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"Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men."

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BIOGRAPHY.

EARL OF CHATHAM.

Born at Bocconock, in Cornwall, Nov. 15, 1708.

His look

Drew audience and attention still as night,

Or summer's noon-tide air, whene'er he spoke.

SHAKESPEARE.

One of the most striking characteristics of this noble, most eminent, and perhaps unequalled English statesman, was his eloquence. The music and majesty of his voice—the persuasive gracefulness and irresistible force of his action—the powerful effect of his eye—all carried conviction with his argument. But it is remarked, that, "to those who never saw or heard this accomplished orator and patriot, the utmost effort of imagination will be necessary to form a just idea of such a combination of excellence."

Edon had the honour of his classical education, though he afterwards was removed to Trinity College, Oxford. Completing his studies in that celebrated seat of learning, he procured a commission as Cornet in a regiment of horse; but "the senate," as one justly observes, "not the camp, was the scene where he was best qualified to shine."

The Duchess of Marlborough ranked among the most zealous of his friends; and duly appreciating his talents, she used her influence to bring him into notice; he was accordingly sent into Parliament for the borough of Old Sarum, in the year 1735; and, enlisting in the ranks of opposition, he greatly distinguished himself by his spirited conduct and eloquence. His superior talents were so powerfully and successfully opposed to the then minister, Sir Robert Walpole, that the Duchess, who had a deadly hatred to that minister, bequeathed to Mr. Pitt a legacy of £10,000. It is said that Sir Robert was alarmed at the very sound of his voice, and the lightning of his eye; and that when he witnessed the impetuous torrent of his eloquence, he told his friends that he should be glad "to muzzle that terrible cornet of horse at any rate." But Pitt had chosen his plan, and knew his own ability. Formed to exalt the honour of his country, and to direct its councils, in 1746 he became joint Vice-treasurer of Ireland, Pay-master of the army, and was sworn a privy counsellor. These situations, however, he did not long retain; for though he was engaged to the court by interest, he was not willing to sacrifice the independence of his vote to any partial measures. His penetration discovered the destructive tendency of continental connexions; his patriotism led him to oppose them, and rendered necessary a temporary resignation of all his offices under the crown. But in this state of comparative inactivity he was not suffered to remain. In December 1750, he was appointed Secretary of State for the southern department; but perceiving that he could not keep his situation, without hazarding the love and confidence of the nation, which had contributed so eminently to his elevation, he again determined to give up his place; assured, that as he was fixed in the public opinion, it would ever accompany him, whilst he made it his study by honourable means to secure it. In this his views were correct. The voice of the people a short time after was indeed loudly expressed in his favour; and it was deemed necessary and politic by the government to recal him to administration, with a considerable accession of power. He returned to his situation as Secretary of State in 1757, with the extensive authority of Prime Minister; and supported by men who had similar views, or were wholly subservient to the wishes of his heart.

The war in which the nation was then engaged, had been unsuccessful; but no sooner was this accomplished statesman placed at the helm, than the fortune of the war changed, and victory accompanied the arms of Britain wherever her military operations were directed. The active genius of Pitt pervaded every department of the state, and his

spirit animated the whole nation. His plans, says a biographer, were conceived with alacrity, and executed with a vigour and promptitude that astonished both friends and enemies. Europe, Asia, and America, felt and acknowledged his influence. The French were humbled, and brought to the very verge of ruin.

Such was the brilliant career of prosperity, which, under Divine Providence, may be ascribed to the virtuous and astonishing energies of one individual, when his Majesty George II. died. After this event, very different sentiments from those embraced when the immortal minister began his career, appeared to influence the cabinet.

The French, about this period, began to intrigue with Spain; which not eluding the vigilance, or escaping the penetration of Mr. Pitt, caused him to propose in council an immediate declaration of war; to strike the first blow against Spain, to capture her vessels, and to secure her treasure, before she threw off the mask. The members, however, were disposed to temporize, and to pause, before they created a new enemy, but the indignant Minister exclaimed, "I will not give them leave to think; this is the time, let us crush the whole house of Bourbon. But if the members of this board are of a different opinion, this is the last time I shall ever mix in its councils. I was called to the ministry by the voice of the people, and to them I hold myself responsible. I am to thank the ministry of the late King for their support. I have served my country with fidelity and some success; but I will not be answerable for the conduct of the war any longer than I retain the direction of it."

From the period of the Sovereign's death, the influence of the Earl of Bute continued to increase; and Mr. Pitt, to brook control, too honest to change his principles,* and disdaining to be a mere nominal head of the Cabinet, determined no longer to share in the deliberations of government. He accordingly resigned, and Lord Bute came into power. On this occasion he received a most glorious testimony of public esteem in an address from the City of London, lamenting, "as a national loss, the deprivation of a most faithful and able Minister at a most critical conjuncture."

