The King saw Mr. Addington yesterday. Mr. Addington spoke with his former warmth of friendship for the Lord Chancellor ; he seems to require quiet, as his mind is perplexed between returning affection for Mr. Pitt, and great soreness at the contemptuous treatment he met with, the end of last Session, from one he had ever looked upon as his private friend. This makes the King resolve to keep them for some time asunder.

GEORGE R.

---

To the readers of this letter, who will observe therein the sentiments entertained at the period in question towards Lord Eldon, not only by the King, but by Mr. Addington himself, it may be left to judge whether Lord Eldon could really deserve, for his recent conduct to Mr. Addington, that extremity of censure which has been passed upon him by Mr. Addington's biographer, Dean Pellew, and by his own, Lord Campbell.

Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox seem to me throughout these trying transactions to have acted equally as became men of such high renown,—generously and magnanimously. Each of them showed himself far superior to the bitter recollection of strife, or to the narrow prejudice of party. Mr. Pitt, even

at the hazard of his personal influence, both with King and people, made a strenuous endeavour for the cordial reception of Mr. Fox into the public councils, arresting that endeavour only at the point where it might throw from its balance the yet unsettled mind of his afflicted Sovereign. Mr. Fox did not weigh his own interests when seeking to wrest the reins of power from a hand unequal to the charge; and in his disappointment he displayed a noble moderation, and a zealous regard for the public service. It was not the fault of either of these great men if each had many followers less discreet and less high-minded than himself.

THE END.

LONDON:  
SPOTTISWOODES and SHAW,  
New-street-Square.







UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 952 181 6



DA  
522  
P6S7s

