The SAINT JOHN GAZETTE.

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Parliamentary Intelligence.

LONDON, April 9.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, April 10.

LORD MELVILLE.

(CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST.)

Mr. FOX—"The Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bankes) ſeems to me to have miſtaken the proceedings on a former night, at leaſt with regard to their import. He ſays, if the reſolution now propoſed had been moved upon that occaſion, he ſhould have been diſpoſed to vote for it as a corollary to that propoſition, but that the ſtate of the queſtion has been altered by what has taken place ſince that time. Now it muſt be in the recollection of the Houſe, that the Right Hon. Gentleman oppoſite (Mr. Pitt) ſaid at the time that it was not fit to diſcuſs a ſubject of ſo great a magnitude at ſo late an hour of the night. In this recommendation I acquieſced, becauſe I do not approve of the practice of introducing motions of importance at an unſeaſonable time, although I admit I may be as guilty of that practice as any man. However, when I did ſo yield to the ſuggeſtion of the Right Hon. Gentleman, I did not underſtand him as hinting in the remoteſt degree at what has ſince paſſed, and making ſuch conditional agreement for delaying the buſineſs. I did not ſay nor inſinuate that the Houſe would be ſatisfied with the reſignation of Lord Melville. I did, no doubt, ſay that Miniſters might do their duty in the mean time, in ſuch a way as might render it unneceſſary to propoſe any meaſure for the removal of Lord Melville; but I was not looking to any courſe which Lord Melville might chuſe for himſelf. If then we have loſt the vote of the Hon. Gentleman, it is not becauſe we have varied our conduct, or on account of any thing that has ſince taken place, but becauſe I yield to an *argumentum ad verecundiam*, and conſented to the delay propoſed by the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt). Sir, with regard to the ſpeech of a Right Hon. Member oppoſite (Mr. Canning), it is ſo weak and irrelevant, I can ſcarcely conſider it as worth notice. It looks as if the joy and ſatisfaction felt by the public at the vote of Monday night, and the riſing ſpirit of the country had excited in the breaſt of that Right Honorable Gentleman, a ſpirit of indignation which vents itſelf, irrelevant, and deſtitute of any grounds. Among other things, it charges an Honorable Friend of mine (Mr. G. Ponſonby) with advancing tyrannical and unconſtitutional principles. Now, Sir, what are theſe principles? My Hon. Friend, after plainly and candidly ſtating the caſe of Lord Melville, ſaid, that a man, thus convicted by his own confeſſion, ſhould have been ſuſpended from office. There are innumerable caſes in which this courſe has been taken, and there is not one precedent of the contrary way. What, in the name of God! when our Steward has betrayed our confidence, and been, upon his own confeſſion, guilty of groſs miſmanagement, muſt we continue him in that truſt and ſituation, leſt we ſhould prejudice his character? and, are we to be told, that it is unconſtitutional and tyrannical to obſerve that caution which is neceſſary to prevent the continuance of the injury and the evil? A contrary courſe may have ſatisfied the Right Hon. Gentleman, who thought beſt to continue Mr. Trotter in office, leſt his diſmiſſal might prejudice his character; and this, after Mr. Trotter had confeſſed his own miſconduct, and was, to the knowledge of the Right Hon. Gentleman, throwing every obſtruction in the way of an enquiry, neceſſary to the attainment of the ends of juſtice. But, if the Right Hon. Gentleman thought it right to continue and encourage Mr. Trotter, under ſuch circumſtances, why has he diſmiſſed him now? The vote of the Houſe on Monday night, only related to Lord Melville; but, with regard to Mr. Trotter, *adhuc sub judice lis eſt.* His caſe is now preciſely in the ſame ſtate in which it was then, and requires the ſame tenderneſs and delicacy. To account, then, for this change of conduct, I can only ſuppoſe that the Right Hon. Gentleman, ſeeing the impreſſion which the vote has made, and the ſatisfaction which it has given, has yielded to the public voice. Having ſaid thus much, in juſtice to my Hon. Friend, I will now add, that, however I may ſubject myſelf to the ſame cenſure, and ſhall be charged with bitterneſs and rancour, I cannot ſit ſilent in the Houſe, and hear unfounded panegyrics beſtowed upon Lord Melville. I know nothing in the character of Lord Melville that ſhould entitle him to tenderneſs, in a caſe of convicted guilt. Is it becauſe he has encreaſed the emoluments of office to an extent beyond any of his predeceſſors? Is it becauſe he has obtained a grant to Lady Melville, of the Fews of Fife, with the arrears due at the time, without conſidering how theſe arrears ſtood at the time, and whether they were not the public money? for it is now underſtood, that the amount of theſe arrears was not known at the time, and that the grant was made without knowing its extent. Is it becauſe he has added 1500l. a year to his ſalary at the Admiralty? Are theſe his claims to tenderneſs, and his titles to panegyric? But, it is ſaid Lord Melville never was a bitter adverſary; that he has employed in the army and in the navy, perſons who differed from him in political principles. In what caſe have Miniſters, in his ſituation, not done ſo? Could he refuſe to employ ſuch men as Sir George Saunders and Admiral Keppel, becauſe they differed from him in political ſentiments? I do remember, however, that, at a time when this country was in great danger, when its very exiſtence was at ſtake, a propoſition for the defence of the country, the moſt œconomical for Government, and the moſt liberal and ſpirited, on the part of the perſon propoſing; I mean an offer from Taviſtock, to raiſe a body of men, was rejected by the Noble Lord, becauſe he knew the late Duke of Bedford was to command them. I do not mention the circumſtance in compliment to the memory of my much-lamented friend. I have related the anecdote only to ſhew how unfounded thoſe panegyrics are upon the liberality of Lord Melville. There is another caſe, which proves how little his Lordſhip deſerves the praiſe of never ſuffering his conduct to be influenced by party feeling; I mean the diſmiſſal of the Dean of Faculty of Advocates of Edinburgh (the Hon. Henry Erſkine), the brother to my worthy friend who ſits near me; two men, to whom, if any extraordinary exertions of virtue were neceſſary, I do not know any to whom I ſhould look with more confidence. But the caſes of Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jarvis (Lord Grey