A vindication of Mr. Fox's History of the early part of
the reign of James the Second

Heywood Samuel
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THE

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OF

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JAMES THE SECOND.

BY SAMUEL HEYWOOD,

SERJEANT AT LAW.

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1811.
The publication of Mr. Fox's Historical Work, though only an unfinished fragment, naturally excited a considerable degree of interest in the public mind; however imperfect it might be, it was the production of a man, universally acknowledged to have been blessed with talents of the highest class, whose long political life had rendered him peculiarly conversant with the subjects upon which he professed to write. To discover legitimate objects for criticism in almost any posthumous publication cannot be very difficult, but such works have usually been treated with much indulgence, and Mr. Fox's book has more than common claims upon the candour of the public. It is only a small portion of his intended work: we are not assured that, if he had lived, he would have allowed any part of it to have been laid before the public in its present state. On the contrary, it may be proved from the work itself,
that in the author's consideration it was not so far advanced as to be in a state fit for the press; for one passage, which was meant to be substituted for another, is inserted in the manuscript, and yet the original one continues unobliterated, and both now make part of the printed text* from a praise-worthy delicacy of the noble editor, that there may not be a possibility of doubt, as to the authenticity of the publication.

When Mr. Rose announced his intention to make some observations on this publication, his situation in life was a pledge to the public, that they would be written in the spirit of liberality, and his former publications concerning finance and records, of which the value must depend almost entirely upon their accuracy, induced a hope that errors might be rectified, and obscurities cleared up, if any there were, by his assistance: Mr. Rose himself seems to have been aware of the expectations of the public, and in his Introduction, as well as in different parts of the body of his work, makes the strongest professions of candour and impartiality, and censures the want of that accuracy, in which from the offices he has filled, he supposes himself particularly to excel. He was aware of the delicacy

* Mr. Fox's Historical Work, p. 181.
of the situation in which he placed himself, when he undertook to comment on Mr. Fox's Work, from his having been "very long" honoured with the confidence, and enjoyed the affectionate friendship of "his principal political opposer*. But to obviate this objection, he assures us, "that the opposition of every "liberal man has died with its object;" which is a pretty strong admission that his opposition was not to the principles, but to the person of Mr. Fox, for the principles remain though the person is gone; and yet he adds, that "his opposition was altogether on public "grounds." He says, there was a time when he hoped to have seen a junction of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt, but in reading Mr. Fox's History, he had conceived a doubt, how far their co-operation could have been permanent, because "the political principles of Mr. Pitt certainly "would not have accorded with those of Mr. Fox, in the "manner in which he has developed them." He however intimates, that in power, he might not have acted according to the demonstration of his principles in his book. Mr. Rose, then, by his own acknowledgment, had been very long in the habit of opposing the political measures of Mr. Fox, and had been honoured with the confidence and affectionate friendship of his principal political opponent.

* Mr. Rose's Introduction, p. xxxiv.

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He might have added, that Mr. Pitt to him had been a patron, as well as a friend, and that under his auspices, he had acquired nearly the summit of wealth and honour. Mr. Pitt was not so implacable in his enmity as Mr. Rose, and at the close of his life was become sincerely desirous that Mr. Fox should assist in the government of the country; and even Mr. Rose had hoped for it. But from some dreadful principles disclosed in Mr. Fox's book, which during the greater part of a life spent in political contest, he had carefully concealed, or Mr. Rose had not had the sagacity to discover, he now doubts, whether the co-operation of these celebrated rivals could have lasted, because the political principles of Mr. Pitt could not have accorded with those which the tardy penetration of Mr. Rose has discovered in the posthumous work of Mr. Fox!

An appeal may safely be made to the opponents as well as the supporters of the latter, whether he was ever in the habit of concealing his principles, and to any person, except Mr. Rose, who has read his work, whether there are any principles developed in it inconsistent with those, which he had uniformly avowed and acted upon. We shall examine hereafter whether Mr. Rose has fairly represented the passages, from which he has drawn his conclusion, and whether, if fairly represented they would justify it. But we are inclined to think more highly of Mr. Pitt; he, (whatever