

have assurances that notwithstanding all the faire words and promises my Lord Arlington was charg'd with, there was nothing yet positively concluded, nor would not be, till the Prince saw the Success of this Parliament, nor with the Emperor, untill the returne of C. Waldeck, and the end of this Campagne.

16 However it is most certaine, as I was informed by a considerable man, and a well wisher to his Majesty, that some of the chiefe Ministers or Predicants in Holland, have a strict Correspondence with some of the chiefe Presbiterians of England and Scotland, that some Parliament men, and of great credit in England doe correspond with the Prince, about matters of a high nature, these were the very words, that many others would faine correspond with him, and that some of them dissuade the Prince from a marriage with his Royall Highnesses daughter, being incapable to inherit the Crown, upon what grounds I know not,⁴¹ that the King should leave no stone unmoved to discover these correspondencies, and at any rate whatsoever, that none of the States was privy to them but Fagels, and that he was, that they have great assurances that the King will find the Parliament proceed with greater height and confidence than he expects, that the weakning of France will be aim'd at, that the D. of Laderdal ⁴² will be put to it, and the King forced to abandon him, or prorogue, or dissolve the Parliament. These Points I have intimated in my first letters, from Rotterdam and Brusselles for to give timely notice, as I have done of such heads, before the precedent Session of the Parliament.

Now it is to be reflected on, as well as admired, that Strangers should know so positively what the Parliament would insist upon, at their meeting, as they have done before the last Session, and doe now before this Session, if what they say prove true. And with submission I think, if my Lord Arlington has effected a perfect reconciliation betwixt his Majesty and the Prince, he ⁴³ ought to advertise his Majesty of all these practises, and the authors of them; yet when I consider that the Spaniards find the Prince not so forward to occasion troubles in England, as he was found to be last yeare, and that they attribute it to my Lord Arlington's conferences with the Prince, a man knows not what to say, but that the Prince thinks it below him to discover those Intrigues he has been intrusted withall, and an unchristian thing to occasion the ruine of such as confided in him, or for not knowing what to say to cover his own shame and confusion to have intertained, and at any times countenanced such practises.

Earl Temple and the Ministry of 1765

A QUESTION that has caused some difficulty to modern historians is, what considerations actuated Lord Temple in refusing to form a ministry with Pitt in May and June 1765.¹ The

⁴¹ Probably because Anne Hyde, the duke of York's first wife, was a commoner.

⁴² Lauderdale was then chief minister in Scotland, the last member of the Cabal left in power.

⁴³ i.e. the Prince.

¹ Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, iii. 91; Ruville, *Chatham*, iii. 150-2; Basil Williams, *Chatham*, ii. 174-7.

problem has been well stated by Mr. Winstanley in his work on *Personal and Party Government*, where he says :

It is not at all clear why Temple refused to come into the service of the Crown and why Pitt declined to form an Administration without him. Temple's conduct has been variously explained and probably no completely satisfactory solution will ever be offered. . . . Of a jealous and intriguing disposition, he was possibly provoked at the predominant part which Pitt had played in the negotiations, and considered himself to be of sufficient importance to be consulted before everything had been arranged. He was certainly angry at the consideration shown to the followers of Lord Bute and it is not out of the question that he believed the ministry as Pitt had formed it to be doomed to failure. He certainly told the King that he was induced to refuse the offer which had been made, because of the difficulty of forming a proper plan in regard to the house of commons. Pitt did not propose to attend parliament regularly, pleading his health as an excuse ; and Temple might justly feel that in his leader's absence, the ministry might easily be overcome by a joint attack of the members of the Whig opposition who had not been given office, and the supporters of the previous ministry. But Temple did not act from this motive alone : and he was loud in proclaiming that he was influenced by reasons of too delicate nature to be revealed. He was commonly understood to refer to his recent reconciliation with his brother, George Grenville ; but he always denied this interpretation of his words and asserted that the reconciliation was of a purely private character and destitute of any political significance. Thus the matter stands : the knowledge which Temple denied to his contemporaries has not been revealed to posterity ; and his action still awaits an explanation.²