The machine of state seemed to feel the impetus which "the great commoner" had given to it, for some considerable time after he had withdrawn from its direction. New victories were gained, and the illustrious commanders who had risen under his auspices, did not suffer the national glory to be depressed. However, the peace of 1763 succeeded, and when the preliminaries were submitted to the House, Mr. Pitt, though greatly afflicted with the gout, attended and spoke in the debate for more than three hours; opposing and reprobating the terms of the treaty, as being inadequate to our conquests, and the expenditure of the public money. Nevertheless, the definitive treaty was ratified; but as it was not popular, a new administration was formed in 1760, in which Mr. Pitt had a share as Lord Privy Seal, and at this time also he was created Earl of Chatham; this ministry, however, being ill assorted, was dissolved in 1761, and the noble Earl was once more displaced. He was now more than sixty years of age, and being greatly debilitated by repeated attacks of the gout, he courted retirement, and aban-

* His love of rational liberty, and attachment to every principle of freedom, may be estimated by what he advanced when the subject of general warrants was agitated in the House. Speaking of the security of British subjects, he remarked,—"By the British Constitution, every man's house is his castle; not that it is surrounded by walls and battlements;—it may be a straw built shed, every wind of heaven may whistle round it, all the elements may enter it; but the King cannot, the King dare not."

† This requital of his Lordship's services, may bring to recollection what is related concerning the Earl, and Dr. Haulker;—his Lordship, among other questions in a private conversation, asked Haulker how he defined war? The Dr. replied, "My Lord, war is like what a physician would be given by your Lordship to your humble servant—a GOOD THING WILL APPLIED."

dened completely the idea of ever more taking an active part in the duties of administration. From the beginning of the differences between England and the American colonies, his Lordship was a vigorous and eloquent opposer of the coercive and fatal measures the ministry were pursuing; but when he saw France interfere in the contest, and the independence of America about to be recognised by those who had before contended for her submission, he summoned up all his energy, and poured forth his eloquence against a measure so fraught with ruin in its consequences to both his country and mankind.

His speech being answered, and his arguments combated, the mind of his Lordship seemed to labour with anxiety to give vent to a succession of ideas that crowded upon him on this important subject. Rising for this purpose, he was overpowered by his emotions; and suddenly pressing his hand on his stomach, fell down in a convulsive fit. This melancholy circumstance shocked every member in the House. All were anxious to procure relief. But his public career was closed for ever, as he never recovered. This illustrious Senator might he said to have breathed his last in the service of his country. He died on the 11th of May, A. D. 1778, being only a few days more than a month from the time of the memorable debate in the House of Lords. His body lay in state, and was afterwards solemnly interred in Westminster Abbey, where a monument was erected to his memory at the expense of the nation. It bears the following inscription:

Erected by the King and Parliament,
as a Testimony to
The Virtues and Ability
of
WILLIAM PITT, Earl of Chatham.
During whose Administration
Divine Providence
Exalted Great Britain
To a height of Prosperity and Glory
Unknown to any former Age.

His Lordship left a widow, who was created a Baroness in her own right, with a pension of £5,000 a year. She died in 1803, at Burton Pyssent, in Somersetshire, an estate which had been left to Lord Chatham by Sir Thomas Pyssent, from a veneration of his character.

The celebrated JUSTICE revered this exalted character, and before the Statesman's labours were ended, penned the following Eulogy:—"I did not intend to make a public declaration of the respect I bear Lord Chatham; but I am called upon to deliver my opinion, and even the pen of Junius shall contribute to reward him. Recorded honours shall gather round his monument, and thicken over him. It is a solid fabric, and will support the laurels that adorn it.—I am not conversant with the language of panegyric. These praises are extorted from me, but they will wear well, as they have been dearly earned."

"The glory of Mr. Pitt," says another elegant writer, "advanced like a regular fabric. Gradually its commencement, it however discovered to the discerning eye a grandeur of design, and produced the most magnificent effects. By degrees it disclosed beauty, utility, and majesty; it out-stretched the eye of the spectator, and hid its head among the clouds."

Long had his virtue mark'd him out for fame,
Far, far, superior to a courtier's name!

LATITUD

* Amongst the important questions which, after his accession called forth his powers, that of relieving Protestant dissenting ministers from the hardship of being required to subscribe to the doctrinal articles of the Church of England was one. He greatly exerted himself in favour of the Dissenters, and in his speech on the occasion, observed, "We have a Popish hierarchy, a Calvinistic creed, and an Arminian clergy."