and Earl St. Vincent), have been referred to as inſtances of the great liberality of Lord Melville. I have taken the trouble of looking over the Journals for this caſe, in which the Right Hon. Gentleman has made ſo much parade of the ſupport received by the parties from Lord Melville. Did he do ſo not knowing their cauſe to be juſt? Theſe two meritorious Officers, it appears, when on ſervice in the Weſt-Indies, had remedied the blunders of the Adminiſtration, of which the Noble Lord was a part; but, in ſo doing, had made themſelves reſponſible by undertaking a meaſure not exactly within their inſtructions, and this is the ſituation in which my Lord Melville makes a merit of his ſupport. Now, Sir, having made theſe obſervations, I muſt allude to what has fallen from a Bank Director (Mr. Thornton). That Hon. Gentleman admits that Lord Melville has been guilty of negligence and inattention in office. Sir, I can only ſay, that the vote of Monday night went much farther, and if the Hon. Gentleman thinks it did not charge a greater offence, he ought not to have ſupported it. Now, Sir, I have no objection to ſay, that in conſequence of what has fallen from the Right Hon. Gentleman oppoſite (Mr. Pitt), and from the Hon. Gentleman who ſits upon the ſame ſide of the Houſe with me (Mr. Bankes), I have no wiſh to preſs the Houſe to a diviſion. The Hon. Gentleman ſays, we may do hereafter what is now propoſed. I think ſo too; and, what is more, I think we muſt do ſo. He adds, that we cannot yet know how the buſineſs may turn out, and that it may come to an impeachment. In this alſo I agree with him; but I fear ſome Gentlemen do not diſcriminate as they ought in the proceedings, which the caſe demands. If the Attorney General is to be directed to take legal ſteps for the recovery of the ſums which have been made from the public money, that is a civil proceſs. If alſo ſeveral grants have been made to Lord Melville, it may be neceſſary to enquire on what grounds His Majeſty has been induced to make them; and if they have been made upon miſrepreſentations, they ought to be revoked. Theſe, however, are all civil proceedings, and very diſtinct from the courſe that ſhould follow his conduct, conſidered as a breach of the law. Whatever courſe then may be taken upon the civil ſide of the queſtion, I think the addreſs is the beſt mode of finiſhing the criminal proceedings. However, after the declaration of the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt), and made in the way it is, I have no objection to delay it; becauſe, after ſuch an aſſurance, and from ſuch a quarter, I think there can be no danger of Lord Melville being placed in any office of truſt. With regard, Sir to the puniſhment ſought for, I find that, during the 45 years of His preſent Majeſty's reign, there have been but two perſons upon whom the puniſhment of removal from His Majeſty's Privy Council has been inflicted; the Duke of Norfolk, and myſelf. Now, Sir, I may venture to ſay, for both of us, that we want no ſuch companion as Lord Melville. In Ireland, no doubt, ſome inſtances have occurred. There is one caſe particularly, I mean that of my honored and eſteemed friend, Mr. Grattan. In conſequence of the union, he comes into the ſame ſituation as the Duke of Norfolk and myſelf; and, therefore, though, for our own part, we did not object to the company of Lord Melville, we do not wiſh to introduce my eſteemed and revered friend, the proſecutor of public abuſes, the ſupporter of virtue, pre-eminent in purity, as he is in talents, to the company of Lord Melville.—After the declaration of the Right Hon. Gentleman, he admitted it was not poſſible that Lord Melville could be reſtored; and in that caſe the motion not being preſſing, he had no objection to its being withdrawn. But admitting that, and ſuppoſing this courſe to be taken, it may be worth conſidering how the caſe ſtands, ſuppoſing Lord Melville reſigned, and the buſineſs to proceed no farther. On Monday we voted the premiſes. Does, then, the Hon. Member (Mr. Bankes) mean to negative the concluſion? Is that the courſe which the accurate mind of the Hon. Member approves; that we ſhould pronounce Lord Melville guilty, but refuſe to call for judgment upon him? Such would be the inconſiſtency which the motion, if negatived, would involve; but if it be only withdrawn, the caſe will not be ſo awkward. There may be alſo this further reaſon for delay, that ſomething may be expected to be done in the mean time. The queſtion has made a greater impreſſion upon the public mind, than any caſe that has occurred for many years. The public were grateful to the Houſe for their conduct, and looked up to them with joy and thankfulneſs. But, was the Houſe to be anxious only for their own character, and to be inattentive to the honour of the Government and the Crown? The Houſe of Commons have proved themſelves the true repreſentatives of the people, by expreſſing their indignation at the conduct of Lord Melville; but not a ſingle mark of diſapprobation has been expreſſed by His Majeſty. No ſuch diſapprobation can be implied from the reſignation of Lord Melville. The reſignation of a Miniſter may be the moſt honorable act of his life. It has fallen to my lot to be in office, and to have reſigned more than once; and I went next day to Court, feeling myſelf neither puniſhed nor degraded, to pay my reſpects and duty to my Sovereign. May not Lord Melville do the ſame? Dearly as I love this Houſe, as the ſource of every great public benefit and advantage to the country; dearly as I love it, as the corner-ſtone of the Conſtitution, and the foundation of our liberties; I will not ſay, that it is more dangerous that the nation ſhould loſe its confidence in the Houſe of Commons, than its confidence in the Throne. And is there not a danger that ſuch may be the caſe, if it may be ſaid that, upon a great queſtion like this the Houſe of Commons have done their duty, but His Majeſty has been ſatisfied in a different manner? Sir, this will not be a nine days wonder. From the impreſſion which it has made upon the public, and the ſtate of ferment in which the agitation of it may long keep the public mind, will it be right, I aſk, to enable thoſe perſons, who may not be the beſt diſpoſed towards the Monarchical part of our Conſtitution, to draw a line between His Majeſty and the Parliament? I warn Miniſters of their duty to take care that no ſuch language ſhall be held, by leaving, no pretence for it, or implicating the true intereſts of the Throne.—Truſting, therefore, that Miniſters will do their duty, I have no objection that the Motion ſhould be withdrawn, in the confidence of a more complete and ſatisfactory explanation and concluſion at a future day."

