

Lord Cockburn, in the "Memorials of His Times," writing from the Whig point of view, speaks of Dundas as absolute Dictator of Scotland, as Proconsul, as Harry the Ninth. "The suppression of independent talent and of ambition," he says, "was the tendency of the times. Every Tory principle being absorbed in the horror of innovation, and that party casting all its cares upon Henry Dundas, no one could, without renouncing all his hopes, commit the treason of dreaming an independent thought. There was little genuine attraction for real talent, knowledge or eloquence on that side, because these qualities can seldom exist in combination with abject submission. And indeed," he then candidly adds, "there was not much attraction for them among the senior and dominant Whigs, among whom there was a corresponding loyalty to the Earl of Lauderdale." And again, Lord Cockburn writes: "In addition to all the ordinary sources of government influence, Henry Dundas, an Edinburgh man, and well calculated by talent and manners to make despotism popular, was the absolute dictator of Scotland, and had the means of rewarding submission, and of suppressing opposition, beyond what was ever exercised in modern times by one person in any portion of the empire." "A country gentleman," he says, "with any public principle except devotion to Henry Dundas, was viewed as a wonder, or rather as a monster. This was the creed also of all our merchants, all our removable office holders, and all our public corporations."

When Lord North's administration at length fell, and that of Lord Rockingham came into power, Henry Dundas still retained the office of Lord Advocate of Scotland; and when Lord Rockingham died, and Lord Shelburne succeeded, he was appointed Secretary of the Navy; but on the formation of the Coalition Ministry very soon after, he resigned, and became Pitt's right-hand man in the Opposition. Lord North, the head of the Coalition, resigned on the rejection of his India Bill by the Lords; when Pitt became premier, with Dundas as Treasurer of the Navy. Dundas materially assisted Pitt in the elaboration of the new India Bill, which passed, and under the arrangements of which he became President of the Board of Control; and he fully believed, as he expressed himself to the House, that the new measure would be a means of prodigiously lightening, if it did not finally extinguish, the national debt, so large would be the surplus revenue accruing in future from India.