

**THE WORKS, OF THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE AMBASSADOR OF
THE COURTS OF RUSSIA,
SAXONY & C.; WITH NOTES.
VOL. 1**

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The works, of the Right Honourable Ambassador of the courts of Russia, Saxony & c.; With notes. Vol. 1 by Sir Chas. Hanbury Williams & Horace Walpole

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SIR CHAS. HANBURY WILLIAMS & HORACE WALPOLE

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THE COURTS OF RUSSIA,
SAXONY & C.;
WITH NOTES. VOL. 1**

THE WORKS,

OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR CHAS. HANBURY WILLIAMS, K. B.

AMBASSADOR TO THE COURTS OF RUSSIA, SAXONY, &c.

FROM THE ORIGINALS

IN THE POSSESSION OF HIS GRANDSON

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ESSEX:

WITH NOTES BY

HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD.

.....
IN THREE VOLUMES, WITH PORTRAITS.
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VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

EDWARD JEFFERY AND SON, PALL-MALL.

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P R E F A C E.



A PREFACE, in the usual style of prefaces, to the Works of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams would be unnecessary; perhaps, in more senses than one, even impertinent. The simplicity of his character, and of the character of his writings, present formidable obstacles to the grave ceremony with which those portals to new and unexpected publications are generally raised, and set at nought the customary arrangement of their usual cumbrous decorations. A literary career without labour, and a political life without intrigue, furnish little ground for narration, and less for conjecture; and common-place criticism could with difficulty find employment on the works of one who drew solely from the sparkling sources of his own lively mind and

temper. Something, however, is due to the memory of this accomplished person, and much indeed from the Editor of the following sheets to the eminent persons through whose generosity he is enabled to lay them before the public. It is in this place only that these duties can be properly discharged.

The Author, then, was the third of the five sons of John Hanbury, of Pontypool Park, in the county of Monmouth, a descendant of the ancient Worcestershire family of his name, and representative in several parliaments for the city of Gloucester, by Albina, daughter of John Selwyn, of Matson, in the latter county. He was born in 1709, and having completed an education of the best sort, which commenced at Eton, made the usual foreign tour with all the profit which might be expected from his genius. These advantages, which at that time were seldom bestowed on younger sons, arose from a circumstance of some singularity, through which he became possessed of a

considerable fortune in his childhood. Charles Williams, of Caerleon, his father's neighbour, having killed a person in a fray, fled to the continent, and, having on his return, many years after, received from Mr. Hanbury that friendship and countenance which his misfortune had probably induced others to deny him, bequeathed to the young Charles, to whom he had been godfather, the most part of his property, to the amount of more than seventy thousand pounds, conditionally, that it should be laid out in the purchase of estates; and that the legatee should assume the surname and arms of Williams. This gentleman died in 1720, and Charles, who returned to England when he came of age, complied with the condition; took possession of the purchased estates, and of others which his father had bought for him; and in 1732 married the Lady Frances, youngest of the daughters and co-heirs of Thomas Earl Coningsby.

His father died in the following year; and he

was soon after returned to serve in parliament for the county of Monmouth. The lively acuteness of his talents, the elegance of his manners, and an incessant gaiety of heart, had already endeared him to a class, at that time rather numerous, of eminent men, who delighted in retreating from political labour and party agitation to a social privacy into which only wit and good-humour were admitted. Among these was sir Robert Walpole, who, regarding him with the eye at once of a statesman, a critic, and a friend, fixed him firmly in the support of that line of public conduct to which he was perhaps already well disposed. He engaged with all the warmth which belonged to his character, and his regard for the minister was cemented by his affection to the man. That his motives were disinterested may be fairly inferred from the fact that he held for many years no public office but the pitiful one of paymaster of the marines, and to that he was not appointed till 1739.

He took no active share in ministerial affairs, and is said to have spoken but twice in parliament; and then shortly, and on matters of no great moment. Indeed, he was too volatile for a counsellor, and too honourable for the tricks of party; the wit and bitter satire, however, which flowed from his pen, in a stream apparently of careless gaiety, rendered him a very important ally; nor did he confine the exercise of those talents to the censure of public men and measures, but frequently attacked with equal severity the faults and foibles of domestic conduct. The consequences of one of these flights of poetical intemperance,* on the marriage of Isabella, Dowager duchess of Manchester, to Mr. Hussey, afterwards Lord Beauclieu, caused him great and deserved vexation. That gentleman, whose reputation for personal courage was fortunately already well established,

* Vol. I. p. 90.