Mr. Wilberforce did not apprehend any danger at the preſent day, but times might hereafter arrive more liable to danger, and favorable to abuſes, and it was the duty of the Houſe to act with diligence and attention in contemplation of ſuch future times. At the ſame time that he was ſatisfied with every thing that he had ſaid upon the laſt night, he agreed with thoſe who wiſhed the motion to be withdrawn for the preſent. He owned that he conceived the delay was granted for the purpoſe of affording an opportunity to Lord Melville of withdrawing, and he left the Houſe without any expectation of the preſent meaſure being brought forward. So far as he had an opportunity of converſing with Gentlemen upon it, he thought it came by ſurpriſe. He would not ſay that he ſhould vote for it, but he would not ſay that he ſhould vote againſt it in the detail, and after he had an opportunity of giving it a more mature conſideration. The Houſe were bound to act upon principles of independence; but he could not help ſaying, that, in circumſtances like the preſent, they ſhould not exerciſe a legal juſtice, but proceed upon the eternal and univerſal principles of right. He, therefore, regretted, that party principles were adverted to in the courſe of the night. Gentlemen upon ſuch a queſtion ought to diveſt themſelves of ſuch principles, and act only upon the broad baſis of juſtice and liberality. He agreed that this would not be a nine days wonder, nor a tranſient feeling, but that the vote of Monday night would be recorded in the page of hiſtory, as one of the brighteſt events of the preſent day. Looking at it therefore in that flattering point of view, he did not wiſh to take away from the effect which the vote of Monday night had produced upon the public mind. For this reaſon he wiſhed the Hon. Gentleman to withdraw the motion, at the ſame time wiſhing it to be underſtood, that he gave no promiſe whether he ſhould vote for it hereafter or not.