This knowledge was not so completely denied to contemporaries of Temple as Mr. Winstanley infers. Horace Walpole,³ Lord George Sackville,⁴ the Rockingham party generally, did not enjoy Lord Temple's confidence, but his own circle was better informed, and, according to a letter of Augustus Hervey,⁵ the mystery seems to have been gradually divulged even among Temple's political opponents. It may indeed soon have become one of those open secrets which all know but which it would give offence to declare. George Grenville, who gives an account of the affair in his Diary for 25 June, shows no trace of doubt or curiosity :

Lord Temple came to town from Hayes early in the morning. Mr. Grenville went to him in Pall Mall before breakfast. His conversation was of the most cordial and affectionate kind to Mr. Grenville, but

² *Personal and Party Government*, pp. 234, 235.

³ *Memoirs*, ii. 132, 133.

⁴ ' His lordship always ends his explanation by talking of certain delicacies, but what they mean nobody can understand, and in short the whole of that transaction appears equally absurd and unintelligible ' : 29 July 1765, *Rep. of Hist. MSS. Comm.*, ix, app., p. 21.

⁵ *Infra*.

he appeared under great agitation. He went at ten to the King, with whom he stayed about an hour. He absolutely declined coming into the King's service and wrote Mr. Grenville a note at twelve to tell him so. He came afterwards to dine with Mr. Grenville, and then related more at large what had passed, and told him the reasons he had assigned for not accepting the offer the King made him were two, the first of which was the difficulty of forming a proper plan with regard to the House of Commons; the second was of a tender and delicate nature, and which he therefore desired not to explain.⁶

Grenville here does not elucidate the 'tender and delicate' matter, but from his manner of writing there is little doubt that in their confidential meeting, if not before, he had been fully enlightened.

On 3 July Charles Townshend wrote to his brother, Lord Townshend:

My former letters were, as I told you, written upon conjecture, or at best loose information; but I can now speak to you with certainty. In the first place it is resolved that the present Administration shall not continue; in the next, Mr. Pitt's negotiation was on the Saturday accomplished and broke up by Lord Temple on the Monday, against Mr. Pitt's judgment, declaration, and most earnest remonstrance; nay, more, it did not break off on Mr. Grenville's account. Mr. Pitt and Lord Temple have differed entirely; Lord Temple would assign no reasons in the Closet, and Mr. Pitt remains with the King lamenting that he has not health and strength to undertake, without his family, for the relief of his Sovereign and his Country.⁷

Now Lord Temple and Mr. Pitt had not 'differed entirely' in any ordinary sense of the words. From the duke of Cumberland's statement⁸ it is evident that they demanded the same terms as to foreign policy, as to the restoration of the officers dismissed from the army on political grounds, as to honours for Chief Justice Pratt, and as to the illegality of general warrants; that in fact they named identical measures. They had 'differed entirely', then, not upon measures but upon men or upon one man. And he was not George Grenville. Charles Townshend knew this; his assertion is not 'Lord Temple says it did not break off upon Mr. Grenville's account', but simply 'it did not break off upon Mr. Grenville's account'.

The key to the situation may be found in a phrase used by Temple to George Grenville on 3 July 1765, 'The plan of the provisional administration was, I think, Butal-Ducal';⁹ and in the duke of Cumberland's complaints of the earl's haughty demeanour, 'I cannot help saying that I think he was more

* *Grenville Papers*, iii. 200, 201.

* *Rockingham Memoirs*, i. 185-203.

* *Ibid.*, p. 65.

* *Grenville Papers*, iii. 64.

verbose and pompous than Mr. Pitt'.¹⁰ Lord Temple feared lest the duke of Cumberland should be about to serve as a new channel through which the royal influence could flow and swamp the authority of the ministers. Nor was he alone in this suspicion. That acute observer, Calcraft, told Shelburne that he had doubts of Cumberland's political integrity and independence.¹¹ And the duke of Bedford declared to Grenville that the object of the negotiations seemed to have been 'the uniting of, under the banners of the duke of Cumberland, the favouritism of Bute and the popularity of Mr. Pitt'.¹²

The theory that Temple's objection was to Cumberland is confirmed in letters of the following October and November. The duke of Cumberland died on 11 October, and on 2 November Augustus Hervey wrote to Grenville :

