

INDEPENDENT ELECTORS

OF THE

BURGHES OF ELGIN, CULLEN, BANFF, INVERURY, KINTORE, AND
PETERHEAD.

GENTLEMEN,

I BEG permission to offer myself as a Candidate for the honour of representing you in the next Parliament, and to solicit your indulgent attention, while I briefly state the grounds on which I venture to seek that high distinction. Personally a stranger to you, I have yet the happiness of believing that there are, among you, many who will allow me to claim the relationship of hereditary attachment; and I trust, that though long separated from my native country, I shall not be suspected of any failure in my zeal for her interests, or of any abatement in my devotion to those principles of freedom, which constitute the firmest basis of her strength and glory. The Advocate of a liberal policy in administering the affairs of a country necessarily denied the full enjoyment of free institutions;—keenly sensible, through a close perception, of the evils of unchecked authority;—I need scarcely avow my attachment to the cause of Freedom here.

On the great Measure to which most of you owe the privilege of direct Representation in the Parliament, I will not now enlarge, lest I should seem to arrogate undeserved praise, in stating the sentiments I have long entertained and avowed in favour of Reform, or should subject myself to unjust censure in withholding my approval of any of the details of the arrangement by which the object has been accomplished. To take any share in the discussion of it was not within my competence or duty; but even its opponents are bound to regard it as no less firmly established than any part of the Constitution, and, that it is dearly prized by a large majority of my Countrymen, is sufficient motive to exertion, in the endeavour to secure for them the full benefits they justly expect from it. Of these benefits there is none more earnestly to be desired, than that the conduct of public affairs may be gradually disembarassed of party contests, and that the Members of His Majesty's Government may act really, invariably, and simply as the responsible Ministers and Advisers of the Crown, controlled by the Representatives of the people, but neither being nor thinking themselves obliged to make any sacrifice of public utility, to conciliate or resist faction. The situation which I have the honour of filling, may be taken as sufficient proof of my inclination, as far as my humble abilities permit, to support and assist His Majesty's present Ministers in that course of policy which I believe they design to pursue: My persuasion being, that it is their wish, as well as their duty, to adopt such measures as will best advance the interests of their Country at home and abroad. But, giving them my gratuitous services, in the hope (possibly the vain hope) that the experience acquired during a long course of public duty in India, may be turned to the advantage of that Country and of Britain, (their true interests are inseparable,) I hold myself entirely free from the shackles of party connection. I will not disguise from you my persuasion, that the public interests have suffered, and do suffer from the undue prevalence of party spirit, which, while it weakens the ties of friendship and of neighbourhood, and too often breaks the bonds of Christian charity, seems not less surely to impair the national strength, and hinder the progress of national improvement. I offer myself to you, therefore, neither as Whig nor as Tory, but as one willing, zealously though humbly, to co-operate with all who will unite in supporting the fundamental principles of the Constitution,—