Mr. Fuller expreſſed a hope, that the Hon. Gentleman who had moved the Reſolution, would ſift the matter to the bottom. The public mind was greatly agitated by the ſubject, and he truſted, that if it ſhould be found that the Noble Lord had made any pelf by the buſineſs, he ſhould get a complete doſe of Tarter emetic, which would force him to diſgorge the public money. If any thing had been wreſted from the public purſe, he hoped the Hon. Gentleman would follow up the matter to the utmoſt, in order that ſuch ſums might be reſtored. One Gentleman had ſaid they were two haſty, another had ſaid the puniſhment had been ſufficiently inflicted already, others ſaid ſo and ſo. He cared nothing about what was ſaid; but, as a repreſentative of the people, he felt it his duty to ſee the money of the public properly diſpoſed of, and that the recovery ſhould not be delayed, notwithſtanding what any little man, in a great ſituation, might ſay upon the ſubject.

Mr. Thornton explained.

Mr. David Scott ſaid, that his only wiſh was to expreſs a reaſon for the purpoſe of inducing the Hon. Gentleman who had brought forward the queſtion before the Houſe to withdraw his motion. If it was to be carried any further upon the preſent occaſion, the public opinion would be otherwiſe than it was at preſent; inſtead of imputing the conduct of the Houſe to the real motives, they would ſay that the meaſure aroſe, not from a wiſh to do public juſtice,