

Mr. Fox, who had been for some months past labouring under a dropsical complaint, expired on the 13th of September, 1806, in the 59th year of his age; and thus in the midst of tumultuous wars and of uncertain negotiations, Great Britain was called to mourn the loss of a patriot and a statesman, who has had few equals, and perhaps in no age or country any superior. For his own glory he had lived sufficiently long; but his existence was too short for the good of his country. The public and even the personal character of Mr. Fox, must be estimated by his speeches in parliament, and by his unwearied efforts to promote the interests of his country. All historical delineation is comparatively feeble. The errors of his early youth he shook off "as dew-drops from the lion's mane." While yet in the morning of life, his genius, bursting through the surrounding clouds, shone with unrivalled radiance, amid a long succession of political conflicts in times the most momentous. The extent of his sagacity in his vast survey of human affairs, could only be equalled by what has been happily styled "the grandeur of his benevolence." His mind was too lofty to adopt sinister means of effecting even the most important purposes. Too great for pride, too wise for artifice, he was not only free from dissimulation, but from the remotest suspicion of it. His eloquence was as various as the occasions which called it forth; always clear and forcible, at times dignified, pathetic, and sublime. His attacks were invariably made on the strong-holds of his adversaries, and his wit, which was occasionally brilliant, constantly touched on his subject, and never degenerated into personality. Peculiarly gifted to unravel the most complicated web of sophistry, he abstained, as a sacred duty, from ascribing to others sentiments which they themselves disclaimed. Without rhetorical flourishes and gaudy ornaments, his language was the vehicle of thought and feeling. Perfectly master of every kind and mode of reasoning, he modelled his arguments according to those of his principal opponents. Among his rhetorical excellencies may be reckoned his extraordinary powers of arrangement and amplification, the unstudied result of distinct and comprehensive views formed in a mind luminous and energetic, and rapid in all its combinations. His style was such as a powerful understanding and extensive information are calculated to produce: it was not defective either in elegance or harmony, but clear, precise, forcible, and appropriate to the subject he was handling.

As a classical scholar he had few equals. He retained through life his acquaintance with the Greek language. He could converse with a Longinus, on Homer's beauty, sublimity, and pathos; with an Aristotle, on his exhibitions of man; and with a pedagogue, on his dactyls and spondees. Such was the rapidity with which the genius of Fox darted into every subject, that he could meet men of the greatest talents on equal terms in their peculiar studies.

His disinterested patriotism and universal philanthropy render his memory dear to his country and to mankind. While the subverters of thrones and the spoilers of kingdoms are crowned with triumphant laurels, and congratulated with applauding pæans, it is to the honour of Mr. Fox, that he never gave a vote in the British senate by which one drop of human blood had been spilled, or the treasures of the nation lavished away. He

"Mid jarring conflicts, stemm'd the tide of blood,
And to the menaced world a sea-mark stood;
Whose wisdom bade the broils of nations cease,
And taught the world humanity and peace."

The closing scene of his life was employed in the benevolent work of restoring peace to his distracted country: but he lived not to effect the wishes of his heart: posterity, however, will not fail to applaud his efforts and intentions.

In private life, no man was ever more adapted to captivate the minds of those with whom he had frequent intercourse. His genius was at once so profound and so lively, his knowledge so extensive, his disposition so amiable

his deportment so unassuming, his manners so affable and engaging, that he gained the hearts of all who enjoyed his conversation, and was the delight of every company into which he entered. Though destitute of the gifts of fortune, he was supported by the services, as well as honoured with the esteem, of several of the most wealthy of the aristocracy, while he was beloved by the nation in general, and adored by the people of Westminster, whom he represented. Dr. Johnson, though unfriendly to his whig principles, was proud to call him his friend, and admired his genius and talents. "There is an extraordinary man," said he, "who can leave the empire in doubt whether it shall be ruled by the tongue of Fox, or by the sceptre of George III." Burke and Pitt condemned his politics, but to his talents and virtues they paid the just tribute of applause; and, if report may be credited, the latter with his dying breath recommended him to his sovereign as his successor. The earl of Carlisle hailed the dawning genius of his youth, which he celebrated in a poem of great excellence: all his contemporaries admired the wonders of his maturer years; and many of the nobility regarded him as the brightest ornament of his age.

Such was the public and private character of the man who, through life, never deviated from the principles of benevolence and patriotism. The close of his career was not less brilliant than its meridian splendour. The three last acts of his life were worthy of the lover of his country and the friend of mankind. By one, he endeavoured to put a period to the ravages of war; and had his valuable life been spared, it can scarcely be doubted that he would have accomplished the desirable object. By another, he laboured to tranquillize an important branch of the empire that was distracted by religious feuds and dissensions; to remove all legal disabilities on the score of religion; to establish on the broadest basis liberty of conscience; and to unite the interests of Ireland with those of England, by an extension of common rights, and a participation of common benefits. By the third, he obtained from both houses of parliament a resolution for the abolition of the slave trade; and thus closed his life with an act which tends to rescue humanity from reproach, and cause millions yet unborn to revere his memory. When prejudice shall be extinct, and party cavils forgotten, the name of Fox will be classed among the benefactors of mankind, and "history, making an allowance for the indiscretions of his youth, will enshrine his fame in one unclouded blaze of glory."

Poesy has immortalized the names of Pitt and Fox, and erected to the memory of these two celebrated statesmen and eminent orators, a monument more durable than marble or bronze:—

With more than mortal powers endow'd,
How high they soar'd above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled gods, their mighty war,
Shook realms and nations in its jar:
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Look'd up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
Spells of such force, no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave;
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
Those spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.