

In 1780 Burke achieved one of his greatest successes—the Economical Reform. By this bill the country was saved millions of pounds annually which otherwise would have gone to waste in the corruption of the House of Commons. Unnecessary offices and secret pensions were done away with, while many positions with fabulous salaries and “revenues” attached to them were either abolished, or the salaries were much diminished and the opportunities of deriving “revenues,” rendered nil. It is of interest to know that the Reformer himself was one of the first to be affected by his work, when he was appointed paymaster of the forces at a salary of four thousand pounds, a position which previously rendered a “revenue” of two and fifty thousand pounds.

The year of the Introduction of Economic Reform is the date when Burke's influence and repute were at their height but by a strange coincidence of fate, it was in that same year that he suffered the great humiliation of losing his seat for Bristol. His speech before the election is a masterpiece. It shows Burke in his true colors, as a dignified man with the interest and greatness of his country at heart.

Throughout his entire life the great statesman's outstanding trait was his love for justice. As a politician he possessed in the highest degree “a passion for good, wise and orderly government,” so that when Warren Hastings was accused of misrule and atrocious crimes during his administration in India, Burke at once took it upon himself to bring the accused one to task. For six years he persisted in his prosecution but did not succeed in convicting the wrong doer. Hastings was acquitted in 1795. In all, Burke had laboured fourteen years on the case, and when it terminated, he gave utterance to the following: “If I were to call for a reward, it would be for the services in which for fourteen years, without intermission, I showed the most industry and had the least success. I mean the affairs of India; they are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance; most for the labour; most for the judgment; most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit.”

The world was now approaching the great Crisis—the French Revolution. Burke heard the first rumblings with distrust. As the movement progressed this distrust changed to hate, contempt and dread. The “Reflections” appeared in seventeen-ninety. This admirable work denounces the Revolution as vile and destructive. “When a separation is made between liberty and justice,” he wrote, “neither is, in my opinion, safe.” Being an