This stroke causes great uneasiness to these people [the Ministry], as I told you yesterday. The talk to-day is that Mr. Pitt is to be immediately negotiated with . . . and how they boast that Lord Temple's great objection is removed.¹³

Cumberland's death, then, cancelled Temple's difficulty, which he had explained to the king was 'of a tender and delicate nature', 'delicate' being the ordinary term among eighteenth-century politicians for negotiations of a personal character, and 'tender' denoting the duke's relationship to his majesty. Nor could Temple speak more frankly to George III than he did ; he could not say, 'Your uncle shall not meddle'. But that the court understood him is proved in the immediate renewals of the attempt to gain Temple after the duke's demise. As early as 13 October we find the queen sounding the earl through Cotes, Mackintosh, and Graeme, and Lord Temple replying that he should have

the greatest happiness in contributing to the honour, ease, and felicity [of the Government] . . . if he can do it upon such clear ground as may allow him to hope for success in it. But that no consideration on earth can induce him to engage in Administration, unless he is assured he enters upon it with the King's full confidence and cordiality, because he knows these are essential to the capacity of doing his Majesty, or the country, any effectual service. That he wishes for no negotiations and

¹⁰ *Rockingham Memoirs*, i. 104.

¹¹ 'He [Pitt] went into arguments, is most determined to keep Lord Bute at bay. . . . The commendation of the Duke nettles and creates doubts of underhand manoeuvres between H.R.H. and Lord Holland': Letter wrongly dated May 1763, but quoted in this connexion; see Fitzmaurice, *Shelburne*, i. 329, 330.

¹² *Bedford Corresp.* 26 June 1765, iii. 300. See also Grenville's opinion, *Grenville Papers*, iii. 179-81.

¹³ *Grenville Papers*, iii. 106.

is averse to any interposition whatsoever ; as nothing can be so agreeable or so satisfactory to him as to receive the King's pleasure from himself.¹⁴

Grenville refers to this or a similar message of later date in his *Diary* for 9 February 1766 :

Lord Temple had intelligence from other hands of the Queen's favourable dispositions towards him, and of the King's dislike to his present Ministry. Lord Temple made professions of his zeal for the King's service at this dangerous crisis, saying that he was willing to ~~show that~~ all heat was subsided in his mind, and that he should esteem himself happy to be the instrument to rescue the King out of the hands of those who wanted and meant to take him prisoner ; that even if the King had delicacies about sending to him after what had passed in May last, he would save his Majesty the blush by asking an audience.¹⁵

Lord Temple's objection, therefore, had been to Cumberland's influence. He was a proud and difficult man ; he had played second fiddle to Pitt in the last ministry of George II's reign, but was unwilling to do it for any one else or even for him a second time. He would not come in to see his plans thwarted and his efforts neutralized by opposing currents—to be ' a great cypher ' .¹⁶

One point remains to be dealt with. If Lord Temple had this dread of the ducal influence, how was it that Pitt, equally proud and independent, was in June willing to accept office ? The answer may, perhaps, be found in Pitt's extreme self-confidence, which had hitherto been justified. He knew that man to man he could outmatch any potentate in the country ; he feared the duke as little as he feared the king's friends or the whig malcontents, and went out of his way for him as little. When the duke was the instrument to summon Pitt to court, he received an answer that ' Mr. Pitt was penetrated with the King's condescension, . . . but without desiring to see His Royal Highness either before or after his audience ' .¹⁷ And when Cumberland, proud of his successful embassy, ' had answered for Mr. Pitt's taking the Administration ' , there were already signs of a storm. ' The Chancellor seemed to understand that Mr. Pitt was a good deal displeased with the Duke's having answered for him, and the Duke as much so at his not having answered his expectations. ' ¹⁸ So although Pitt in his moment of disappointment termed Temple's defection ' an amputation ' , it seems not unlikely that sooner or later he might have been driven to share his brother-in-law's hostility to the duke of Cumberland.

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¹⁴ *Grenville Papers*, iii. 97-8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 360.

¹⁶ *Chatham Correspondence*, ii. 468 ; *Grenville Papers*, iii. 267.

¹⁷ *Newcastle Narrative*, pp. 22-3.

¹⁸ *Grenville Papers*, iii. 202.