

of consulting the doctor himself.' In the letter which he openly addressed to Dr. Blackstone, Solicitor-General to Her Majesty, Junius declared that the omission of a previous expulsion from the category of incapacities to sit in the House of Commons amounted to so grave a defect in the Commentaries as to render them—what Blackstone himself called unrepealed penal laws—'a snare to the unwary.' Junius concluded: 'If I were personally your enemy I should dwell with a malignant pleasure upon these great and useful qualifications, which you certainly possess, and by which you once acquired, though they could not preserve to you, the respect and esteem of your country. I should enumerate the honours you have lost, and the virtues you have disgraced; but having no private resentments to gratify, I think it sufficient to have given my opinion of your public conduct, leaving the punishment it deserves to your closet and yourself.' To employ Edmund Burke's language about Junius, he made the doctor his quarry, and made him bleed beneath the wounds of his talons. On the other hand, Blackstone's oration in the House of Commons on Wilkes' re-election, while it gave birth to a literature almost as extensive as that of the German critics on Cicero's '*Oratio pro Murena*,' found able defenders, and the doctor's reply to Junius was not wanting in incisiveness. It is impossible not to recognize the force of his defence that the House had the power to pass a law on a particular person, that the privilege of the Roman law furnished a parallel, and that acts of attainder afforded apt instances of laws passed against particular persons. But perhaps Junius won a triumph over the doctor, by his pointing out that the latter attributed to a resolution of one House the force of law, and that in 1698 an expelled member was re-elected and sat again in the House. Besides his support of the government in Wilkes' case, Blackstone incurred the censure of Junius for having been an adviser of Sir James Lowther against the Duke of Portland in the dispute concerning the Cumberland Crown lands in Inglewood Forest upon the obsolete law of *nullum tempus*. But perhaps the letter written by Junius under the *nom de guerre* of '*Simplex*,' protesting