

**TENTAMEN; OR, AN ESSAY  
TOWARDS THE HISTORY OF  
WHITTINGTON, SOME TIME  
LORD MAYOR OF LONDON**

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Tentamen; Or, An Essay Towards the History of Whittington, Some Time Lord Mayor of London by Vicesimus Blinkinsop

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**VICESIMUS BLINKINSOP**

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OF  
**WHITTINGTON,**



*Some Time*  
**LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.**

BY  
**VICESIMUS BLINKINSOP, L.L.D. F.R.S. A.S.S. &c.**

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TO  
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, DUKE OF SUSSEX,  
EARL OF INVERNESS, AND BARON ARELOW;

President of the Society of Arts; Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of the Ancient Masons of England; Colonel of the Honourable Artillery Company; Colonel Commandant of the Loyal North Britain Volunteers; Vice President of the Bible Society; of the Infirmary for Asthma, Union Street, Bishopsgate; of the London Dispensary, Artillery Street, Bishopsgate; and of the Public Dispensary, Bishop's Court, Chancery Lane; of the Universal Medical Institution, Batcliff Highway; of the Original Vaccine Pock Institution, Broad Street, Golden Square; of the Free Mason's Charity, St. George's Fields, and one of the Trustees of the same; Patron of the Mile End Philanthropic Society; Vice Patron of the Westminster General Dispensary, 52, Gerrard Street, Soho; of the Society for the Relief of the Ruptured Poor; of the Universal Dispensary for Children, St. Andrews Hill, Doctors Commons; of the Lancasterian School Society, Borough Road; Patron of the Choral Fund, and of the Northern Dispensary, Duke's Road, New Road; Vice President of Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, Edson Green; of the Benevolent Institution for delivering Married Women at their own Habitations, Hungerford Coffee House, Strand; and of the General Central Lying-in Charity, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields; Knight of the Garter; President of the Beef Steak Club; One of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council; and a FISHERMONGER.

SIR,

YOUR connexion with the fine arts and the city of London so honorably celebrated in the preceding enumeration of

your titles, is a combination of merits wholly unexpected and unprecedented. You alone, Sir, among the members of scientific bodies, can glory in being a Fishmonger; and you alone, among Fishmongers, can boast of being President of the Society of Arts.

Glorious, and more truly honorable, than rank or ribbons, is the list of the numerous charities of which your Royal Highness is the *ostensible head*. It may seem, at first sight, inconsistent with the Christian precepts to give so much notoriety to benevolent actions; but, even in this view, your Royal Highness's conduct is above all imputation: *that* precept applies to the *hand*; and not to the *head*, and though your Royal Highness



gives your *great personal weight* to the chair of those associations, your worst enemy cannot say that you were ever known to give anything else. Your left hand (which, agreeably to the scriptural suggestion, is as discerning as your Royal Highness's intellect) does certainly not know of any particular charity, performed by your Royal Highness's right hand.

You are thus enabled, Sir, to extend the sphere of your utility and beneficence. Actual donations must have had a limit; but the charity which costs nothing, may, as we see in Your Royal Highness's case, be indefinitely extended, to the great encouragement and increase of the contributions of others.

To all the above mentioned distinctions, equally high, equally honorable, and equally deserved, your Royal Highness, on the principle just stated, — that you have still *countenance* enough to bestow on meritorious institutions,—has intimated your gracious intention of succeeding Sir Joseph Banks as President of the Royal Society. Amongst your many and obvious claims to this situation, the first is, that you are a *fishmonger*; for thus your Royal Highness will be in a condition to solve that celebrated problem propounded to the Society by its Royal Founder Charles the Second, and which has not been yet satisfactorily explained, relative to the respective gravities of fish, dead or alive. Nor if the late President had been a *fishmonger*, would the Society have been involved in the failure

and disgrace of that experiment which the indignant poet has immortalized by the line

“Fleas are not lobsters—Damn their souls.”

But though I could not avoid touching upon these matters, it is as a citizen of London, and as the condescending friend of our most patriotic magistrates—our modern Whittingtons—that I presume to address Your Royal Highness, and to solicit your favour to an essay towards the history of that great man, the honor of which cannot fail to be reflected on his successors; and in addition to this gracious patronage for myself, I am charged by others to solicit your Royal Highness, to be pleased to lend your name as President to a new literary and most useful association,