

He, however, neither lacked spirit or strength, and he forced his way into the lobby.

"Inform his lordship," said George, "that Mr. Rogers has called with the pamphlet in Defence of the War!" And he spoke this with an air of consequence and authority.

The man of genius was ushered into the library of the literary lord who, raising his glass to his eye, surveyed him from head to foot with a look partaking of scorn and disgust; and there was no mistaking that its meaning was—"Stand back!" At length, he desired our author to remain where he was, and to read his manuscript. The chagrin which he felt at this reception, marred the effect of the first two or three sentences, but, as he acquired his self-possession, he read with excellent feeling and emphasis. Every sentence told. "Good! good!" said the peer, rubbing his hands—"that will do!—give me the manuscript."

George was stepping boldly forward to the chair of his lordship, when the latter, rising, stretched his arm at its extreme length across the table, and received the manuscript between his finger and thumb, as though he feared contagion from the touch of the author or fancied that the plague was sewed up between the seams of his threadbare coat. The peer glanced his eye over the title-page! which George had not read—"A Defence of War with France," said he; "by—by who—George Rogers!—who is George Rogers?"

"I am, your lordship," answered the author.

"You are!—you!" said his lordship, "you the author of the *Defence*? Impertinent fool! had not you the idea from me? Am not I to pay for it? The work is mine!" So saying, he rang the bell, and addressing the servant who entered, added—"Give that gentleman a guinea."

George withdrew in rage and bewilderment, and his poverty, not his will, consented to accept the insulting remuneration. Within two days, he saw at the door of every bookseller, a placard with the words—"Just Published, A Defence of the War with France, by the Right Hon. Lord L——." George compared himself to Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage—he had battered his name, his fame, and the fruits of his genius for a paltry guinea.

He began to be ashamed of the shabbiness of his garments—the withering meaning of the word clung round him—he felt it as a festering sore eating into his very soul, and

he appeared but little upon the streets. He had been several weeks without a lodging, and though it was now summer, the winds of heaven afforded but a comfortless blanket for the shoulders when the midnight dews fell upon the earth. He had slept for several nights in a hay-field in the suburbs, on the Kent side of the river; and his custom was to hit a few armfuls aside on a low rick, and laying himself down in the midst of it, gradually phoning the hay over his feet, and the rest of his body, until the whole was covered. But the hay season did not last for ever; and one morning, when fast asleep in the middle of the rick, he was roused by a sudden exclamation of mingled horror and astonishment. He looked up, and beside him stood a countryman, with his mouth open and his eyes gazing wistfully. In his hand he held a hayfork, and on the prongs of the fork was one of the skirts of poor George's coat! He gazed angrily at the countryman, and ruefully at the fragment of his unfortunate coat; and, rising, he drew round the portion of it that remained on his back, to view "the rent the envious hayfork made."

"By goam! chap," said the countryman, when he regained his speech, "I have made thee a spencer; but I might have run the fork through thee, and it would have been no blame of mine."

They were leading the hay from the field, and the genius was deprived of his lodging. It was some nights after this, he was wandering in the neighbourhood of Poplar, fainting and exhausted—sleeping, starting, dreaming—as he dragged his benumbed and wearied limbs along; and, as he was crossing one of the bridges over the canal, he saw one of the long fly-boats, which ply with goods to Birmingham and Manchester, lying below it. George climbed over the bridge and dropped into the boat, and finding a quantity of painted sailcloth near the head of the boat, which was used as a covering for the goods, to protect them from the weather, he wrapped himself up in it, and lay down to sleep. How long he lay he knew not, for he slept most soundly; and, when he awoke, he felt more refreshed than he had been for many nights. But he started as he heard the sound of voices near him; and, cautiously withdrawing the canvass from over his face, he beheld that the sun was up; and, to increase his perplexity, fields, trees, and hedges were gliding past him. While he slept, the boatmen had put the horses to the barge, and were not on their passage to Birmingham,