

The vanquished⁴ still hold out, though the language of the commanders is desponding enough to make their soldiers disband. The want of pay is yet more disheartening;⁵ and the late vapour of a benevolence⁶ betrays the lowness of the military chest,⁷ which was to have raised a new army;⁸ the thought of which is now said to be given up; at least Mr Pitt's friends and those of the Chancellor⁹ affectedly proclaim *their* aversion to the measure, and lay all blame on *superior* obstinacy,¹⁰ which alone forbids Mr Pitt's resignation; as on the other side the whispers from the backstairs lament the latter's irresolution—I know not what foundation either have for what they give out; nor whether both do not speak to shift off the disgrace of a defeat from themselves.

TO LADY OSSORY, Friday 6 February 1784

Berkeley Square, Feb. 6, 1784.

I AM very sorry, Madam, to have occasion so soon to return your Ladyship's kind condolence on my brother's death. It is more difficult to speak on your loss,¹ though I am persuaded you feel it more sensibly than I did mine, who was prepared for it, and saw it so gradual and so little grievous to himself, that I admired more than lamented. Yet your Ladyship, I hope, will have a consolation that I could not receive—I do not mean in point of fortune, though as you

of it) and made a very poor figure' ('Mem. 1783-91' 12 Jan. 1784).

4. Pitt's administration.

5. Money for the Army for 1784 had not been voted before the fall of the Portland ministry in Dec. 1783. On 22 March 1784, preceding the dissolution of Parliament on 24 March, £2,360,992.0.9 was voted for Army Extraordinaries (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 768-74).

6. 'Much talk of [Alderman Thomas] Harley and merchants advancing a million to King without security. This would be a benevolence and illegal: yet the Duke of Richmond, who last year condemned Sir J. Lowther giving a ship as a benevolence, approved this. Harley and Drummond [banker] and Sir J. Lowther had talked, but did nothing' ('Mem. 1783-91' *sub* 14 Jan. 1784).

7. In the House of Commons on 12 Dec. Minchin had referred to the heavy ordnance debt of more than £850,000 and to the present 'time when the state of public credit was so low, and the finances in such disorder' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 117).

8. On 10 Dec. 1783 Fitzpatrick, secretary at war, proposed to the House of Commons (in committee of supply) 17,483 men, including 2,030 invalids, but the money for them was not voted before the fall of the Portland ministry. See *ibid.* xxiv. 111-17.

9. Thurlow.

10. The King's.

1. Her father, Lord Ravensworth, had died 30 Jan. 1784.