

Carlton-House, April 28, 1812.

THIS Day the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, Sheriffs, Common Council and Officers of the City of London, waited upon His Royal Highness the Prince Regent at Carlton-House, with the following Address and Petition, which was read by John Silvester, Esq; the Recorder :

To His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, REGENT of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The humble and dutiful Address and Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, in Common-Council assembled.

May it please your Royal Highness,

WE, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, in Common-Council assembled, humbly approach your Royal Highness dutifully to represent our deep sense of the difficulties and dangers impending over the country, and anxiously to invite your beneficent attention to the complaints and grievances of your afflicted but faithful subjects.

Fourteen months have elapsed since your Royal Highness acceded to the regency of these kingdoms, at which time we felt it our duty to submit to you a statement of abuses which had taken root in the various departments of the government, the speedy correction and removal of which we deemed essential to the prosperity and safety of the empire; and we now again present ourselves before your Royal Highness to express our unfeigned sorrow that, during this interval, no efficient measures have been adopted by your Ministers calculated to satisfy the wishes and wants of your people; but that, on the contrary, the same mal-practices, and the same false principles of government have been tenaciously pursued and enforced, thereby adding contumely to injury, and extinguishing the spring of public energy in a free nation. We have continued to witness the same system of profligacy in the expenditure of the public money,—the same system of governing by undue influence and corruption,—the same system of delusion in regard to the circulating medium and finances of the country,—the same system of arbitrary and grievous assessment and collection of the taxes, by which industry is thwarted, and liberty violated,—the same system of introducing into the heart of the country foreign troops,—the same system of persecuting the press, by which the value of free discussion on national topics is lost to prince and people,—and, finally, the same system of coercive restrictions on the freedom of commerce, by which many of our merchants and manufacturers have been involved in ruin, and flourishing districts reduced to beggary.

As faithful and loyal subjects, and as the representatives of the first city in your empire, we feel the deepest affliction in being thus compelled to reiterate this enumeration of the malpractices and mistaken principles of your Ministers; we should, however, compromise that sense of public duty, and that character of frankness which appertain to us

as freemen and Britons were we to disguise the truth and forbear to express our conviction, that your confidential advisers have plunged this great and once flourishing empire into an abyss, from which we can be rescued only by radical reforms, and a total change in our domestic government and foreign policy.

In a crisis, therefore, which involves the destiny of the greatest empire of these or past times; of an empire which is blessed by Providence with unequalled natural advantages, and which possesses a people that in all ages have bravely secured their prosperity on the solid basis of public liberty, we feel that we should justly merit the reproaches of our country and posterity, if at such a crisis we were to refrain from laying before your Royal Highness a faithful representation of the public grievances, and expressing our painful apprehensions for the welfare and the very existence of the nation; we, therefore pray, that your Royal Highness will be graciously pleased to dismiss from your councils those Ministers who have proved themselves so undeserving of the confidence of your people, and call to the administration of the government men of public character and patriotic principles, whose enlarged and liberal policy is suited to the enlightened character of the nation, whose wisdom and energy would prove equal to the exigencies of the times, whose inclination would lead them to secure the affections of the people, and whose public spirit would stimulate them to effect these reforms in the Commons House of Parliament, and in the various branches of the state; which, at this perilous crisis, are absolutely necessary to the restoration of national prosperity, and not less essential to the honour and true interests of the crown, than to the security and true glory of the empire.

Signed by order of Court,

HENRY WOODTHORPE.

To which Address and Petition His Royal Highness was graciously pleased to return the following answer :

IT must always be My Inclination to listen with attention to the petitions of any part of His Majesty's subjects.

For the redress of any grievances of which they can reasonably complain, I have full confidence in the wisdom of parliament, the great council of the nation.

Being firmly of opinion that the total change in the domestic government and foreign policy of the country, which it is the declared object of your petition to accomplish, would only serve to increase the dangers against which we have to contend; I should be wanting to Myself, and to the great interests committed to My charge, if I did not steadily persevere in those endeavours which appear to me best calculated to support the just rights of the nation abroad, and to preserve inviolate the constitution at home.

These endeavours can only be attended with success when seconded by the zeal and loyalty of His Majesty's people, upon which I shall continue to place the strongest reliance.

They were all received very graciously, and had the honour of kissing the Prince Regent's hand.