

"The Pilot that weathered the storm" is the echo of a phrase of Canning's, used by him as the title of some verses on Pitt, written in 1802.

Lockhart does not applaud the animus of Scott's song; and Sir Walter himself subsequently allowed the unwisdom of much of it.

In this song, too, occurred the expression—"Tally-ho! to the Fox!" which was interpreted by some to be an allusion to Fox, the great Whig rival of Pitt, who was known at the time to be prostrated by sickness—sickness likely to prove mortal, and which did prove mortal on the 6th of the following September. "If," says Lord Cockburn, "Scott really intended this as a shout of triumph over the expiring orator, it was an indecency which no fair license of party-zeal can palliate. But I am inclined to believe," Lord Cockburn continues, "that nothing was meant beyond one of the jocular and not unnatural exultations over the defeated leaders of the impeachment, of which the song is composed. There were some important persons, however," it is added, "whose good opinion, by this indiscretion, was lost to Scott forever."

On the death of Pitt, the coalition-ministry, known as "All the Talents," was formed, consisting of Grenville, Fox, Lord Howick, Erskine; which was speedily followed by the Duke of Portland's ministry, comprising Canning, Castlereagh, Percival, Lord Eldon. Melville's name was replaced on the list of the Privy Council; and it was suspected by some that this was preparatory to acceptance of office. We have the Whig feeling on this point expressed in some stanzas which I quote from a satire, styled Melville's Mantle, put forth in reply to Canning's Elijah's Mantle, a piece in which Elijah rather strangely adumbrates the lately deceased Pitt:

"When by th' Almighty's dread command
Old Bute had left this injured land,
He long had set in flame,
His mantle crafty Jenky caught—
Dundas, with equal spirit fraught,
The Tories' hope became.

In these were qualities combined
Just suited to the royal mind—
The supple spirits here:
What sad reverse! that spirit left,
No confidence, no hope was left—
The Whigs impeached the Peer!